



# Lorraine Wojahn

## An Oral History



Washington State Legislature  
Oral History Program

# Lorraine Wojahn

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Interviewed and Edited by Anne Kilgannon

Legislative Oral History Program  
Washington State Legislature  
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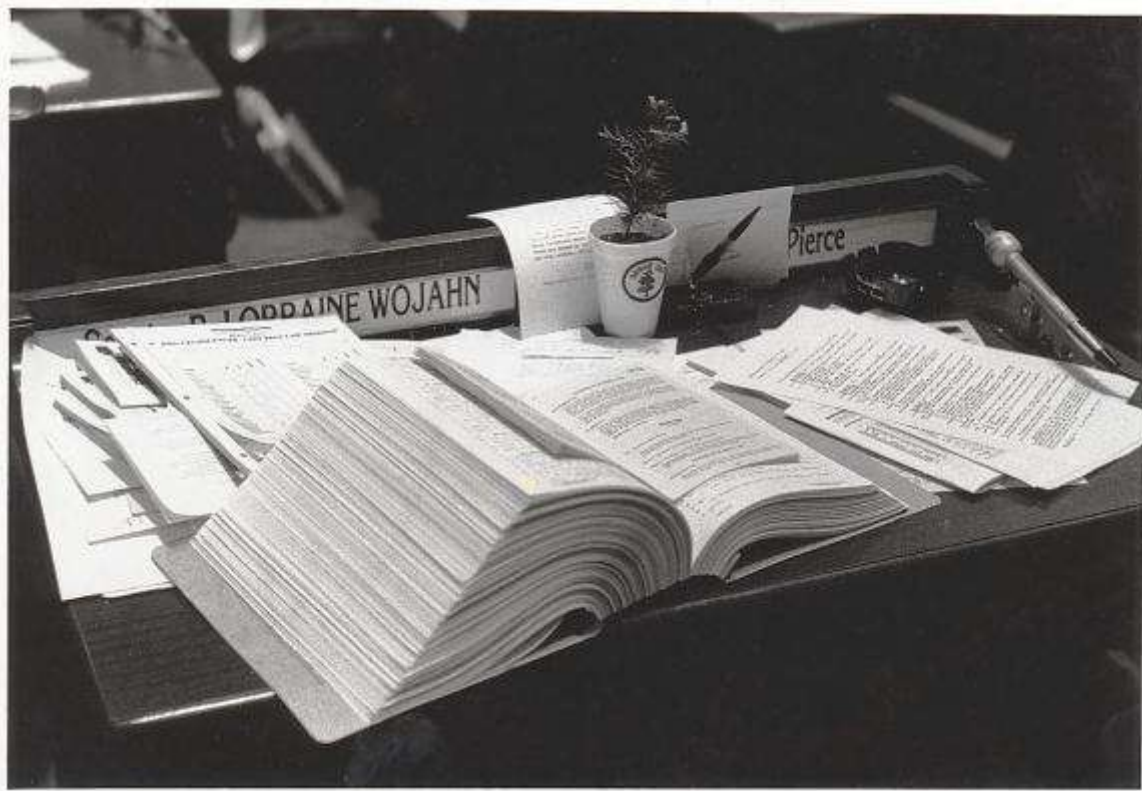
Cover photograph: R. Lorraine Wojahn at condominium residence of Lyle and Delores Swedberg overlooking Ruston Way neighborhood across from Stadium High School in the City of Tacoma Building designed by Lyle Swedberg, part of Tacoma revitalization movement; from Senator Wojahn's personal file.

Photographs are courtesy of the Washington State Digital Archives, the Washington State Senate, the Washington State House of Representatives and from Senator Wojahn's personal files.

*“I wish to dedicate this oral history to Myra DeLaunay, the most genuine, loving person I have ever met. She could always empathize with me about the problems we faced and capture what was in my heart and mind in phrases so felicitous that others might understand.*

*And to Evie White and Bob McDaniel, who worked with me in the legislative trenches to develop citizen legislation.”*

L.W.



*There is a destiny that makes us brothers,  
None goes his way alone,  
All that we send into the lives of others,  
Comes back into our own.*

Edwin Markham



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## FOREWORD

I had the extraordinary privilege of serving with Senator Lorraine Wojahn for sixteen years in the Washington State Senate. I can say without reservation that I love and admire Lorraine Wojahn. She was, and is, a mentor. She was one of the pioneering women members of the Washington State Senate. She is a role model for women who have followed in her political footsteps.

I can think of no single person in the Legislature whose work embodies the progressive tradition of Washington State better than Senator Lorraine Wojahn. She got things done. How did Lorraine do it? She is an amazing combination of intellect, tenacity, and shrewdness. She understood issues; she knew people; she kept on fighting for the right causes—causes that advance the poor, the neglected, and the people with disabilities in our society. She made public policy bend to her will, a will that fought for the right causes, for the right reasons.

More than a role model for women in public service, Lorraine's record of achievement as a member of the Washington House of Representatives and the Senate is legendary. She was the prime sponsor of legislation to create the Department of Health. As chair of the Senate Social and Health Services Committee, Lorraine strengthened Washington's laws on child abuse and neglect when the Eli Creekmore case got public attention in 1986. She fought long and hard for consumer protection legislation and for the improvement of Washington's health care. She was an outspoken advocate of tax reform.

Lorraine was the vice-chair of the Senate Health Care Committee in 1993 when I was its chair. We fought vigorously to establish a policy of comprehensive health care insurance for all Washington citizens. Her efforts on behalf of universal access to health care were tireless.

Lorraine was a fierce advocate for the City of Tacoma and Pierce County. Her efforts made Tacoma's Pantages Theater renovation, better facilities at Western State Hospital, a renewed Tacoma downtown, the University of Washington-Tacoma campus, the Port of Tacoma, Bates Technical College, to name just a few, realities.

Lorraine did not suffer legislators who did not keep the people foremost in their minds and efforts. I can still think of many times when a senator stood up to speak in the Democratic caucus, in committee, or on the floor of the Senate, only to have Lorraine say "Oh for God's sake" as a way of expressing her displeasure with that individual's failure to know the people's will.

She never let politics get in the way of doing the right thing. She kept her eyes firmly focused on the outcome that benefited Washington's people. This meant Lorraine would often fight for unpopular causes, like tax reform. She kept working to get legislation passed even if it took years. She hired good staff to help her. For example, Jean Soliz, who later was DSHS Secretary, and Don Sloma, the executive secretary of the State Board of Health, both worked for Lorraine.

I have to confess here, for the first time, that Senator Ray Moore and I conspired to award Senator Wojahn the highest honor we could think of. Ray and I got sweatshirts made emblazoned with the motto "Norse Goddess of Terror." Ray and I both believed that Lorraine would serve well in the pantheon of Norse deities. Odin...Thor...Freya...and Wojahn! Her will on doing right for people would be done. No one commanded the awe, or respect, that Senator Wojahn did.



On a personal note, whenever I brought one of my five children to the Senate, they always looked forward to seeing and talking to Senator Wojahn. She was always interested in what they were doing and how they were progressing in their various activities and studies.

I am privileged to have Lorraine Wojahn as a friend and mentor over the years. I am delighted she has prepared her oral history. Her extraordinary achievements as a public official for the state of Washington and its people have firmly established her position in the history of our State as one of its great legislators and public figures. Lorraine Wojahn did the job of state legislator right—with heart, with courage, and with skill. We need more people like her in public life.

**PHIL TALMADGE**

Former Washington State Senator,  
Former Justice, Washington State Supreme Court



*With two of Senator Phil Talmadge's children on the Senate floor, 1993.*

## FOREWORD

I first met Senator Wojahn during a job interview. I was applying to become Counsel to the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee. I came away with several impressions, she was kind, she knew her subject matter, and she was a lady. These impressions remain to this day, two and a half decades later.

I was hired for the 1987 legislature, which passed major legislation from the Human Services and Corrections Committee. Senator Wojahn was the Committee Chair and guided the committee with tactical ease as we rewrote child protection statutes and launched a major welfare reform initiative. This position also launched my career in state government. The operating rules I learned from the Senator have served me well. Senator Wojahn knew how to lead and how to get most of what she wanted, while respecting the opposition and responding to the issues that were of interest to other committee members.

One example from 1987 illustrates why Lorraine Wojahn was a power to be reckoned with, and a person who got things done the right way. Governor Booth Gardner was Governor and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) had put forward a skeletal and insubstantial welfare reform bill on his behalf. Senator Wojahn would not even consider an approach that was not well designed. She called the bill “Welfare WPPSS” drawing an analogy to a disastrous, misguided investment the state had made into a nuclear plan called the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS). Newspapers led with the quote. She took me with her when she was called in to meet with the Governor. She explained her reaction and he suggested she do it her way. We began a series of hearings which resulted in the design of the Family Independence Program.

Senator Wojahn’s legislative process included examining the data in context. She brought in labor experts to explain why issues in the job market forced some people onto welfare. Then the real facts about welfare recipients were explained to the committee. Members learned how many assumptions about welfare were just myths. The facts drove the policy and the policy was to get families out of poverty and off welfare. The bill that left the Senate was improved with expertise from the Washington State Institute for Public Policy and the Urban Institute. Senator Wojahn was determined to do it right.

Now the story gets interesting. Welfare bills (like crime bills) are often used as political footballs. Not surprisingly, certain House leaders stripped the substance from the Senate version of the Family Independence Program bill and replaced it with punitive policies that were known to fail and trap families in poverty. Senator Wojahn was not to be outdone. She collaborated with Evergreen Legal Services and other poverty leaders. By the time the House passed its version of welfare reform, then Congressman Mike Lowry had gotten the United States Congress to pass an authorization for the Family Independence Program – but only if the Senate version was what passed the legislature.

The House receded in its amendments and Senator Wojahn had won the day. The best news is that many families got the education and childcare support they needed to become employed and permanently off welfare, and the state received \$90 million in additional federal funds from the Family Independence Program.

I remember sitting in the wings when the floor debates began on the welfare bill. Senator Wojahn listened as one (male) leader made a denigrating speech about “Welfare Moms.” She stood up and exorcized the Senator, taking him through the daily life of a welfare mom and the challenges she faced every day – from pouring cereal in the morning to folding laundry at midnight, before falling into bed. No one else tried to politicize welfare that day...and poor women got the support they needed.

She was what I now call “a good ole labor Democrat.” She knew and adhered to the principles that responded to the needs of working families. There was never a doubt that Senator Wojahn operated on principle and that she represented the people in her district.

Senator Wojahn took every bill seriously, which caused us on her staff to pay close attention to the substance and to the process. I was newly admitted to the world of state politics. I saw how issues were

resolved and how different elected officials operated. That was when I learned that most elected officials work very hard. There are a few with compromised ethics and inflated views of themselves, but the majority - by far - care about doing what they perceive is the right thing. Senator Wojahn ignored egos, gender, wealth and opinion polls. She was a trailblazing woman we all should recognize and thank.

JEAN SOLIZ-CONKLIN

Former Senate Counsel

## **FOREWORD**

State Senator R. Lorraine Wojahn's political career stands as evidence that it may not be easy, but public service can hue to the highest calling of compassion. From the poor to the mentally ill, from the displaced homemaker to the defenseless crack baby, Senator Wojahn stood for fair and compassionate treatment of the least among us. Her works stand as an example of public service that lifts up our state, and makes us proud to choose this as our home.

This book will tell her life's stories and many of her accomplishments. I want you to know the spirit I saw in my years with her. As our State Senate's Health Committee Chair and Ranking Minority member for a decade from the late 1980s onward, I worked with a Senator often as regal in her style as she could be sensitive and compassionate in her legislative aims. In a strategy session early in my time with her, I advised her of the impossibility of breaching legislative customs by requiring accountability for certain specific performance from our state's largest social and health services agency. She leaned toward me, back stiffened, eyes wide, more than a little annoyed and loudly declared, "There is nothing we cannot do. We are the Senate!"

As clearly as she could demonstrate compassion and understanding in her legislative purposes, and as often as she would champion the interests of society's least able to defend themselves, Senator Wojahn knew how brutal the political world could be. And she came to play. By the time I worked with her, she had learned especially how to be successful in the man's political world of liberal politicians of the late twentieth century. She could be as blunt, intimidating and effective in her actions against her foes as a longshoreman with a tire iron.

My first chance to observe the Senator's political style involved recommendations I had made as a performance auditor examining our state Board of Health. I had recommended the Board's modification and refocusing. But a bill had just cleared the State House emasculating the Board entirely. I was summoned to the Senator's office. When I entered, I recognized a who's who of physician, hospital and other medical system lobbyists, along with a few politically naive public health activists. Despite their considerable political influence, most in the room had no strong interest in the state Board of Health. They were there because Senator Wojahn had told them to be. She told them she had determined to stop that House bill dead in its tracks, and they were to help. The Senator was successful in that effort when a new Senate bill appeared in a Senate Committee completely unrelated to health issues and separate from the House bill. The House bill just mysteriously died after having been referred to that non health committee and bottled up by its Chair, as a favor.

The upshot of that brief meeting in Senator Wojahn's office was the redirection of the State Board of Health, the state's public health community favored, but could never have accomplished on their own. This led to a political alliance that some years later, despite initial opposition by the sitting Governor of her own political party, produced the first comprehensive state legislative policy to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS, to the creation of the first state health department to be reestablished in any state in more than 30 years, and to the end of any further health legislation authored by the House member who had authored that bill for as long and as far as Senator Wojahn's reach could grasp. Years later, as Senate Health Committee Staff Director, I must say I had great difficulty explaining to proponents of perfectly benign legislation authored by that House member why their bill would not be heard in Senator

Wojahn's Senate Health Committee.

Among the last memories I have of Senator Wojahn's doings in the Senate were a few words uttered on final passage of a bill about to clear the Republican controlled Senate in 1997, establishing a new tax on motor vehicle registration processing that would generate tens of millions in funds needed to establish our state emergency medical trauma response system. The Senator had concocted a scheme under which car dealers would get a small share of the processing fee for collecting the tax. This, and Senator Wojahn's not so gentle admonitions to help on the bill, had enticed them to favor its passage. Still the bill had caused a Republican House member sitting on the bill's conference committee to object to the tax. The words uttered on the Senate floor by Republican Senator Alex Deccio, who had also participated in the conference were, "We had some trouble with the House about this tax. We put Senator Wojahn on the conference committee. All I did was duck. I suggest you all do the same." The Senate quickly, easily and with some degree of knowing affection by the many Senators who'd been in Deccio's position on other issues, passed a significant tax increase to support a clear public health improvement purpose, ram-rodged by a Democratic Senator in a Republican controlled chamber.

When I was a very young man, someone told me "Anything you care enough to accomplish despite very strong odds, will change you." I resolved in my life to care about something that much. I think of that when I think of Senator Wojahn and the gulf between the causes she championed and the environment and means by which she sometimes had to do it. Long live the "Norse Goddess of Terror" in the hearts and minds of those who bring only mean purposes to public life!

DON SLOMA

Former Senate Staff

## **FOREWORD**

Fearless, strong, courageous and determined are some of the words that come to mind when I think of my friend, Senator Lorraine Wojahn. A tall, straight backed, fashionably attired, attractive woman with a good sense of humor and a very hearty laugh also describes her. The "Norse Goddess of Terror" label used by Senator Talmadge reflects the determination with which she pursued those issues which she believed were good for her district, the state and the public. (Incidentally, the label was used partially in jest and Senator Wojahn always enjoyed it.) Her intelligence, her strength, her knowledge both of the issues and the legislative process, could be intimidating and one did not contest her lightly.

One of my most vivid memories of the Senator was many years ago when she called a press conference to advocate for a measure to combat discrimination. Another Senator opposed her efforts, but she was determined. She had even brought a dart board with her opponent's picture in the middle of it. It was an "eye catcher" as was the fact that her opponent was a member of her own party. The measure passed in time thanks to her and others' efforts, but I believe it illustrates her fearlessness, her willingness to use imaginative methods and her commitment to get the job done.

The Senator's accomplishments are well documented in the other Forewords and I will not repeat them except to attest to their validity and the importance of her involvement in their success. The legislature and the state are a better place because she was there. I have the greatest admiration for her.

PAT THIBAudeau

Former State Senator

## **PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Legislative Oral History Program documents the history of the Legislature in Washington State, using oral history techniques to capture and preserve personal recollections and perspectives of individuals who have participated in state politics.

These individuals are chosen for their deep experience, broad interests and leadership in state affairs. After extensive research, taped interviews are conducted, transcribed and then edited for readability and accuracy. The interviewee reviews the transcript and works closely with program historians to create a manuscript that reflects their best efforts of recollection and interpretation of events.

Each oral history is a valuable record of the individual's contributions and convictions, their interpretation of events and relationships with other participants in state civic life. The resulting narrative reveals the complex interweaving of the personal and political, what each person brings to the political process: family background and education, membership in different geographical and social communities, professional experiences and the philosophical grounding of choice of a political party. Read as a part of a series, each oral history offers a part of the many-faceted and often contested record of state political activity. Readers are encouraged to analyze and weigh this material as they would any primary historical document. Although based in archival research, oral history quintessentially relies on personal memory and reflection.

Senator Lorraine Wojahn is an ideal candidate for an oral history. She served in the Washington State Legislature for thirty-two years, in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, giving her the breadth and depth of experience for informed commentary. She served on a variety of committees, was involved in several areas of policy formation and authored significant legislation and held important positions of leadership. Most importantly, she possesses a prodigious memory for events and persons, and is both straightforward and candid in her recollections.

Senator Wojahn was interviewed shortly after her retirement in 2000 over a period of several years; her comments reflect that time period. The program would like to acknowledge and thank Senator Wojahn for her commitment and dedication to the tremendous work of producing this oral history. She warmly welcomed this interviewer into her home during this long process and participated with enthusiasm and careful consideration for accuracy and historic value. Her tenacity and thoughtfulness made this project possible.

We would also like to thank Senator Wojahn's legislative assistant Robert McDaniel for compiling a detailed and vast collection of documents that greatly aided initial research and for his continued support for the project. Many other state government personnel answered queries and tracked information as needed. As always, the Washington State Library was a treasury of documentation and help. Washington State Archives and Photo Archivist Mary Hammer's assistance in finding photographs was invaluable. Several lobbyists also provided critical background information on issues and events. Judith Turpin deserves special mention for her persistence in recommending Senator Wojahn as a candidate for an oral history.

The Development Committee of the Washington State Oral History Committee raised funds to help transcribe the recorded tapes in a timely manner, a critically essential but often unsung part of the oral history process. Their support for this project and for the program is deeply appreciated. The Secretary of the Senate provided crucial support and structure throughout the production of this oral history. Finally, but not least, this oral history owes its existence to the dedication and dogged persistence of Anne Kilgannon through some difficult times, for that the Program and posterity owes Anne its gratitude.

## INTERVIEWER'S REFLECTIONS

At first sight, Senator Lorraine Wojahn is a tall, even regal woman. Sometime after she had retired from the Senate, I had occasion to meet with her in the Cherberg Building on the Capitol Campus, and as she walked down the hallway, people flocked to see her. As I trailed behind in the manner of an acolyte, I marveled as Senate staff and lobbyists crowded around to greet her, what a power she was there still, a presence to be reckoned with, and a personality that drew people to her. Witnessing this demonstration of her quiet power and her intense interest in everyone she greeted, I was given a glimpse into her working relationship with her Senate colleagues. I was in awe of her and humbled to be working with her to document her thirty-two years of legislative service.

She approached this oral history project with great seriousness, wanting to get every detail correct. And with her long service and prodigious memory, there were many details, indeed. But, notwithstanding this dedicated approach, our sessions together were regularly punctuated with laughter and a shared sense of the foibles of life. We broke the rules of good oral history practice by eating while recording, at her insistence. She always had a special treat ready when I arrived at her home in Tacoma.

As we stepped through her years of service, Senator Wojahn remembered every cause, every fight, every friend and foe. Without much prodding from me, she would mount her metaphorical soapbox and give me a ringing speech on issues close to her heart. And although she possesses a formidable brain, her politics were all heart. At the bottom of many—most—of her legislative measures would be a story, an injustice, an issue, something that had touched a human life and needed help. Once such a story was conveyed to her, she seized upon whatever needed rectifying and with tenacity, even cunning, she worked through every channel and even forged a few new ones to solve the problem. She lived by her mother's maxim, "If you see something that's wrong, don't just stand there. Do something!"

Another aspect of this heart-centered approach is her desire to connect with people. She was touched by every story, by the joys and pains so many shared with her. Her first response to another was to listen. She stored up and drew upon all these instances from her own experience and those imparted to her. While trying to remember some incident, Senator Wojahn would recall in detail some person who helped her with the issue at hand and insist that person be remembered for their contribution. If she couldn't remember a name—rare instances—she would build up a word portrait: the person's appearance, where they went to school, their career history and any other detail she could reconstruct. It was so evident that the whole person mattered to her, not just the momentary role they may have played. It was then my task to take this set of clues and find out the identity of the staff member, lobbyist or any other person we were trying to credit with some action. Usually, it was a meritorious action she wished to memorialize, but sometimes her eyes would flash as she would lay down in no uncertain terms the dark deeds of someone who opposed her. True differences of opinion were tolerated and understood, but self-serving aggrandizing actions or carping indifference would bring down her wrath. She had a long memory and used it.

Senator Wojahn has fierce loyalties. She loves Tacoma and worked assiduously to rejuvenate and revitalize her adopted home city, pulling every string to "get money for Tacoma." She stood up for women and championed their equal rights and opened doors for women and girls wherever she could. From helping her hairdresser sign contracts in her own name, to battling for displaced homemakers and women needing reconstructive surgery after breast cancer treatments, to keeping abortion legal, she was there. A staunch feminist, she wasn't above using a mini skirt or sheer-plastic raincoats to get the attention of male legislators, and enjoyed the humor of Leg-of-the-Day awards. But she was deadly serious confronting domestic violence, child abuse, and the needs of the disabled or mentally ill. Hungry children, deserted wives, and those crossed by an unfeeling bureaucracy would find her a friend.

She battled the huge edifice of the Department of Social and Health Services—one of her proudest achievements being the creation of the Department of Health—but she also stood up for social workers on the front lines in struggles to help families caught in the snares of poverty and abuse. Senator Wojahn also respected anyone in the professions, those who had worked to earn the credentials that certified their expertise. She stood up for doctors, dentists, architects and others whose word and training she relied upon. She wore her own title as Senator with pride and even audacity. “The Senate can do anything!” she would declare, but add, “So long as it is in the constitution!”

Senator Wojahn would have made a contribution wherever she may have invested her tremendous energies, but we in the state of Washington have been the beneficiaries of her dedication and long service. Working with her to record and preserve her legislative history has been an education and an inspiration. Reading this memoir, her insights and experiences in life and in the Legislature will shape any reader’s impressions of how that institution works and the role it plays in our individual and collective lives. And of how one individual, Lorraine Wojahn, could put her stamp on a whole state, from how we purchase bacon to how we treat those among us who need our help and protection. Just as stories moved her to action, so may her story inspire the next generation to step up and “do something!”

ANNE KILGANNON

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## CHAPTER 1: FAMILY BACKGROUND

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's begin your oral history by talking about when your family first came to the Northwest. Do you want to start with one branch and then work your way to the other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That would be fine. We'll start with the Kendalls, my father's parents, who migrated from Kansas in the mid-1880s. My grandfather Kendall's name was Alfred Solomon. My Grandmother Kendall was named Elizabeth Ann. My grandfather worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad as head of a bridge and building crew from St. Paul into Tacoma. He bought a farm in Enumclaw because he figured his job would be over when the railroad was completed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your grandparents come west with some children?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they had three children, my uncle, Eugene Harvey, my father, and my aunt, Edna. My father's name was Frederick Charles. He was the oldest of the three. My grandmother died in 1891 in childbirth and is buried, along with her child, in one of the early graves in Enumclaw cemetery. My father was twelve years old when my grandmother died. My uncle Eugene was eight, and my aunt Edna was ten at the time. My grandfather didn't feel that he could rear a girl, so he took her back to Kansas to be reared by very dear friends of theirs in Oskaloosa, the Crandalls, an abstract attorney for Jefferson County, and his wife who couldn't have children. The two boys remained with him. He went back to Kansas every year to see his daughter Edna until the day that he died. He never remarried. My Dad continued this practice, always remaining close to his sister and her family, although miles apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the family never reunited?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. My grandfather would never permit the Crandalls to adopt my aunt. So she grew up in Kansas and later married an attorney by the name of Amos Leech. They had four children, who were all reared in Kansas.

Uncle Eugene Kendall later owned a fleet of trucks which transported raw petroleum products, the Arrow Transportation Company, based in Richmond Beach, Washington. The trucks transported petroleum from Seattle to Los Angeles, California and into Arizona. My grandfather lived with my parents, off and on, for the rest of his life.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did he keep working for the railroad?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He kept working for the railroad. But he moved – he sold the farm and moved into the old Atkins Apartments, an old red-brick building which was located on the corner of East Twenty-sixth and D Street, close to the old Northern Pacific shops and roundhouse. He could walk to work. The Atkins Apartments were torn down recently when the Tacoma Dome was built.

Grandfather Kendall had twin siblings, Liza Jane and Tubal Cain. This was an uncommon name, even in the 1850s. Anyway, when we lived in Montana, my parents received a letter from an attorney asking if they were related to a Tubal Cain Kendall. My mother lost the letter and they never responded. Recently, I read in the News Tribune about a mine in the state of Washington called the Tubal Cain mine. This leads me to wonder if my great uncle Tubal founded that mine.

My father never did graduate from high school. He went to work when he was sixteen years old for the railroad and then rose up through the ranks to become a minor executive with the Northern Pacific. He started out wiping engines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the way it used to work, isn't it? I don't think you could advance like that anymore. You wouldn't get anywhere today if you started at sixteen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. There are no jobs. You couldn't work at sixteen. You couldn't get a permit. You have to have an education. My dad



did go back to school off and on and did go to business college. And he read voraciously. I have lots of his books which he kept. One of them was a Winston Churchill book and there were several, like *Northwest Passage*. Some of the old historical novels. He read continually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Self-educated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very self-educated, yes. A very good grammarian. My dad was born in 1879 and he married at the turn of the century. My mother, Edna Florence Ogilbee, was born in Red Bluff, Iowa and migrated to Portland, Oregon with her family, arriving in about 1887. Oregon was a state then, although Washington was still a territory. She was raised in Portland. My grandfather, Allen Ogilbee, had a lemonade stand in Portland, located on the corner where Meyer & Frank now stands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He could make a living selling lemonade? That's amazing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, apparently. And then he went to work for the Portland school system. He became a stationary engineer – I guess that's what they call them – and he was able to get a lot of my mother's friends jobs as teachers because it just required a minimal education at that time. If you could read and write you could teach.

My mother had a brother, Alan Ogilbee, and a sister Hattie-belle – Hattie-belle Adeline – who was born when my mother was twelve, and my mother practically became the child's mother. My grandparents permitted her to name the child. Thank God there was a Hattie-belle before I came along, or I might have been named Hattie-belle! They all were raised in Portland. They lived there forever. My mother tells about how on the corner of their property the railroad went by and during the Spanish-American War they would take cookies and goodies and hand them out to the soldiers through the windows as the train went by.

My Grandmother Ogilbee – her name was Mary Anne Sadler Ogilbee – was born in Iowa. She died at age one hundred. I was born on her birthday, and I always asked my parents why

they didn't name me after her. I liked that name as I got older. My mother said they didn't want to. Her dad would have been unhappy if they'd named me after my mother's mother, as he hardly knew his mother as she died when he was so young. I said, "Well, why didn't you name me Mary Elizabeth or Elizabeth Ann?" They said they didn't think of it.



*The Ogilbee children: Edna Florence, Hattie-belle, Alan*

My brother was adopted. I was adopted, also. I know little of my background; I just know I was adopted and taken from the hospital at two days old. I was born on September 17, 1920. My parents wanted to take me out right away, and they could have, but they had to give me a name. They had always said if they had a girl they were going to name her Noreen, because my dad had a cousin Noreen and he liked the name. But they couldn't think of the name!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must have been so excited.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were. It was a girl – because they already had a boy. All they could come up with was Lorraine, and then the doctor said, “Yes, but she has to have another name, a Christian name.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn’t know that was the practice.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Apparently it was at that time. They finally picked out Ruth, but Lorraine Ruth didn’t sound very good, so they tacked Ruth on the beginning. They’ve told me this story a number of times. So I became Ruth Lorraine. I have never used the name Ruth. It’s become an appendage that is burdensome. Legally, I have to use it. I could use Ruth Lorraine Kendall Wojahn, I guess, but horrors, it would be too long. It’s my legal name and I have to use it. And that’s the story of how I got my name.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I picture this couple just so excited to get this little girl!

**Sen. Wojahn:** My dad was forty-two and my mother was thirty-nine, so they were older.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were a very wanted child.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That is exactly right. They didn’t tell me; I found out myself when I was an adult because I had applied to work for the Corps of Engineers and I had to have a birth certificate. They didn’t tell me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that would have made a difference to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I don’t think so, but I can remember thinking about it, because my mother, when I did something naughty, would spank me. My dad never touched me, Mother spanked me. She always said, “Just remember, we had you because we wanted you.” She always used to say that to me, and so I said to my friend growing up when I was in grade school, “Wouldn’t it be awful to be adopted?” And she knew I was adopted. She didn’t respond. Apparently, my mother had confided in her mother.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everyone knew but you? Did your brother know?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn’t know, but he suspected. He found out when I did because he was in the Army by that time. He had graduated in ROTC from the University of Washington and was inducted into the Army just before World War II broke out and he hadn’t had a birth certificate at that time because it wasn’t required. Then by the time they required it, he was already in, so it wasn’t needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What a way to find out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was shattering. They didn’t want to tell me, and they didn’t tell. So that’s what happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you and your brother look alike?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Not particularly. He was a very handsome young man. He was adopted in Kittitas County. They were living in Ellensburg at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He’s what, two years older than you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Almost two and one-half. He was born in June and I was born in September.

I saw him after he found out and he said, “I always thought I was adopted, but I couldn’t prove it.” This is a picture of my brother and me when we were little. It was taken in Ellensburg at an ice cream parlor. Isn’t that fun? Look at the high-button shoes, velveteen suit and velveteen dress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perfect hair. Little cuffs. That’s really cute. You look like such model children.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had every opportunity ever offered any child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s pretty wonderful. Let’s get back to the family story. How did your parents meet? Did your mother come up to Washington somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know how my parents met. I think my dad in his railroading had occasion to go to Portland, and he must have



*Donald and Lorraine as young children*

met her in Portland. I have no idea. These are the things I regret never asking. They never talked about it and I didn't ask, and now it's too late.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a different code then about talking about certain things. You just didn't.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. You didn't talk about them. And I have no idea how my Grandfather Kendall and his wife met. I know he was born in Virginia and as a young man he took to the road and went to Kentucky and then he ended up in Dodge City, Kansas, and that's where he started to work for the railroad. That's where he met my grandmother. But apparently at some time he must have been in Oskaloosa because that's where the family emigrated from originally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They came out here when it was just a territory – a whole new land.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whole new environment. My mother grew up next door to the Weatherly children, a family who were well known in

Portland; the Weatherly Building on the east side was named for them. They had three children, Isabel, Jessie and Clayton Weatherly. The children of both families were all raised together and remained friends all of their lives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your family have this idea of the Northwest as the last great frontier? A place of opportunity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think my Ogilbee grandparents did because they came out for no reason except to be here. My grandfather Kendall ended up here at the railroad terminus of the Northern Pacific. But I think he decided farming was not for him despite his background. Although his family were farmers in Virginia and farming was what you did at the time; even my Dad always wanted a plot of ground where he could have a garden.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could he ever really have farmed if he was always working on the railroad?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He sold the farm then. He ended up retiring from the railroad. The old railroad widowers always wanted to retire in a hospital because they knew everything would be done for them there. The Northern Pacific Railroad had hospitals all over. They had one in St. Paul, Minnesota and one in Missoula, Montana and one in Tacoma. It was a way of life if you worked for the railroad. In the early days, men worked until they were too ill or injured on the job and had to be hospitalized, where they ultimately died. But with the advent of the railroad pension system this changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, they would they be like nursing homes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They would be like a nursing home today. So my grandfather, instead of retiring in a hospital, moved to the Tacoma Croft Hotel, which has now been destroyed and replaced with the Tacoma Art Museum near the History Museum.

I don't know what his politics were. I suspect my Grandfather Kendall was a Democrat, but he swore when Governor Martin

was Governor and the state sales tax was imposed that he'd never vote for a Democrat again. He hated tax tokens. He used to talk about Roland Hartley and all these various Governors. Family friends of my parents were the Chapmans. His name was King George Chapman – I always thought it was interesting George Chapman's first name was "King." He and his wife were born in England. She was the sister of Ernest Lister. He later became Governor in 1913 and served until 1919 and died in office, I believe. The Kendalls, Chapmans and Listers all lived in Tacoma; our families were friends and often entertained together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your parents married and lived in Tacoma at first?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. They lived all over Washington, including Tacoma. They lived in Ellensburg, they lived in Auburn; they lived in Easton when I was little. They were living in Easton when they adopted me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As your father would be moving up the corporate ladder, so to speak, he was changing locations here and there and getting more and more responsibility?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. He was roundhouse foreman in Easton. Then he was sent to Missoula, Montana to learn that part of the railroad. He knew the division from Seattle to Spokane and from Spokane to Missoula and from Missoula to Butte and Helena, Montana. Then the next division, a long division, was to Glendive, Montana and then to St. Paul. They had asked him earlier to go to Glendive, Montana so that he would learn that portion of the railroad, the eastern division, and he refused because it was such a dreadful, dreadful place. He didn't think it was a proper place to raise children, so he refused to go to Glendive. The next opportunity came when he was sent to Missoula when I was in the fifth grade. We got stuck in Missoula because of the Depression.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everything was just stalled?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything stalled and people were riffed and jobs were consolidated. The structure was depleted. He would have had to go back to running as an engineer if he had returned to Seattle, so he stayed in Missoula where he was secure as an assistant master mechanic and foreman. We stayed five years. We were supposed to stay for a year and then come back to Seattle at which time he would be promoted to master mechanic. So I started my freshman year at Missoula County High School.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it quite a small place at that time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Missoula was about seventeen-thousand. It was the center of the railroad division, and that's where the Northern Pacific hospital was located.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know you have some stories about growing up and what you might call your "character formation." The values your parents taught you about being independent and about taking care of yourself.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. My parents would always say: "Don't come tattling to us; you can take care of yourself."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like they started that teaching when you were very young.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very young. I remember living in Easton, Washington and one of my earliest memories was my mother dressing me in overalls and I was so angry. I was irate! They



*Lorraine with her father and brother, unhappy with her outfit.*

took a picture of me and my Dad on the running board of our Buick, and I was trying to get away from him, I was so mad for putting me in those awful clothes. I'll never forget that. I couldn't have been more than two-and-a-half or three years old. But I remember that! And I remember my Dad saying a rooster could sit on my lower lip because I was pouting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have preferred a dress?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, or coveralls. I guess I had coveralls before that. But they put me in these overalls with suspenders like a boy. My brother and I, even as little kids, were both bossy. He was bossy and I was bossy. I remember he was always throwing things and always hitting me in the head, and I was always getting a bloody head. I've got cowlicks all over my head where I got hit. I'd go in and my mother would put my head under the water faucet and wash the blood off and I'd go out and play again. I remember the time he threw a bottle that broke on my head; that was a bad one. That caused the worst cowlick which I still have, and it really bled.

I remember the time the older kids ran down the hill and threw rocks into a bees nest. I was about three years old. It was summertime and there was a bees nest at the foot of the hill and the kids all got a big rock and ran down the hill and threw the rocks into the bees nest. I was standing at the foot of the hill right by the nest and I stood there and watched them throw the rocks and then they all took off and I stood there and got stung all over my head and face!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're lucky you didn't die.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. And there was no doctor in Easton. I had to go into Cle Elum. Nothing happened, but I had bee stings all over my head and face and neck. I remember crying and my mother sympathized with me and she really scolded my brother. He had it coming. She had to make a goop out of flour and water or baking soda and water and I had these white patches all over my face.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a little more than fooling around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Easton was a tiny little town; it was just a railroad town. That's where they put the helper engines on to go over the Pass. My dad was roundhouse foreman. There weren't that many families in the whole town. The little store there was called Pless' Grocery. The intern who I had as a sophomore legislator was from Cle Elum and she was related to the Pless family. It's a small world! Her name was Mary Ellen Plouse. There were only about twelve kids in town and the one-room school had a row for each grade. My brother was in the first grade so he was in the first row. I remember one of the girls who used to come up from Seattle and play with us because her uncle was an engineer by the name of Jack Paris and he'd stay over in Easton. Sometimes he'd bring his niece up to play with us because we didn't have too many kids to play with. Her name was Paula Paris, and her other uncle was Ben Paris who owned the Ben Paris Restaurant in Seattle. She was about my brother's age and sometimes they would run and hide so they wouldn't have to play with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were the little one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was the little one, yes. I was a problem! What else happened? I remember one time how bad it snowed. I remember the snow bank. We had to make a walkway to get out of the house, and I remember the snow was over my head and it was like going through a tunnel. As I got older, I kept thinking the snow was really high there, but I was so little it looked like a tunnel. I remember my first Christmas. We had heat but we had closed off the living room to save fuel. We kept the kitchen and bedrooms and dining room warm. Behind the closed door in the living room was the Christmas tree. I didn't see it or know it was there. There were candles on the tree and my parents lit the candles on Christmas Eve and took me and showed me the candles on the tree. I couldn't believe it – it was the most beautiful sight I'd ever seen, with the candles lit on the tree and the gifts all under the tree. They said, "Now, there are going to be some more gifts. Santa Claus is going to come tonight, and there'll be some more things under the tree." This was about

1923. From there it seems like we moved to Auburn for a brief period of time. And then eventually we were transferred to Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that's where you started school?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's where I started school – kindergarten. We had kindergarten in Seattle at that time. I was raised in the University District. The first house in the University District we rented belonged to Hec Edmundson. The Edmundson Pavilion is named for him. He was the basketball coach at the University of Washington at that time. Then we bought a house shortly after that a short distance away. I played on the campus as a child. I went to University Heights Grade School. It's still standing. I remember there was a Japanese family named Shimazou. I don't remember any black families, but there were a couple of Japanese families. One of the dads was a shoemaker and he was so grateful to the school district for educating his children that he presented the University Heights Grade School with four or six Japanese cherry trees that I believe are still standing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you like school?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I loved school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It came easily for you? Learning?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I liked learning and I loved school. I remember when I was in the fourth grade we had a test and because I had observed some books and titles on display I was able to answer the questions, not because I had read them. I could read but not well, and the teacher asked me if I'd read all these books. One was Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates. I still remember that one with the little Dutch boy on the cover. I didn't go to junior high in Seattle because we left then for Missoula.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hard to make friends? You moved around quite a bit. Some people do it easily. Other people have a harder time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When we moved to Missoula I don't ever remember being upset. It was a new adventure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If it was a positive thing for your family...

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was very positive. We rented this lovely, big old home and didn't take our furniture; just put it in storage and kept our main home in Seattle because we weren't supposed to be there for more than a year. The house we rented had about five bedrooms and two baths and a parlor and living room – and a secret room my brother discovered. It was a lovely home. It was quite spacious. But it was on the wrong side of the tracks. The north side of Missoula was the best place and we were on the south side, which wasn't particularly plush. Except that a U.S. Senator lived a block from us. Former U.S. Senator Joseph Dixon lived on East Pine Street and we lived on East Spruce Street. He had a house with huge colonial pillars in front. It took up about the same amount of space that we had, but it was a much more elaborate home.

I went from fifth grade through my freshman year in high school and made friends easily. It wasn't a problem. That's when my grandfather came to live with us. There's a story about my mother going to an afternoon tea and buying a lovely new outfit and a Panama hat. I remember the dress. It was a caramel color and off-white, and she had green eyes. She was really a pretty lady. Small stature with green eyes and a little turned-up nose. She walked down the steps off the porch – we had a wrap-around porch – and Grandpa Kendall was out watering the lawn and he said to her, "You think you look pretty cute, don't you?" and then he turned the hose on her!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he kind of a spiteful guy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He was just ornery. Just ornery! I remember that he used to chew tobacco and he smoked cigars. He could smoke the cigars in the house, but my mother would not permit him to chew tobacco in the house. When we lived in Seattle, he kept his chaw of tobacco out on the front porch and I remember as a child about five years old I went out and took a chaw of the tobacco.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty powerful stuff!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Awful stuff! Burnt my mouth like a blow torch. My mother said, “It served you right,” as she washed out my mouth with soap and water.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that cure you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. I took a big chaw. It looked like licorice, you know. I’ll never forget that. Nor my mother’s remarks. I never got my mouth washed out with soap again either, but my brother and I got spanked occasionally.

I can remember as a freshman in high school the football games because there was a lot of school spirit within the high schools in the state of Montana. We played one another and often would have a special train which would take the kids from Missoula to Helena, Butte or wherever the football game was being played.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Huge distances.

**Sen. Wojahn:** About two hundred miles, yes. I had an annual pass as a student from when I was twelve years old. Later, I went to Minneapolis for a football game when I was a freshman at the University of Washington. I remember going up to Rock Creek fly-fishing. My dad taught me to fly-fish in the Missoula River, which is a tributary of the Missouri River. We used to go to Rock Creek and to Lolo Hot Springs, close to where Chief Joseph was finally captured at Lolo Pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you kind of an outdoorsy girl?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I rode horseback and fly-fished and was a tomboy. I played football.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that with the guys?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And I always had a dog. I had a Springer spaniel named Pal – a black dog, pretty dog. I had a really good life. The atmosphere in Missoula was not geared toward education particularly. I did not get a good foundation there. I took my first year of Latin at Missoula High School and I didn’t learn a thing. I didn’t learn much in Algebra, either. I had a really tough time when we transferred back to Seattle because Roosevelt High School was ranked sixteenth nationally in scholastics. A

very good school. I had to learn two years of Latin in one year. It was really tough. I managed to get a C but it was really tough. I practically memorized Caesar’s Gallic War. We had to decline verbs and the verb tenses were just deadly. The only thing that helped was the fact I was such a voracious reader so English was always easy for me and spelling was also easy. A foreign language should have been easy if I’d had a better foundation. We didn’t have very good teachers in Montana.

I did have occasion to meet two U.S. Senators in Missoula by age ten. One of my best friends, who’d lived down the block from me, moved to the north end out by the University of Montana. We still remained friends even though they were a ways away. We had to cross the Missoula River which ran through the middle of town and separated north and south. Anyway, they lived next door to Mike Mansfield, who at that time was a professor, but who later became a U.S. Senator with whom I had contact when I was lobbying the “Truth in Lending” bill. It all worked together! It was incredible. My friends used to call him “Uncle Mike.” That story comes later. This was in my growing-up years. Senator Dixon, who lived by us on East Pine had left office years ago, but I do remember one of his aides who lived in the district. She had a Girl Reserve Troop of which I was a member and we used to go to the Senator’s house for meetings and to receive awards and occasionally we would meet the Senator who kept an office in his home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We’ll have to remember that. I wonder if that little taste of proximity, shall we say, made the field of politics more accessible to you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It may have been. I don’t know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask you how the Depression impacted your family.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was ages ten to fourteen during the Depression in Montana. It didn’t impact us. We were protected, but the people around us were not, and my family was always helping people. The banks closed. No one could get into the banks, so everybody’s money was tied up or

lost. I remember taking a can of food to get in to the movies instead of paying ten or fifteen cents. I knew there was something wrong but I didn't know what it was. I remember my folks putting their money into Postal Savings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your parents talk about the Depression very much? You said you didn't quite understand it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The only thing I knew, because we lived so close to the railroad tracks, we had people coming to our house to ask for work or food. They had been "riding the rails" and had come from other states or sections of the country looking for jobs. They would come and ask for food; my mother always gave them food, but she never let them in the house. She would fix some food or give them a hot meal of what we were eating at that time, and then they would go on. That was almost an every-day occasion. Well-dressed people, too. They wanted work and we had nothing we could give them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your parents give you any explanation as to why this was happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They just said there was a Depression and that it wasn't affecting the railroads too much where we were located, but we needed to stay there because if we were to go back to the Coast my dad would have had no job. His job in Seattle had been eliminated. We understood that. So instead of staying one year we stayed five years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think they had a lot of anxiety about what was going on themselves?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If they did, they never communicated their anxiety to us. We were sheltered from that. Whether they had felt it, I don't know. While my family did pretty well during the Depression because my dad kept his job, the Depression didn't hit quite as hard in Montana. People were mainly farmers or ranchers and so could truck farm, and there was food to be hunted and fished; they had enough to eat. Also, there was an Army garrison nearby, Fort Missoula, which brought some cash in to the local economy. The sugar beet factory in Missoula continued to operate during the

Depression and farmers could supply sugar beets to the factory. Also, Missoula was a railroad hub and the NP had a steady troop of people to maintain the railroad and the hospital. In contrast, the Coast – Seattle – was in terrible shape.

My grandfather was taken care of. He was either in Tacoma living at the Croft Hotel or he was with us. He would come and stay for a while and then he'd go back to Tacoma. I remember twice my mother had to go to Tacoma to get him because he wouldn't eat. Lee Croft, the hotel owner, called my mother on the telephone and said that Grandpa wouldn't eat because he wouldn't pay a tax token. He was so angry with Governor Martin for imposing a sales tax and he was never going to vote for another Democrat. My mother had to leave home and get on the train to Tacoma. I remember her telling us how she got a big paper bag and filled it with tax tokens and gave it to Grandpa and said, "Grandpa, you eat."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain what tax tokens were and how they worked?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything you bought you also had to pay tax tokens. It was the forerunner of the state sales tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not just cash, but you had to have these special little things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. As I remember, you could buy a lot of tax tokens for a dollar. Instead of the retailers taxing you, people had to pay tax tokens when they bought items.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not like now when you get your bill and then they tag it on at the end? You had to do it yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was very political because, rather than requiring the retailers to do it, the burden was placed on the customer who was required to provide the tax token along with the purchase amount. I don't remember if it was on everything or just on food.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting that the tax was on food. That's the thing people are most



reluctant to tax, usually. Were the tokens like coins or tickets?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were made out of tin or aluminum. They were real light. They were about the size of a nickel and had a hole in the middle. For every so much you had to give a tax token.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the retailer would collect all these little tokens and then turn them in to the state? Or did they just sort of circulate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They'd turn them in to the state. You bought the tax tokens, you paid for them, and the money that you paid for the tax token went to the state to support programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you get them at an ordinary store or would you have to go somewhere special to get them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. I wasn't buying very much at that time. My mother was ill. One of the things that occurred when we lived in Easton, my dad had an infection in his finger and had gone down to the hospital in Tacoma, I think, and gotten some medication – alum – to put on his finger. Well, we didn't have electric lights and my mother got up in the middle of the night. Instead of lighting the lamp, she went in the bathroom – which we could use during the summertime because the plumbing was there, but during the winter it froze and we had to use an outhouse. That was all part of growing up. She went in to take some Epsom salts because she was feeling bilious and she took the alum instead. It closed her stomach. I remember they took her to the hospital in Cle Elum and she was in and out of the hospital. They had to make a new opening in her stomach. She was one of the first persons to survive an operation called a gastroenterostomy surgery, which was a new opening in her stomach by her heart. The doctor's name was Dr. Lampson. He had just come from the Mayo Clinic and was familiar with the surgery. During her lifetime, she had sixteen major surgeries. She used to go with him to different medical meetings and he would display her as living proof that she had survived this unusual surgery. The surgery is more commonplace now, I guess.

Not commonplace, but it happens. They do gastric resections I guess now, but this was a new opening to her stomach.

When we moved to Seattle we had a housekeeper because she was in the hospital most of the time. That's part of growing up. I remember I was about five years old, and there was a smallpox epidemic, and my brother and I were supposed be vaccinated. But my mother was in the hospital. My dad was going to take us. He was gone from home a lot and not available because at the time there was a series of silk trains traveling from the Seattle Port and going east to silk factories. Because the product was so valuable coming in from Japan, they had to have an official ride the silk trains all the way into Minneapolis, so he'd be gone for days at a time. But we had a housekeeper. We called her "Grandma," although she wasn't my grandma. My mother had made me all these dresses; she sewed. Even when I was little I had these dresses with little pants to match. My dad couldn't find a pair of pants to match the dress. But Grandma hadn't ironed and so she didn't have a pair of pants. So he said, "To hell with it, you and your brother are not going to get a vaccination," and I was so glad because I thought it was going to hurt. I remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For lack of the proper clothing you might get smallpox?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He fumbled around. He had to dress me and he wasn't very good. Grandma hadn't ironed me an outfit, and he was frustrated anyway, so I didn't get vaccinated. We had just come from Easton. I was probably in kindergarten at the time and I guess I was pretty healthy. My mother, I can remember even growing up, she would always bring us orange juice in bed every morning to wake us up. Fresh orange juice every day. It was kind of neat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though you were healthy as a horse, apparently, your mother was not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My mother was not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you grew up...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Without a mother.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** ...but with a lot of awareness of medical issues and care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Of medical issues, right. My family didn't talk politics, we talked medicine mostly. I was aware that people could get sick. I remember going to the hospital several times because she was going to die, but she didn't. I remember being prepared because Mother was going to die, and then my real grandmother would come and stay with us for a while, Grandmother Ogilbee from Portland. My aunt, Hattie-belle, would come and stay with us and then my mother would get well, and come home and then she'd get sick again and she'd have to go back for another operation. She kept getting adhesions and they'd have to go in and break up the adhesions around her heart. In spite of her problems, she lived to be eighty-six years old. She outlived my dad.

But I remember too, going back to the Missoula days, one time my mother got a note from the doctor at the Northern Pacific hospital in Tacoma saying that Grandpa was acting up and was being ornery. He wouldn't take his medicine and could she please come over. When my mother got to the hospital, the nurse told that every time she gave Grandpa his medicine, he waited until she went out of the room – he held it in his mouth – and he went and opened the hot air register and spat it down the register.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must have caught him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They caught him. And they said that he wouldn't behave and somebody had to read him the riot act.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was your tiny, little mother?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My tiny, little mother had to come over and he minded her. He was like a child by this time. She said, "Don't you dare take me away from my family again. This has got to stop." Later on, when he went back to the Croft Hotel, when he had to have the tax tokens, she would read him the riot act and he'd behave for a while, then he'd get nasty again. Then he came to live with us and he turned the hose on her. Perpetual!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a character. We haven't actually talked about your Grandmother Ogilbee, who I think must have been a pretty interesting lady from your description.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My Grandfather Ogilbee died when I was a child, a baby, I think. I don't even remember him. My Grandmother Ogilbee had all her property dug up and she had a flower garden. She raised flowers – sunflowers. She just loved sunflowers. I remember that. We spent a lot of vacation time with her in Portland. My Aunt Hattie-belle lived with her, and my aunt, who did not marry young, would always take us to various places. I remember going to the zoo in Portland.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She'd take you to the circus, you said.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The circus. She'd take us to the zoo, and she always knew where the good hamburger places were. That was before McDonald's. There was a place where you could get hamburgers and they'd put all these different things on them. All the goodies which we think about now. She took us to the park. That's how I remember her. She always planned things for us when we were there so that we were entertained.

I remember I thought my Grandma was awfully messy. One time, when I was eight or nine years old, I told her to go into the living room and stay out of the kitchen because I was going to clean it up. We were living in Seattle at the time. She had a pantry and an old coal and wood range. I cleaned it all up and it was really nice and I organized her pantry and her kitchen and she was just delighted. She was a messy cook, but a good one. I remember later going to Portland from Missoula, I cleaned and organized her kitchen. Later, my aunt modernized the kitchen and added a dressing room.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did your aunt do? Did she just look after her mother?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My aunt had gone to school in Oregon for two years, to Linfield College, to become a teacher. She became a teacher, but she

didn't like teaching and quit and then she went to work in business. When she finally retired, she was doing bankruptcies, working for an attorney referee in bankruptcy. Earlier, she was an auditor for a radio station in Portland.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think she preferred a career to marriage?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My mother went down and lived with my grandmother for awhile so my aunt could do her own thing. But my aunt took care of Grandma, although eventually my grandmother went to a nursing home and my aunt sold the family home and moved into an apartment. She always had boyfriends, but she didn't marry until the age of fifty-eight, to a gentleman who was a telegrapher for the Southern Pacific Railroad. After my grandmother had died at age one hundred. The nursing home was operated by the Seventh Day Adventist church in Portland. They were very good to Grandma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought your family were Methodists?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My family were always Methodists. My mother was the organist for the First Methodist Church when she was a girl in Portland. My grandmother, up to the day she went in the nursing home, tithed for the church. She was always a good Methodist. We were all raised in that faith.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I like the story of her in the hospital with the priest. Could you tell that again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was funny. She was eighty-six, living at home at that time and she fell and broke her hip. They took her to St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland and sandbagged her hip instead of setting it because they didn't think she'd survive the anesthetic. And she went into a coma and my aunt was called to come to the hospital because the doctors believed she was dying. My aunt rushed to the hospital and as she was approaching Grandma's room, a young priest walked out of the room and he was laughing. He said, "Grandma is fine." Then he said, "I went in the room and I was laying out

my vestments to administer the Last Rites of the Church when Grandma raised up out of her coma and said, 'Young man, I was born a Methodist, I was raised a Methodist and I plan to die a Methodist. Get out of here.'"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No Catholic Last Rites for her.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No! That was my Grandma. That is the story that's remained at St. Vincent's Hospital. She lived to be one hundred. Her hip healed but she had trouble walking after that. She used a cane and they had a housekeeper with her, but that's when she decided to go into the nursing home. The house was sold and my aunt moved into an apartment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You once said that she went around town preaching the evils of liquor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. She was a member of the WCTU, Women's Christian Temperance Union. I inherited my Grandma Ogilbee's tenacity, I guess. She would ride the street cars in Portland preaching the evils of John Barleycorn and also preaching for women's right to vote, women's suffrage. She became almost an icon in Portland during that time. She did that until the amendment was passed, I guess. In the state of Washington we had the women's right to vote much earlier.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. 1910. Do you think that she knew Abigail Duniway?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. She probably did, but I don't have any of her records. She never talked to me about it. But I know that she did it because of the stories I was told by family and friends. She had some expressions that were priceless. I remember my Grandmother Ogilbee used to say, "you'ns and we'uns." It was colloquial from Iowa, I guess, where she was born. "C'mon, you'ns, let's go. Let's go to market." Or, "we'uns will go." I remember that. She was a little tiny lady. She didn't weigh one hundred pounds, I bet. The Oregonian came out and took her picture when she sold her house after she got out of the hospital; she was about eighty-six, standing beside her sunflowers. They were taller than she was. I've got the picture. She had an old swing rocker that I saved. And I

still have that chair and a piano chair. The original upholstery is still on the rocker. The upholstery on the piano chair isn't original because it became too tattered. The piano chair has been reupholstered twice. Both chairs are over one hundred years old.

My mother tells this story. One time my Uncle Alan Ogilbee was home with my mother – they were about seven and eight years old and Grandma was out in the yard gardening. A census taker came to the house and my uncle answered the door and the census taker wanted to know how many people lived in the house, and my uncle said there were five: “There is me, my mother and my dad, my sister, Ted – he called her Ted – and my baby sister Hattie-belle.” Then the census-taker said, “What nationality are you?” And he said, “Well, my mother is Scotch and Irish. My dad is Pennsylvania Dutch and my sister and I and Hattie-belle are half-breeds.” That’s the story; my mother couldn’t get over that; it was one of her funniest memories and she kept it forever. My uncle Alan Ogilbee was a tailor in Portland. He was a marvelous tailor. He wouldn’t study and played hooky from school and my grandfather, who was working in the schools – he’d helped many friends get positions as teachers in schools in Portland and they reported on my uncle not going to school. According to my mother, my uncle was a wizard at mathematics, but lousy in verbal concepts. My grandfather said, “You’re going to do something,” and he gave my uncle a choice of either going to school or taking an apprenticeship as a tailor. He became a very fine tailor. He apprenticed maybe at age twelve, maybe fourteen. I don’t know. My mother taught music, private organ lessons, and was at one time the organist for the First Methodist Church in Portland. My aunt was the only one who went to college. She went to Linfield College in Oregon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she teach you music?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My mother said we had to learn the piano first. Then we could each have an instrument of our choice. My brother chose an accordion. I wanted a harp. My family said no,

harps were too expensive, so they bought me a violin.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not quite the same.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not quite the same thing. But I always wanted a harp. For some reason I loved harp music. I don’t know whether they couldn’t afford it or whether they decided that it might not take. You couldn’t rent harps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t think that would be an easy instrument to get hold of.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. We were living in Missoula at that time. So she taught us piano for about two years and then she hired a teacher. She taught us the scales and the basics and then it got to be too uncomfortable. She could make us practice if we were taking lessons because she could say, “We’re paying for lessons and you have to practice.” She wasn’t able to impress upon us the need for it until she was paying for lessons. That was the reason.

My brother, Donald Lee, developed nephritis, a kidney disease, when he was about fourteen, and I remember there was a doctor, Dr. Haas, at the Northern Pacific hospital in Missoula, Montana, whose daughter had had a kidney infection. The doctor had developed a program that he put her on and she overcame her illness. He put my brother on the same regimen. My mother had to cook a stew with many different vegetables: celery and carrots and turnips and any kind of fresh veggies and my brother had to take the broth and eat veggies and take some kind of horrible tasting fish-oil medicine that my mother put in grape juice twice a day. She’d put several drops of this fish oil in the grape juice so it wouldn’t taste so bad. The only thing he could have once in a while was a broiled lamb chop. He lived on cooked fresh vegetables, vegetable broth and fish oil for two years. He wasn’t allowed to have any salt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this to somehow cleanse his system?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and to get his immune system working properly. Lots of liquids. He had to be on that diet for two years. I remember the veggies were just awful tasting without salt!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a pretty stiff regime.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Really stiff. And he overcame his illness. He was fine. It wasn't until much later in life, after Don retired from the military and from his job as Utilities Director for the City of Aurora, Colorado, that he developed kidney failure. He was on dialysis for two years and then refused dialysis. He died of kidney failure in the military hospital, Fitzsimmons Army Hospital, in Aurora, Colorado, at the age of seventy-three, August 1990. I spent two weeks with him before he died.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess the treatment was worth it, then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That was Doctor Haas. A very fine internist. After I moved into my condominium in Tacoma, I met Swan Johnson, one of the physiotherapists who started physiotherapy in Tacoma and was one of the head people of the Tacoma Elks Club. Swan had graduated from college in physiotherapy and started his practice at the Northern Pacific Hospital in Missoula, Montana. Swan Johnson had known Dr. Haas. Swan was born in Butte, Montana and had gone to Montana State College in Bozeman. He was one of the early physiotherapists in the state of Washington. He died several years ago at ninety-five-years of age.

So that's all part of the history I can remember. I remember while living in Missoula, every time my dad was home for a few days – he was on the road a lot – we would go fly-fishing. My dad taught me to fly-fish. We'd pack a picnic dinner and pick up other railroad families and go fly-fishing. We went fly-fishing up Rock Creek and the Rattlesnake, both tributaries of the Missouri River.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that include your brother or just you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My brother and me. During the summertime, while living in Missoula, we often went to Lolo Hot Springs, which is up at Lolo Pass, on the border of Idaho. We would fly-fish on the Locksaw River in Idaho. On other

vacations, we'd drive to the Coast – as Seattle was referred to by Montanans – and we'd visit friends in Seattle or Tacoma, and we always stopped and stayed overnight in Spokane so we could go swimming in Natatorium Park. Or sometimes we'd go to Wallace, Idaho, and rent a cottage on a little lake. Those are the things I remember as a child. We always went as a family. Earlier in his career, my father had the opportunity for a promotion which would have opened the door to greater promotions in his career, but it would have meant leaving Seattle and interrupting the stability my parents wanted for my brother and me. As parents, they had bought a home in the University District in Seattle so my brother and I would be able to go from elementary school through college and live at home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have been a totally different life.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would have been different. Because my dad did not take the promotion, Missoula is the only place out of the state of Washington that I ever lived. My dad wanted me back in Seattle in the University District so that my brother and I could go through grade school, high school and college within walking distance of home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you brought up with the idea that you would go to college?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was expected. I went to college, but then I got married and went to work. My brother graduated. I was exposed to the University a lot, though. My brother was in the school of architecture and the students were often given six-week projects. The students would start the project but didn't get serious with it until about a week before it was due, and then in the last twenty-four hours – we had this big old house in Seattle – about ten of the students would bring their drawing boards and come up to the house and finish the project all over our house. The basement, every room in the house, including my brother's bedroom, there were drawing boards and boys and a girl. Dory-Anne Miller was one of the few women students. And they would be up there in the

house drawing and finishing their projects. It was a zoo. So I was exposed to students and higher education. I used to play on the campus when I was little. I married an architect, so it was all quite natural.

When we moved back to Seattle, in 1935 or thereabouts, we used to go to Hood Canal or to Sol Duc Hot Springs. I remember one time we couldn't get a cabin at Sol Duc, but we had blankets and we were sleeping out on the ground, which people did at that time. There was a carnival in town and lots of noise. The next morning some people from the carnival came around to where we were camping and said they were looking for a snake which had escaped the day before. Pretty soon they came back and they'd found it. It had gotten stuck in a creek bed several yards from where we were sleeping.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some things it's better not to know!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's like when our kids were little and we were traveling to California and camping on the way down. We were staying in the redwoods in Camp Richardson, and we had a couple of pup tents, but they didn't have a floor in them. There was a lot of noise at night after we'd gone to bed and Gil and our two sons got up to see what was going on and they didn't come back and they didn't come back. Finally, I went to sleep and the next morning after we had broken camp and started driving, the boys said, "Can we tell her now, Dad?" And Gil said, "No. Not yet." And they kept saying it as we were driving down the peninsula towards San Francisco. We got to the Golden Gate Bridge about noon and they said, "Can we tell her now, Dad?" And he said, "Yes, you can tell her now," and they said, "What we were doing last night was chasing the snakes back to the Sacramento River." The snakes would lie up on the river bank and sun themselves during the day and every evening the male campers would chase them back to the river.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rattlesnakes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I think they were probably just garter snakes or black snakes that aren't dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But still, not snakes you'd want to sleep with in a tent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, no! If I'd seen that I'd have had a heart attack. I know. So we never camped after that. That was the end. I guess one time we did and I insisted on having an Army bed, one of those collapsible beds. But these things actually happened! I don't remember anything while I was growing up that was really dramatic or unpleasant, except for the time my grandfather turned the hose on my mother. I do remember that from the time I was ten years old my mother let me buy my own clothes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you interested in clothes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not particularly so, but I liked nice clothes and she always let me do my own shopping. She would tell me what I could spend and we had a charge account, even during the Depression. I used to go to a store called Donahue's in Missoula and if it was more than I could spend, I always had to call and ask if I could spend more. But I had to justify the additional amount. So from the time I was ten I always bought my own clothes. She didn't interfere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this good training for making choices and managing your money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Good training.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm interested that you were brought up to go to college. Were you thinking that you would have a career, or was this just something to develop yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always thought I wanted to go into medicine. I wanted to go into laboratory type work. I took sciences in high school in order to do that, but then I worked on the newspaper in high school and I liked that, too. When I started school I was in journalism, communications.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the University?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I liked it. I remember Ed Guthman was a sophomore when I was there. He later became the editor of the Philadelphia Examiner and also worked on the Kennedy presidential campaigns. He wrote a lead for me once. I was working on this story and I said, “I can’t get it.” You had to answer five questions: who, what, where, when, and how, and I didn’t have it all in and he wrote it. I don’t remember it, but it was good. I worked on The Daily before I started University. My friend was in journalism school, Cay (Catherine) Griffith; we’d gone through high school together. She was a year ahead of me. So we worked on The Daily together during the summer before I started at the University – the Summer School Daily. Cay and I got two by-lines together at the summer school. I remember one of the leads. It was: “You smoke, you drink, you chew: life is a trap.” We were writing a story about drinking pop – carbonated beverages, and smoking. And we talked about how orange juice was better for you than carbonated beverages and how harmful cigarettes were. “It’s a trap” because, as the doctors were saying at the time, the more carbonated beverages you drink, the more you needed. Carbonated beverages don’t quench your thirst. We interviewed the doctor at the University infirmary. The U didn’t have a medical school at the time; they had an infirmary. The doctor said we should stay away from cigarettes because they were habit forming, and it was better to drink pure lemonade than to drink carbonated beverages. I remember the story.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that make a big impression on you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But I started smoking because we got free cigarettes. The ad group for The Daily always had a drawer full of cigarettes which were free. So I started smoking cigarettes, Philip Morris. They came in samples of four in a package. We found them in Betty Lou Manley’s desk. She was the advertising manager for The Daily.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t think people understood then about the dangers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. They didn’t know that. The summer school editor of The Daily, Mo (Morton) Lachman, later became the gag writer for Bob Hope. Also, he wrote the first series of All in the Family. Mo Lachman, he was a brilliant man. He was recently admitted to the University of Washington Communications hall of fame. Cay Griffith’s brother, Tom Griffith, also graduated from UW School of Communications and later became an editor of Time Magazine. These are UW people who became famous. I understand that Mo never worked in the newspaper business, but the others did. Another graduate, Ed Garrison, who was going with Cay, was at one time the publicist for the Washington State Republican Party.

One assignment I was given was to write a story on the Walker-Ames lecturers, who were scheduled to speak at the University of Washington. Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of England, was a scheduled speaker. I reported that Prime Minister Chamberlain was coming to the U of W in September, but he was actually in Germany negotiating peace between the Czechs and Germany, “Peace in Our Time.” The editor yanked the story and gave me hell. It was a foregone conclusion Chamberlain couldn’t be in two places at once. I started college and was assigned to the society column, covering sorority affairs. All of the juniors and seniors coming back to school got the good beats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you started college and you were in communications and working on the paper. What other kind of courses did you take?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I took Political Science. I took a year of French to prove I could do it because I’d had such trouble in Latin. I had to take one quarter of English. I also took several literature classes, sociology, and psychology. No more sciences. I didn’t go to gym so I flunked my gym class. I was taking square dancing and it was such an effort I just dropped it. If I had paid a dollar I could have dropped my gym class and avoided getting an E. I should have dropped the course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you living in a dorm?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I lived at home. I didn't pledge. My brother went through 'rush' and decided not to pledge a fraternity, so my family wouldn't pay for me to join a sorority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you want to?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. My brother said I didn't need to join a sorority, and shouldn't because I would develop bad habits. My parents listened. My mother apologized later on, on her death-bed. She thought it was more important to me that it really was. My cousins in Kansas could never understand why my brother and I did not become members of a Greek organization. They had all graduated from the University of Kansas and had pledged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did that mean for your college life?

**Sen. Wojahn:** When I had covered social issues for The Daily, I was invited to many sorority events and was invited to join several but I didn't. I got a job that summer after my first year of college, working as a model at I. Magnin and I never went back, although I was enrolled for my sophomore year. I was having too much fun and I was earning my own money for the first time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You only went to school for one year?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But I had a lot of experiences. I worked on The Daily all the time I was in school and knew all the journalists. My brother graduated; I didn't. I worked at I. Magnin for a couple of years and then the war broke out and I went to work for the Corps of Engineers and I married. I left I. Magnin because I wanted to help the war effort and needed to work to help my husband get through college. I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life at that point. And I didn't feel the urge to go back to school. I was happy with what I was doing. And then the war came.

My husband went back to school. He had quit school in order to earn money to continue his schooling. I should have gone back to school after Gil graduated. Could have, but I didn't. I

would go back now if I weren't eighty years old. Years later, I took some courses in economics and labor economics at Tacoma Community College because I needed the information for my job with the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think it was that easy to go back, then, was it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. It wasn't. Nobody did. Now, in the last thirty years they have. I could have gone back but I helped my husband get through school and then I worked for him when he had his office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We slid over your I. Magnin job pretty quickly. How did you happen to start doing that? What was that like?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was fun. I just decided I wanted to do something different and had seen an ad in the paper for a model and I went down and applied. I didn't think I'd get hired and I did. I always worked the fashion shows and did stock work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would go down the plank in the dresses and show them off?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We modeled for wealthy people. There were certain people who didn't want to try the clothes on, but they wanted to see how they looked, so we would put them on and show them. We also did fashion shows.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a kind of public performance. Did you already have this poise or did they teach it to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just had it. They said, "I. Magnin models never pose."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes a kind of confidence to do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whatever. I didn't lack confidence. I worked on the student paper in high school. Roosevelt High School formed an honor society for women – not the National Honor Society – but one for women who were active in school affairs and I was a charter member. It was called "Spurs," because Roosevelt High School was named for Teddy Roosevelt. I remember our school motto was:



“What you are to be, you are now becoming.” That was Teddy Roosevelt’s motto. The “Rough Riders” were the boys, and the “Spurs” were the girls. I also earned a letter in field hockey and basketball. When I went to work for the Corps of Engineers, I joined the Washington Athletic Club, of which I’m still a member. I played on the women’s volleyball team at the Club and we won the women’s volleyball championship that year. It was just intramural. I played a year of high school basketball in Montana. So those are things that I did. I still read. I’ve always read.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had all these different experiences and they formed you – who you are today.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess I am a composite of everything I actually did. I learned, not politics from my parents, but I was always aware. If you read and read the paper – my family took three newspapers. They took the P-I because Mother wanted a morning paper. And Mother liked the Times; my dad liked the Seattle Star because he liked the sports page and the funnies. We always took three newspapers. So I was reading those. My family read, and my mother read to my brother and me when we were little or took us to the library to story hour. My boys went to story hour from the time when they were babies, and they were read to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were just keeping up with affairs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Keeping up with affairs. Always voted. I voted for Roosevelt, my first vote in a national election in 1944. The last time he ran I was twenty-one. I’ve always voted. I went down and registered and voted for Roosevelt. I don’t think my family did. My aunt was Republican and was the Secretary/Treasurer for the Republican Party in Oregon. That’s when she worked for the radio station.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have kept your views to yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I listened to her sound off. When I was going to school I took Sociology

and Psychology. And when I was taking Sociology in college, I knew I wasn’t a Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was it that did it for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I read about the Wobblies and the social problems. With the Sociology class we went to the Red Light district in Seattle and to see the bums on the street.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little slice of life.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had a pretty broad background. My Sociology professor was Dr. Laviolette. I still remember his name. He used to take us down in a bus. During the Depression I saw the ‘have-nots’ and I knew my family was taking food to people. And I knew, at times, that I could get into a movie by giving a can of food. So I knew there were the ‘have-nots’ out there. I was never in an orphanage, but I knew they existed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your parents talk about Roosevelt and the New Deal and the different things that were going on? Or was that was something you just did on your own?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not particularly. But I knew there was a WPA and a CCC. I think they were at Fort Missoula. The Works Project Administration was building public things. And I knew that it was a social program. We moved back to Seattle when the people marched on D.C., the veterans, to get their earned bonuses. I remember seeing that. I remember reading about capital punishment and I could never agree that it was right. I used to suffer when I’d see a movie in which somebody was put to death. I would wring my hands and say, “That’s not right.” I had a social conscience which must have been imbued in me by osmosis. How else? My parents didn’t talk about things, particularly. They were just kind people with common sense, a sense of community. They believed they were their brother’s keeper.



*R. Lorraine Kendall, age 21*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But they did things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did things. They were doers. And my brother and I were doers, and they expected us to be doers. “Don’t just stand there, do something!” My mother always used to say, “If you see something that’s wrong, don’t just stand there, do something.” She didn’t tell me what to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At that time, who was “doing something” was the government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That might have been some kind of object lesson on how to solve problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And my dad was on the management side. I think he’d suffered as a child. They’d never been without; they’d never suffered economically, but it wasn’t good. He didn’t have a mother. He didn’t have a childhood, really. So he wanted to protect us and to give us a chance to be children and to play and to never have to work. I never worked at a job until I marched into I. Magnin and thought I wanted to be a model. Then I decided I wanted to work for the Corps of Engineers.



*Donald Kendall in uniform*

My brother was in the Corps of Engineers. When he graduated from the University of Washington, he had served four years in ROTC and he had to give back part of that to the government. So he was immediately placed on active duty and sent to Fort McArthur, California, which was a coast artillery Army base. He’d started out in the coast artillery in college because that’s what the University of Washington trained in. He was doing his Army payback. He was a playboy in California because they didn’t have to do anything. That was really the country club of the Army – on the Pacific Ocean and around Del Mar. Then the war broke out and that’s when he became a man.

My brother told us the story as follows: The day Pearl Harbor was attacked, they knew we were at war. Next, the Japanese attacked Adak in the Aleutian Islands and the Army had to get troops to Alaska, fast. They commandeered commercial airlines from all over the country to fly into Army posts to pick up soldiers. My brother was put on an Eastern Airlines plane which was flying from New York to Miami. It was grounded in Columbia, South Carolina and

the passengers were evacuated from the plane. The plane flew to Fort MacArthur in southern California and picked up the coast artillery troops. They gave each soldier a machine gun, flew them up to Nome, Alaska, and told them they might have to fight their way off the plane. All these planes were converging on Alaska from all over the United States with the troops, but the Japanese weren't there. There wasn't a soul there. The Japanese had landed at Adak and then they left. The Americans thought they would go north and land in Nome and work their way down the peninsula, eventually winning Alaska. He was kept in Alaska for two years because it was believed that the Japanese might try to come back. It was so cold – it was in December or January. The soldiers were all in their summer uniforms – then Army supply sent them tropical Quonset huts – to Alaska! The inefficiency of the Army. The troops dug into the snow banks and lived in snow caves – tunneled into the snow banks – they had to dig in somehow and the snow froze as they dug. The Army Quartermaster really goofed! Eventually, they sent the right ones. There was no fresh food; all they had to eat for days were canned pears. My brother got into trouble with his health because of it. Because he'd had nephritis, Bright's kidney disease, when he was a teenager. He managed to survive. He was there for two years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's surprising they could survive that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** This tells you what happens in an emergency situation. This actually happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many soldiers were sent up there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea, but it was probably a battalion; I'm sure, which would be a number of companies. A battalion is usually commanded by a major and I think they had that. My brother was a second lieutenant at the time, but they had a corps of officers. Maybe one-half a battalion, I don't really know. Eventually, there was no more use for the coast artillery, so my brother was given a choice of the Corps of Engineers or the paratroopers or

the military police. Because of his building background, he was assigned to the Corps of Engineers. He was still stationed in Nome, Alaska. He wrote to me that I should do something to help with the war work. He had a social conscience, too. So I marched down to the Corps of Engineers district office in Seattle. The fellow who was in charge was an Army major. He was a graduate of West Point. I saw his ring. I said, "I think I need to work for the Corps of Engineers, and I want to apply." I was hired.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel like you were contributing to the war effort?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. We worked seven days a week, no holidays. We were officed in a textile building in Seattle. The Army Engineers took over the whole building. It was a demarcation point for all of the people developing the Alaskan Highway. I worked in Personnel and we hired workers for the Al-can Highway. It was necessary to get a highway built and a supply line established to Alaska because of the possibility of a Japanese victory in Alaska. I was in the discharge section of the Corps. Surveyors would come in to report to us and they'd tell us of the beautiful country which had never been surveyed before, all the way to Alaska. They had these incredible tales of the beauty of the land and how natural it was and the wildlife they'd seen. It was incredible. That's where I ran across the name of one guy whose name was Harry Bottom. We used to crack up with these names which would come out. Another girl was named Crystal Bell. Those are the two names I remember. There were some hilarious names.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People were coming from all over, I suppose?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had to be engineers and surveyors. The Corps recruited them from all over. I worked in the report section, so we saw the workers when they came back from completing their work. That's where the stories were. The stories about the animals they'd seen – the caribou and the wildlife – in this uncharted territory. The surveyors were going into that

new country and found it absolutely magnificent country.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Have you ever been up there? Did you ever go by way of the highway?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I've been to Fairbanks and Anchorage, but no, I've never driven the highway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if you were inspired to do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted to. My brother was stationed in Anchorage and he drove the Al-can Highway. That was sometime later after the war. They had to buy several sets of tires because the roads were so bad. They finally got stations set up along the way where you could buy tires as you were going up. Now it's quite refined, I guess. I have never driven the highway, but I guess it's beautiful country. Now it's become old hat to a lot of people. It isn't that exciting anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I heard that in the early days it was quite a feat to get up there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It started in Edmonton, as I remember. That's where we picked them up. When we got them, I was in the reports section, discharging the crews where they were coming off of the project because they'd completed their survey and the road was beginning to be built. Then the surveying was all through at that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Alaska story in the war is not that well known, but an important link in the defenses. Did your brother ever see active fighting, or was he more or less just stuck up there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He was stuck up there until MacArthur went into the Philippines. He was transferred from the coast artillery because there was no longer a need for coastal defense, and he went into the Corps of Engineers, because he was in architecture and engineering in school. He ended up in the Philippines in a mop-up campaign. He took his accordion with him to Alaska. When the war was over he was on a ship going to Japan and there was a tropical storm and the ship got soaked, and the

accordion just disintegrated. After all that time! It had been all over the world.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'll bet he was quite entertaining.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very entertaining and was real good. It kept the morale of the troops up, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would be cheerful. Let's get back to your story. What were you doing when it was Pearl Harbor day? A lot of people remember that moment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pearl Harbor: I was going with my husband. We weren't married yet. Gil was still in college. We were down at Gunderson Jewelers. My husband lived in Tacoma and Gunderson's had a small specialty shop in Tacoma, at Ninth and Broadway in the triangle-shaped building. I had come down to stay with my husband's mother and sister and we'd gone down to Gunderson's to pick out my engagement ring. We had just come out of Gunderson's and I'd picked out a raw stone, a star sapphire, and we'd ordered the setting. Gil was getting this for me. I was getting him a black star sapphire. We walked out of the store about eleven a.m. and went across the street from Gunderson's to have coffee. In the coffee shop the radio was on and the announcer started calling and demanding that all military personnel report to duty: "Report immediately to their respective bases of command." This was repeated over and over again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Without saying what had happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't know what had happened. We just heard this over the loudspeaker which came on because of the radio in this restaurant. There were servicemen who got up and left and nobody knew what was happening. They didn't tell you. We got to Gil's home, walked up to the door and his mother and sister came rushing out and said that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor at eight a.m. This was eleven a.m.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, your happy day, your momentous day, ended this way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was destroyed. Had the draft started? I don't remember. I'm not sure about tax tokens and I'm not sure about the draft. It may have started at that time, but I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that it wasn't totally a surprise to some people that there would be a war.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was to me. I was shattered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn't think that the Americans would join the war effort?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't think that we would be bombed. That was a shock. According to the newspaper, negotiations were going on in D.C., but there was nothing, no alert that it could end up in war – although I'm sure the politicians knew it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that with the European war that sooner or later the Americans would be in it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think I ever thought we'd ever end up in the war. It wasn't affecting me that much. My brother was in the service and I was really hoping there wouldn't be a war because he would be in the thick of it. So I

never gave it much thought. "I'm a happy girl."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're getting married...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Getting married. We hadn't set the date, but we were getting engaged and that was the day we were doing our thing. I was also picking out my china and my silver and crystal. I'd already picked out my silver; I knew what I wanted at Frederick's in Seattle. I hadn't picked out the china, but I'd picked out some crystal and some china which was just earthenware made in Britain. Of course, the last boat which was to bring the completion of our set was sunk by a U-boat, so we never were able to complete our set.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** History interferes with your dishes!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Interferes with my dishes. I picked out the Shakespeare pattern which was made by Myott and Son in England. Every dish had a different picture of Shakespeare. I've still got them. We got all they had. We bought them that day. They were just earthenware. We weren't buying bone china; we were just buying good earthenware. We were going to take the dishes with us. The store was going to get more that they had in Seattle. We went ahead and



*Wedding day photograph: (L to R) Gil's sister, Gil, Lorraine, Lorraine's father, Gil's mother, Lorraine's mother.*

ordered some more to complete the set. I remember the store called us later on and told us that the company which made the dishes was bombed and that all of their molds were gone. They were never able to start up again. The ship carrying our dishes was sunk by a U-boat, so we never could complete our set.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess you just weren't meant to have that set.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We weren't supposed to have that set.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty momentous.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That really was. All these things happened. Then the silver I had picked out, became impossible to get because the company went out of business. I have a service for eight, but I can't get any more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose people weren't having that many dinner parties once the war got going.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We forgot about it at that time. I'd bought the knives, which had stainless steel blades, because I was afraid stainless steel – because of the war effort – wouldn't be available. So I bought eight butter spreaders and eight knives because they had the stainless steel blades. I didn't buy anything else. So I had eight knives and eight butter spreaders but no forks or spoons. I finally got them, but then they went out of business. Everybody's going to stainless steel. I wish I had. It doesn't tarnish.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I remember everyone had silver, then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody had to have sterling and they had to have good dishes and good china. I didn't buy bone china because it would be impractical, but I was going to get my sterling and crystal. You always had that. That's what young engaged women considered important at that time. Then later on it didn't matter anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We forgot to say how you met your husband.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Through my brother. I met all the architecture students. There were about ten



*The happy newly weds*

of them and I met them all. I liked Gil better. He was older. His dad had been an architect and when Gil was about ten years old, his dad arranged for him to work with an architecture firm in Tacoma: Heath, Gove & Bell, sharpening pencils and things like that. But he was invited to go along on sketching trips with the architects. Gil's father was friends with Mr. Gove. So, Gil was still in elementary school when he began working. Until his death, Gil's dad paid the firm to let Gil work there. When Gil found this out, shortly after he started, Gil was furious. But he continued the work, nonetheless. Gil worked after school and weekends for Mr. Gove, on and off, until he went to college. So he was a pretty good draftsman when he started at the UW. He'd been working part-time since he was ten years old!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very young. What a great preparation!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very young. His father was Prussian. His family had emigrated from Prussia before the First World War and settled in Stillwater, Minnesota. Gil's father was an architect and he belonged to the Royal Academy of Architects in Canada and he did most of his work in Canada – because he lived in Stillwater, Minnesota, which was on the border of Canada. That's where he met Gil's mother. She had emigrated from Scotland. I have a picture of the manifest of the ship she came over on. Her

name was Christina Drysdale McLeod and she is listed on the manifest. They had about ten kids. They were teachers or carpenters or architects – builders. They all were trained. Gil’s dad was working for a firm in Tacoma and had design responsibility for the Holy Communion Church, which is located in Tacoma. It was designed after a church in Germany. At the time of his death, he was working on a church of a similar design, the Assumption Church in Bellingham. He was commuting to Bellingham. He got pneumonia. He didn’t know he was going to die; Gil was twelve years old. But Gil had already been working part-time for about two years. Working with Mr. Gove.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was just the way the family was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. His sister got to college and she was helping Gil get through and he got through two years. He worked for two years before he started college, and then he had to stop for two years to earn money to go on. He worked at McNeil Island, designing a new cell block for the penitentiary and drawing homes for guards. He worked there for Heath, Gove & Bell. But I’d met him with my brother and then I knew him when he came back. Then he still had three more years of college to go when we were married. That’s why I continued to work and help him get through. Architecture at the U. of W. was a five-year course.

I went to work for the Corps of Engineers in 1942. I. Magnin was where I worked prior to my marriage and before the Corps of Engineers. I was working at I. Magnin when he was working at McNeil. He would come over on weekends and we’d go dancing or go to the movies. Then he came back to school. I was still working at I. Magnin and then the war broke out. Gil went to work for the Corps of Engineers and he had to quit school again. Then he went to school part-time and I started working for the Corps of Engineers. Gil graduated in 1944 with a Bachelor’s degree in architecture. He was awarded the American Institute of Architect’s medal the year he graduated and also was

elected to Tao Sigma Delta, the national architecture honors society.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because he was married, he didn’t have to enlist?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had to sign up for the draft, but then he went to work for the Corps of Engineers and he was stationed at the government locks where they were building ships for Coast Guard duty or to be used for the merchant marine. So he got tabbed as a naval architect because he had three years of school. He had to go back to school while he was still working for the Corps of Engineers to help with ship design.

My uncle had a hundred-foot yacht which he took to Alaska twice a year. The Coast Guard commandeered it when the war broke out and used it as a Coast Guard vessel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he ever get it back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Never got it back. They bought it, finally and paid him what they thought it was worth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, working for the Corps of Engineers was like part of the service?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was considered war effort. He was still going to school nights, because he could do some classes and didn’t have to be on campus. He tried to get into the four-year ROTC program. But he couldn’t.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he want to enlist? There was just an overwhelming social pressure to join.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He wanted to go in as an officer. He would have gone in. He couldn’t get in the ROTC because they didn’t take any more. He couldn’t get in the Navy because he’d ridden horses when he was a youngster and the Navy said his legs were a little bowed. That’s what they used as an excuse so he couldn’t get in as an officer. Toward the very end of the war he was drafted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you worried?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Worried sick. He had gotten his notice to report to duty when the war

had ended. We just beat it by the skin of our teeth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the defining time of your generation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But he would have gone and he was doing work which was very, very important to the war effort. They were still re-commissioning ships. I think the ships they used here were used mostly for Coast Guard or for merchant marine. They were not troop ships or anything like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had to have those, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything they had was being used, if you remember. All of our scrap metal was going into the war effort. We were on food ration stamps. We had to choose between butter, eggs and meat. I remember going to the grocery store with my food stamps and I had just enough stamps to buy some meat and they didn't have much meat. I saw what I thought was a shank of ham and was so delighted I gave them all my food stamps and bought this shank of ham, got home and cooked it and it was a leg of pork. It wasn't ham at all. I didn't know the difference. We didn't have any more meat for the rest of the month, and I didn't cook it long enough. I had to re-cook it because it was pork. I think we went to a restaurant because my husband looked at it and he said, "This is not ham. This is pork and it's not done." That happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh well, you were a newly-wed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Even milk was rationed. Gas was rationed. Gil had an old '31 Chevrolet that barely ran, but we didn't have gas for it. Then he did get a little more ration, so we bought a second hand Chrysler because he had to get to the government locks and there was no bus service to the locks. We lived in the Greenwood area, which was just beyond Ballard and we could get to the locks from there, but he had to have a car. So he got a few ration stamps for gas, but we couldn't use it for anything else. We had to use it just for gas for him to get back and forth to work. I wasn't working by that time. We had a baby, so I had to quit. I had to grocery

shop so I had to have a baby buggy to grocery shop. That's what happened in the war years.

When the war years were over, Gil left the Corps of Engineers and went to work for an architectural firm in Seattle, a young firm, all graduates of the University of Washington. Bliss Moore, a classmate, who started the firm, was never in the service. He worked for the Boeing Company during the war. He also worked for the Corps of Engineers. Jim Klontz, another classmate, was in the Army. Mary Lund was the woman; she didn't have to go to war. Bliss Moore was the principal and the rest were associate architects. They had the contract for the original Bellevue shopping center. And the costs were being underwritten by Miller Freeman and Kemper Freeman, Jr. Gil's firm, Bliss Moore and Associates, did the original shopping center in Bellevue, and from then on he was launched.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was alright?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And the war was over.





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## CHAPTER 2: BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that your husband had had a scholarship to MIT but could not take advantage of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He graduated at the top of his class in school, but it was a very small class in architecture because it was during the war and he was working for the Corps of Engineers, but going to school part-time. He managed to graduate and got an award. He could have gone to MIT or to the Beaux Arts School in Paris, or anyplace he wanted to go, but he couldn't accept it because the war was going on in Europe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Paris was out of the picture.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there was no way to go to MIT because he needed to stay with the Corps of Engineers where he was working in war work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he regret losing that opportunity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he did. Then after that, he took his state boards and passed and there was no point in going back to school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And pretty soon you had a family.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Then I was home. I was working for the Corps and I quit. I didn't go back to work until about 1954, I guess. Gil decided to open his own architecture office and I went back to work to help out. I can't remember the exact dates, but I went to work at the Rhodes Department Store in the personnel department. I worked in coats and suits as an assistant buyer, and then down to cosmetics where I could make more money by representing specific cosmetics lines, such as Elizabeth Arden and Christian Dior. We were all assistant buyers there because we had our own lines. I was paid a monthly wage and paid a commission for cosmetics sales. A buyer quit and I was offered a buyer's job, but I didn't want to work that long at this type of job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you still balancing taking care of your family and working at this time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but I had in-home help with the boys. I think they were in about the third and fifth grades at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that hard to juggle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Not really. Because I could go to work after they went to school and Gil was at the office and was available, and we had someone taking care of them after school, and we were home on weekends.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you think about women's experiences in the fifties there's this idea – but it's an idea only – that everybody stayed home with their children. In fact, a lot of women went back to work. But somehow that was invisible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of them went to work in war industries during the war and then stayed if they had a job that was useable or wasn't expendable with the war effort being over. They stayed, I didn't. I worked until after the war and then stayed home, and then went back to work at the time that Gil wanted to open a practice. Women always put things off until their kids were in school or until their kids were out of school and they could have the time to do the things they wanted to do. They delayed their education if they didn't finish their education. They delayed going back to work if they had a profession until after their children were partially raised. It was always "after." We always were second. We were second in command, always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was what we did. I didn't think it was bad. I was active in PTA and doing the things that I wanted to do on the Citizens' Committee for School Support. I was busy, in addition to keeping up a house and doing the normal things: washing, cooking, ironing. It was no real burden. I accepted it. It was the thing

you did. I have to give Gil credit for always helping around the house. He could iron as well as I could, and often did. He enjoyed cooking, although he over-spiced everything; he figured that if a little spice was good, more would be better. On more than one occasion, however, Gil had the uncanny ability to ask if he could help long after help was needed. We didn't have day care at that time. There wasn't such a thing. You had to have someone to take care of your children. My kids were in school all day. They went to school at 8:30 a.m. and got out about 3:30 p.m. So we just had to have part-time jobs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask about when your kids were little. I understand they went to pre-school and that you were involved with that? Was that a co-op pre-school where the mothers helped run it, or was it a neighborhood school?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I was involved in pre-school. Before we moved from Seattle to Tacoma, I was involved in a pre-school in which the mothers helped out. We lived in Seattle until 1948. We had a co-operative pre-school where the mothers came one day a week. So I did that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did that involve? Organizing the shifts? Fundraising, that sort of thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We hired a teacher. We all paid so much. I think the Seattle schools were part of it because we met in an elementary school which was free, so all we had to do was pay for the teacher. I don't know what we paid the teacher to be there five days a week. There were enough mothers so each of us only had to be there one day a week. That went on until we moved to Tacoma. We moved to Tacoma because Gil's sister, Avalon Lenore Wojahn, who was an art teacher at Lincoln High School, became ill and died at the age of thirty-five. Gil's mom owned a house which she had mortgaged to pay for Avalon's hospital care. We had to move to Tacoma because there was no one to take care of his mother or help her pay the mortgage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was alone?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Alone in their family home. We moved there prior to Avalon dying. She was in the hospital and died of malignant hypertension. The family home was located on McKinley Hill, the east side of Tacoma. My husband's father was an architect in early Tacoma and had designed and built the house. It was a good house but located in a terrible neighborhood.



*In front of McKinley Hill house, designed by her father-in-law*



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the neighborhood change character?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It got even worse. It was bad enough when we lived there. It was in an old established blue-collar neighborhood. We bought it. We moved here and then, eventually, Gil transferred to an architectural firm in Tacoma. Shortly after Gil transferred, the Seattle firm disbanded because Bliss Moore died. Mary Lund, a former member of Bliss

Moore's firm, married George Davis, Jr. and also moved to Tacoma. George Davis also was an architect and classmate of Gil's and Mary's. His family owned the Tacoma Millwork Supply.

Our oldest boy, Toby (Gilbert, Jr.) was not in school yet; he was five. Our younger son, Mark, was about two and one-half. When Avalon died, Gil stayed and practiced with an architectural firm in Tacoma, Lea, Pearson & Richards, until he opened his own practice.

I'll have to tell you one of the funny things that happened when our older boy was about three years old and our youngest one was just a babe-in-arms. We'd gone to Canada for a trip for a few days vacation. Toby, my oldest, never liked milk but I used to make him drink it. Coming back from Canada, he was quietly looking out the back window of the car. When we got to Marysville, Toby looked at me and said, "I'm not going to drink any more milk. All it is, is grass." He'd watched the cows grazing along the highway in the Skagit valley. I should have sent that to Reader's Digest. It was a precious remark which I have never forgotten. He was so bright. I said, "You don't have to drink any more milk if you don't want to. We'll take care of it." We never forced him to drink milk again. I could never drink milk, either. I used to get sick from it so I should have known better. My parents tried me on raw milk, every kind of milk, because I'd 'urp' it back up. So they never forced me to drink milk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You might have been lactose intolerant, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what it was. And it was that way for Toby also. We never forced him to drink milk again. We substituted other things, but if he wanted some he could have it. But I'll never forget that because it made me realize that we live in a democracy but our children don't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he said something so bright that it made you stop and think?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet it did. Anyway, during those years in Tacoma, when Toby was in kindergarten, I was pre-school president. Later on, I worked in PTA and was chairman of

several committees while my children were in elementary school, including Ways and Means, where we helped raise money for special projects for schools. Generally, all the neighborhood kids seemed to end up in our yard because I was home all the time. They were good years. We didn't have much, but no one did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Without knowing it, I suppose you were building quite a network of people who looked to you for some kind of leadership?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably, yes. Always through PTA. I was pre-school president and I didn't want to be president of the elementary school PTA. I organized things and everything seemed to go real smoothly, but I didn't want to be president again. So I often served as program chairman and Ways and Means chairman. I remember one time when I was president we had a gal who was the program chairman. In doing her planning for the year she announced that we were going to have Rabbi Rosenthal here for our Christmas program. Aghast, I said, "Have Rabbi Rosenthal for a Christmas program? Jewish people don't recognize Christmas, you know." She didn't realize that! That actually happened! I'll never forget it. So we changed the program and invited him for November. She had not invited him yet. She was just doing the scheduling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In retrospect, do you think that you learned some parliamentary procedure and how to work with people during these years? How to run meetings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I learned how to work with people, how to get along. I think people did look to me as a leader, but I never really wanted to lead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are different kinds of leadership.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just wanted to do things right. I wanted things done well and I insisted that they be done well. But I never pushed people. Even in the Legislature, I wanted to be there but women were not taught to lead at that time. My family always told my brother and me that we

could do anything we wanted to do, if we wanted it badly enough. I was raised to believe that if something was wrong, it should be righted and if something was broken it should be fixed. You didn't wait for others to do what needed to be done. I also was raised to be self-reliant; my parents often said to my brother and me, "Don't come tattling to us. Handle your own problems." They approached me with that philosophy, but I never really wanted to be the leader. Yet I was a den mother for Cub Scouts. I had the largest den of all the troops. I had about ten kids in my den. The other den mothers had three or four or five. I always had the most.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That says something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We always did fun things. I remember one year I asked the boys to bring a one-pound coffee can to the meeting because we were going to make Mother's Day planters. Each boy painted his can a pastel color. It was a mess. We had paint all over the kitchen. Then we stenciled little flowers on the cans and planted a pansy plant in each container. I remember that project; we had a boisterous good time.

One time, when my kids were very young, they picked our neighbor's flowers without permission. I remember that because the neighbor came over and he was really angry because the kids had picked all his yellow pansies. I made each boy take his allowance money and give it to the neighbor. They didn't get any allowance for several weeks. They learned the hard way. They also learned to handle money. In later years, Mark interrupted his college education to join the Marine Corps. He was stationed on Okinawa and they worked seven days a week and he didn't even buy a Coke. He saved every penny of his money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He must have had quite a nest-egg when he was done.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was so mad he had to pay income tax on his meager earnings. He was only getting \$125 a month and he had to pay income tax on it. It wasn't very much, but he had to pay, and he thought that was grossly unfair. He said, "I lived like a mole and I didn't even buy a

Coke. I sent my money home." The boys were good. They learned to handle their money. Our philosophy was that you tried to live on half your income and save half. We usually couldn't do that, but we always saved a little. We bought our first car on time and we paid almost as much in interest as we paid for the first car, so we swore "never again." We wouldn't buy a car except for cash, and we never did. We saved and bought for cash.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty strict. Can you think of other things like that that you taught your kids that stand out in your mind?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My family was taught this because my mother was ill; we had to have a housekeeper and we never had much money, but we always believed that you had to save something. These are the little things that you learn at your mother's knee or before that. It just becomes entrenched in you. My mother-in-law used to say, "Never pay more than three thousand dollars for a house, because the interest will eat you up."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd have to adjust that number up a little bit now with the price of houses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. But that was the philosophy. That's the way it was in those days. Those are the things I remember. The little idiosyncrasies. The things that became part of my conditioning that I've never forgotten. I still don't like to go into debt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the kind of thing that is just you, your foundation. I've also read that you were involved in the YWCA, which was interesting since you don't have daughters. Was that for yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I just believed in it and they needed someone on the Board. This was after we moved to Tacoma and after I went to work for the State Labor Council. I was an officer with the retail store employees union when I was working. I had joined the Union when I was modeling at I. Magnin, and I took a withdrawal from the Teamsters when I went to work for the Corps of Engineers. I didn't think I



*Receiving an award in 1996, Lorraine Wojahn celebrates her long association with the YWCA*

would ever be involved with a union again, but I took out a withdrawal because it was the appropriate thing to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sorry, what's a withdrawal? Kind of like being "on hold?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** A withdrawal from the union. You can take out a withdrawal, which means you don't pay your dues and if you ever want to go back to work in the same trade you don't have to pay an initiation fee. At that time the Retail Store Employees were a Teamsters Union. So I was a member of the Teamsters Union.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this during the Dave Beck era?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I resented that. I didn't want to join the union because I didn't like Dave Beck.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me more about him. What did you think of him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought he was wrong. This was while I was still in high school and college, that he organized all these... We had a farmer's market in Seattle which is still there, and these guys with a little stack of potatoes who were

just barely eking out a living had to hire a truck driver to drive their produce to the market. They could drive their produce to the city limits, but they had to pay a Dave Beck-union truck driver to take it in to the market. This happened. This was the way it was, and I thought it was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had a pretty tight control over things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was very tight. They'd come in with their buckets full of flowers and had to hire a Teamster to take them in from the city limits. And Dave Beck, Jr. was in my high school class. I believe he was in the same graduating class that I graduated from Roosevelt High School. I thought the whole thing was dreadful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you consider this an abuse of union power rather than a true expression of what unionism is supposed to be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. I hadn't really logically figured it out. I just thought it was wrong that they were forcing these people who had little or nothing to do this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this widely known? Did everyone know this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew it. How I knew it I don't know. Osmosis, I guess. You just knew it, and I thought it was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it taint your idea of what unionism was all about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did. I didn't want to join, but I knew I had to when I went to work, so I did and paid my \$1.50 per month or whatever it was. I was bright enough to take out a demit (withdrawal) when I left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go to meetings? Were you active in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had to once in a while. When I had to. I never thought about the idea of unions for collective bargaining purposes; it was a great idea that people could – that they needed to have a union. But I didn't think that the Retail Clerks or the Teamsters were going to negotiate anything for me because I wasn't getting a very good salary. I was getting \$39.50 a week, I

think, or a month. Every two weeks. It was nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think the Teamsters concentrated more on men's occupations?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the women were just...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were just a part of it. Every union they could nag or get, they did, and they were able to recruit these people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Teamsters had a pretty wide net.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had a very wide net and they were netting a lot of people. I suppose that came about because of warehousing, that they got the retail stores.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whatever connection they had, they went every direction with it, from what I understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They didn't have the food people or anything like that, but any connection they were able to appropriate and bring under their umbrella. Then, when I went to work for Rhodes later, I was called.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go back to that union?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I didn't have to belong in Personnel Department, but after I left Personnel, when I went to 'coats and suits' I had to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because you were on the floor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was on the floor. Even the buyers belonged. Not all of them, but a lot of them did. They called me and said, "You're going to have to join the union." I said, "I already have," because I went right down and took my withdrawal slip which was transferred from the Teamsters into the Retail Store Employees which was an AFL-CIO union, and they accepted that. I didn't have to pay any initiation fee, which would be about seventy-five dollars, which was out-of-pocket money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were back in the union in Rhodes Department Store, and then from there did you go work for the Labor Council?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, in about 1964 I quit working at the Rhodes Department Store and went to work for the Washington State Labor Council. When I went to work with the Labor Council, I had to have help. My husband had his practice, the kids were in school, but I had someone to come in and do the cooking and maintain the house.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because you were working late?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because I was on the road some of the time. Gil could get them off in the morning, but I had someone come in at three p.m. every afternoon to cook their dinner. She kept making pies because she believed that men liked pies, and they got so sick of pies they just didn't want any more pie after that. Most men like pies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not usually considered a hardship.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One time when my younger son was still in high school and I was working for the Labor Council, Tracy Rosellini invited my son, Mark, to have dinner with them when he was over at their house studying one day. Judge Rosellini lived by us and Tracy, his son, was a classmate of my son's. The Rosellinis asked him if he'd like to stay for dinner and he said, "No," and Judge Rosellini said, "We're having steak. Are you sure you don't want to stay?" And Mark said, "We're having casserole. I'm going home." He was so sick of steak and pie, he wanted casserole. They thought that was hilarious. I thought that was kind of neat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's different!

**Sen. Wojahn:** My first year with the Labor Council I was hired on as a field agent. I was responsible for setting up programs for political education, now known as COPE, for all of the labor councils in western Washington. There were twenty-six of them which I covered periodically for their meetings. Otherwise I commuted to Seattle. But I was home every

night when I wasn't on the road. The State Labor Council increased the membership dues of the local unions and used the money to hire two field agents. I had been recording secretary for the union.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For your own union? So, at that point you had become a little more active?

**Sen. Wojahn:** For my own union. I became active at that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What caused you to do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Money. I got paid for being recording secretary. Not very much, but I got paid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a good reason. Did you start feeling a little differently about belonging to the union?

**Sen. Wojahn:** By that time I began to realize that if we had to bargain for our own wages, we would never make out very well. This is just the very beginning of the women's movement and I realized that. About the same time, Governor Rosellini appointed me to the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in 1963. That's when Kennedy was president. I was still with the union. It was just before I went to work for the Labor Council. It was really impressed upon me, even more so at that time, because we reviewed all the contracts for retail store employees of which I'd been a member, but was no longer. We found out that men were paid about five dollars a week more than women doing the same work, same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was part of your awakening, you might call it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I knew that we did get things as a result of the negotiating that went on in Tacoma. The Retail Store Employees was a very strong union and they were able to negotiate much better wages and conditions. They negotiated a three-week vacation after ten years. I hadn't reached that yet. They negotiated raises, like \$2.50 a week, which was substantial at that time. Five dollars a week was substantial. And so it paid. And it paid for the Union dues. They also got very good health insurance. They did all this for us and I recognized that no one

could negotiate their own wages and hours. They would lose their job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You needed that protection. Did you start to study labor history?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then I went back to Tacoma Community College and took courses in labor history and labor economics. I took labor economics there in order to get a better grasp. I had some grasp of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've read some of your speeches where you were talking about Samuel Gompers and I thought you must have been doing some reading somewhere in there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And then I took another course in labor law. I think I got credit but I didn't use it. It was not to build for a degree. I used it for my own purposes and my own knowledge. I realized more fully that it had to be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** During this time period the controversy over "looking for communists" in the union movement occurred, with the purging of left-leaning people after the war. Did you know anything about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that the communism, if it occurred, was aimed at the longshoremen. The longshoremen and waterfront people. That was the Harry Bridges union that was accused of being communist. But the Tacoma longshoremen never joined with Harry Bridges. They had their own union. It was very strong, and they were able to work with the Teamsters and not fight with them over the jurisdictional battles. Tacoma is a very strong union town. Seattle was not. The Teamsters were powerful in Seattle, but they were the only union. They were the only ones who were there when I was there, that I know of.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was quite a fierce struggle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, but it was resolved between the Teamsters and the Tacoma longshoremen (IULW). There was no raiding of AFL-CIO unions in Tacoma. There was no raiding of Teamsters or longshoremen. They got along and they actually honored each other's



pickets. No other area in the state was as strong, to my knowledge. Tacoma was very strong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I knew that Tacoma was quite different from everywhere else in how they handled their labor issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It always was. Yes. They were left alone and they solved their own problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By the time you are involved in this, had the AFL and the CIO joined forces already? Wasn't that 1955 or so?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had merged before, and that's when they threw the Teamsters out. The AFL and CIO merged. There were the industrial unions and there were the craft unions. The industrial unions were organized to take up industry-wide things – overall. The United Mineworkers were a separate union, an industrial union. The AFL was made up of service employees, such as retail employees, operating engineers, plumbers, carpenters, etc. All of those were under the AFL. The industrial unions were the autoworkers and the mineworkers, etc. The Teamsters were separate, but they were thrown out, because of communism apparently. I think that was the reason that caused them to be thrown out. I don't know for sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought it was something about corruption. Dave Beck was indicted in '57 or so, and then things started to shift around again. He had gotten pretty high up in their structure, nationally.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The thing I was impressed with – I was still working at Rhodes and my husband was president of the American Institute of Architects – and we went back to D.C. for the national convention. One of the people who impressed me most was a speaker there, who was the head of the United Autoworkers. He was incredible. He was speaking to the architects.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Walter Reuther?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. His brother took over the union eventually. The other one who impressed me was the person who was the president of a large book publishing company which had

published all of the books written by Dr. Seuss. He talked about the Cat in the Hat. It had just come out. They had his book there. And this speaker from Random House talked about the Cat in the Hat and he said, "Go out and buy the book. If you haven't bought a book for a long time, go and buy it. It's worth reading." He was so wonderful. And the head of the United Autoworkers, he gave a marvelous speech.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did he say that impressed you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can't remember anything he said now!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was more his way of speaking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** His philosophy and the reason for the need for unions. I went back and took another look at all this, at the steelworkers, who were all industrial unions. I remember Kennedy told them they'd better settle with the union; otherwise he was going to impose sanctions on them. I remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By the end of the Eisenhower era and the beginning of the Kennedy era, was there a new feeling about all this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A whole new feeling. The whole feeling was beginning to change at that time. Eisenhower was still president, but it was just before Kennedy was elected. I remember that the architect for the Kennedy memorial and the Kennedy library was the fellow who sat at our table. We were assigned to a table and there were only six of us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're a Democrat. It was the end of the Eisenhower era and here was this new, young, exciting president. What was that like for you? Was it inspiring?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. During the Cuban missile crisis, I heard him addressing Congress that we were going to stand firm. That's when they'd already shipped parts of the missiles into Cuba and they were there. They were bringing the rest of them in, and the U.S. put up the embargo. And he said, "We will embargo them. We're prepared." They turned and went back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was incredible. I couldn't believe it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you a little bit scared?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I was too stupid to be scared. I didn't even think about not blowing up the world. I just knew that there was a crisis and they were bringing in the long distance missiles, because there were missiles in Turkey which were aimed at the Soviets. I knew that, but I didn't think turn-about was fair play either to stop it. I remember being elated when they signed the missile pact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The above-ground testing? I read that a lot of the women across the country were protesting the above-ground testing because the strontium was getting into the milk and they realized it was a health hazard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember that, vaguely. I didn't like milk so I don't think it impressed me very much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't resonate with you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Didn't resonate. The other thing they talked about that reminded me of that was when Johnson was running for president, the AFL-CIO sent me this huge packet of material to hand out because I was working at the State Labor Council by then. You remember those big billboards with Barry Goldwater and the atom bomb, the flowers, and the billboard had a picture of him putting his finger on the button? Goldwater's campaign slogan was "In your heart you know he's right." Johnson had this big billboard saying, "In your heart you know he might." I remember that. They sent me this whole carload full of things to hand out that said that, the same as the billboard, "In your heart you know he might." Blow up the world!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand he did talk as though that was in the realm of possibility. That he would consider doing that. He'd rather be "right and dead, than right and red," whatever they called it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember that. I'll never forget that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it feel that stark to you? Did you feel that he was inclined that way? Was he a frightening figure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think that he could win?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. We were working so hard for Johnson I just figured that he couldn't possibly lose. That was '64. I started to work for the Labor Council in January of '64. That fall I did a voter registration drive in Tacoma and Pierce County. That was just a year after I'd been in D.C. and met with Congressman Thor Tollefson, a Republican, from the Sixth Congressional District. Floyd Hicks was running against him in 1965, and we beat Tollefson. Governor Rosellini had appointed Floyd Hicks to the Superior Court bench in Pierce County. Floyd Hicks didn't like being a judge and wanted to get out of it. The Governor suggested Floyd Hicks run for Congress against Thor Tollefson. I believe the voter registration drive beat him, because Floyd Hicks wasn't well known at all. The other ones, we'd worked on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I knew Floyd Hicks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you go about organizing the drive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They told me it was up to me to do it my way. I organized the drive by using trailers, household trailers – we got seven of them donated – and we got people to man the trailers. We had a meeting of the Democrats and the Republicans because the AFL-CIO was supposed to be non-partisan. It was pretty Democratic, but it was supposed to be non-partisan. Anyway, we had a meeting with the Republicans and Democrats in Pierce County – Pierce County only. We had the county chairs at the meeting and we gave them each two weeks – it was going to last for a month – in which they could have the "registrailers." We called these trailers "registrailers." Anywhere they wanted to locate them, they just had to tell us where they wanted them located and we would locate them for them. The Parties gave me the

locations where they wanted them and then we worked out the configuration. We recruited the Teamsters to move the “regitrailers.” We had them moving around the county every other day. Finally we left them about four days in a row because it got to be too much. The Labor Council in Tacoma went public to get volunteer registrars to work in them and we used the League of Women Voters for many of the volunteer registrars. We used anyone as a volunteer who was sworn in by the county clerk as a registrar of voters. We trained about one hundred-fifty volunteers, all of whom swore to uphold the laws of the county and the state of Washington. I remember the county clerk came down and trained them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you do all this arranging and organizing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you know how to do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn’t know. I just sat down with a pencil and paper and did it. It was the most incredible thing I’ve ever done in my life, and I got really good publicity from the Tacoma newspaper. We had everything so well organized that we had the trailers moved by the Teamsters every day, and they were just really great. We had the voter registration things – we supplied the trailers with blank registration forms and then relied upon the city police and county sheriff’s office to pick up the completed forms and take them back to the county clerk and to bring back new blank registration forms to the “regitrailers.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It had to be a police person who did that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The policemen did it, because I asked them to do it. It was important that “responsible” people handle the completed voter registration forms and take them to the county clerk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to keep everything secure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. The policemen on motorcycles and the sheriffs in cars. They did

that for us. It was a tremendous undertaking, believe me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a lot of phone calls, I’ll bet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then we had to find a way for volunteers to get into the locked trailers every day. So we bought these little key holders and put them under the trailer. Everybody had to know where they were, and they’d get the key out every morning and open the trailer, go in and get their things out and then make sure that the keys were replaced in the key holders at night. The Tribune published where the trailers were going to be every day. We got the Tribune the schedule for where the “regitrailers” would be located every day for the next week, a week ahead of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have assistants?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had one lady helping me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is big! Were you doing anything else while you were doing this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I was doing just that. The funny thing was that it all worked. It was incredible. Also, they put a picture of a daisy in the paper and they would put down “eighteen more days to register,” then fourteen, thirteen. Every day they’d pull a petal off the daisy on the front page of the newspaper so people would know they could only register for that many more days before it was over. Every Sunday they’d publish a list of where the trailers were going to be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you once told me that where the Republicans put the trailers wasn’t very effective.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They weren’t. They sent them up to Orting. They had them right across from the City Hall where people could register anyway. They sent them to the Fircrest Golf Course and they couldn’t get in, so they gave them back to us. So we sent it down to Hooker Chemical. We sent it to Educator Furniture. We sent it to St. Regis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You sent it where the people were?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where the people were. And to all of the areas where people were working on the tide flats. So we concentrated on the tide flats. We had them downtown one day, and then we had all of them down at the mall the day the Tacoma Mall opened. The trailers were placed at the Tacoma Mall on opening day, all seven of them. We had them all out there and some of them got stuck in the mud. They hadn't gotten the sidewalks in yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A new mall opening would be a big people draw.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was good publicity. We registered, I think it was, about 35,000 new people. It was recognized at the national Democratic convention that Pierce County and the City of Tacoma had done this, registered all these new people. Floyd Hicks won by one-hundred and six votes, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty close. But then he stayed in office quite a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He won Kitsap by a very small amount, about sixty votes. He did win over there, and of course won in Tacoma. On election night, I was in Seattle with the Brock Adams campaign because I'd worked his campaign, also. I got my first kiss from Brock Adams! He was at the Waldorf Hotel downtown and he had just won, and he knew he'd won – and I called Tacoma because I couldn't get back there. I talked to Floyd and he said – and this was repeated in the National Observer – he said, "The only person who was more surprised than me was Thor Tollefson."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hadn't Thor Tollefson been in office for quite a while?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He'd been there for ages. His family was very well-known. He'd been in office for twenty-five years at least.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was time for a change?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a big deal. But there was a landslide for Lyndon Johnson also, so we have to give credit to the Democratic Party and to Johnson for part of that, but Floyd Hicks – an unknown Democratic candidate – would never have won without that voter registration drive. I

know he would not have. And we had Republicans and Democrats working the trailers because the League of Women Voters was doing it. We had some AFL-CIO wives working in the trailers. We had lots of volunteers. A lot of the volunteers who had trained as registrars were the ones who worked on the trailers. So, in advance of getting the trailers set up, we had the volunteers ready.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You said once that you had been a League of Women Voters member. When did you join them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I joined them when my kids were in high school, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of your political education?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But we were non-partisan, and we never took positions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you studied a lot of the issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did study. We studied dependent children. We did the redistricting one year, or helped with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the drive for Initiative 199 in 1956? Were you involved in that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. There was an initiative which established a pattern for state and federal redistricting every ten years after the census was taken. I was involved in the initiative on redistricting, just peripherally. The League of Women Voters also did the initiative campaign on state civil service. I wasn't involved with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The story is the League of Women Voters pushed an initiative for redistricting and won. Then it went to the Legislature and Senator Greive, Senate Majority Leader at the time, worked to overturn it. They had a certain amount of time to do so. I gathered that the women were surprised that could happen, that was not what they were expecting at all. How did you feel when the initiative on redistricting was overturned by the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was bad. We had it done by a commission after that rather than by the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislature still had to go through some contentious years over redistricting in the early sixties and seventies before resorting to a commission. When you helped with that early initiative, did you go door-to-door or set up in malls to get signatures? How did you do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was only peripherally involved in the actual signature gathering for any of these initiatives. I had to know about them as part of my work with the Washington State Labor Council. The Council did the initiative on the interest rates, you know. I remember that one much more than the League of Women Voters. I remember working, as a League of Women Voters volunteer, with the redistricting planning commission, but I don't remember being very active in getting the actual signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not the ground work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. I don't remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like you're getting more and more politically active in these years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When I worked for the Labor Council I became very political. That's where I found out that the best place to get signatures was the city dump because everybody's there on weekends. You have to wait in line because you have to weigh in. So it was good. I remember even last year they were asking where to get signatures for something, and I told our caucus to go to the city dump on weekends. Can't beat it. Just stand there!

So many things have happened. One of the best things was this best friend of mine who was with the League of Women Voters and wanted to help with the voter registration drive. One night it was about one a.m. and it was just about a week before we were ready to get everything located and started and we hadn't eaten dinner. We went to an all-night diner down on Puyallup Avenue. We were sitting there eating dinner – a lot of industrial people ate there, and there were

quite a few people there. I said to my friend working with me, "If we get these registrailers placed right, and get the right kind of women on them, we should clean up." Everybody turned around and looked at us like we were a couple of whores, you know!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were putting a little different interpretation on your words!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was so funny and we started to laugh. And we were just doing a voter registration drive. Everybody cracked up. It was really funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess you were so into it, you weren't thinking about any other construction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We weren't even thinking about it. But we knew the registrars had to be efficient, and making the key available and laying the completed registrations for the sheriff's people to pick up. The officers just put them in their saddlebags. And they'd bring out new ones. So, every morning they had new registration blanks in a whole series. We didn't have telephones. I think the only thing we worried about was if we needed to get more supplies. We had to call the county auditor and the city clerk, because there were two different people handling them. Generally, we had the registrars located in places where there was a telephone available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you make a special push to register minorities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had minorities involved as registrars and registrailer workers. They were a part of it because they were the ones who encouraged us. The Hilltop people were encouraging us to do that, because at the same time, we were trying to pass a bond issue – we got some of our volunteers from the community college people – to pass a community college initiative in Tacoma. They had put two bond issues on the ballot in the winter and spring and had lost them both, to build the Tacoma Community College. They went back on a millage, where you had to pay for it in one year, and we did this before the primary election and

it went on the ballot. We did the voter registration drive in August, late July and early August, and then millage went on the ballot and it passed after losing two bond issues, so that we had to pay for the Tacoma Community College in one year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think your extra registered voters were able to make the difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I do. Because they offered to help. They thought we were going to do the registration drive and some of the people promoting the community college came and helped us and worked as registrars. So that helped. I'd forgotten about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You helped each other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was very productive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You hit a lot of issues with your one drive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We hit a lot of things at one time, and I think that that was the reason that we decided to do it because we wanted to help the schools with the community college. I had to ask permission of my employers, the Labor Council, to do a voter registration drive because I knew it was going to take up about two months of my time and I couldn't be doing other things. They agreed that it was worth doing. It was all well planned, and it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We started to talk a little bit about partnering with the Hilltop people. Can you tell me about that community? There was a fairly sizeable minority community up there by then, wasn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. All the time in Tacoma there have been a group of people who have attempted to bring the blacks into the mainstream.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don't you have the second largest population in the state, second only to Seattle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know about that. We have a large minority and ethnic community. We have a lot of Mexican-Americans, we have a lot of Indians, and we have a lot of Orientals.

So I think we do have. To bring them all together. I know that people in Fircrest with whom we worked – I remember this now – offered to help find a house for a black family to buy which would be reasonable because they believed there should be black families living there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The open housing issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Open housing. Also, there was another initiative at the same time against capital punishment, both of which I approved. They were on the ballot at the same time. They weren't initiatives; they were referendums to the Legislature to do this. I remember I was the chairman of the Social Concerns committee for Trinity Methodist Church on McKinley Hill. Both times I took the issues to the Board of the Church. The regional Methodist convocation had met at UPS at that time and endorsed the two issues. But, my church, the Trinity Methodist Board, did not endorse the referenda and would not permit me to put the referenda on the bulletin board of the church to obtain signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why? Too political?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because the church didn't believe in it, so the Board members were against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Open housing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And capital punishment. I left the Methodist church. After studying different Protestant denominations for one year, and the Roman Catholic religion, I chose to become an Episcopalian. I just left the church. I couldn't believe that they would do this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought the Methodists were more progressive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are for that. The regional convocation for the American Methodist Church met here at the University of Puget Sound. It was a regional convocation to establish their policies for the year, and they'd endorsed both issues. Here was Trinity Methodist Church on McKinley Hill that would not permit me to put the referenda on the bulletin board to collect signatures. That's a fact. And I bolted. I left the

church. I told them, “I no longer wish to be with you.” And I went all around studying all religions before I became an Episcopalian.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you do this by yourself? What happened to your family? Did they follow you where you went to church?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I went around looking. I just left the church. My husband never went to church although he was baptized in the Episcopal Church. I taught Sunday school, but the kids were in high school at that time and there was no tie-in. They still belonged, but I just wouldn’t go back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were the real church-goer in the family?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. My mother, my whole family. My brother and I were brought up in the University Methodist Temple in Seattle. My children were baptized there. And my family went because I did. But they were in high school and they weren’t much interested in going to church anyway. Now my son, Mark, is a good church member.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you go about studying the different churches?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just went to all the different churches.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For their social policy as much as their theology?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just wanted to see what their policies were, to feel for myself. I went to visit several Roman Catholic churches. I went with a friend of mine, Beverley Brown, who was an Episcopalian, to Centralia because she thought I should meet the priest there. He was a graduate of Wharton School of Finance, and then he became an Episcopal priest, and she thought that I should talk with him before I decided to commit. The Episcopal church priest said, “We don’t think you should change churches; we’re not soliciting you.” I couldn’t become a Catholic because I couldn’t accept their social policies. They were just too rigid. I went to the evangelical churches as well, but they were too narrow. I didn’t think I’d like that. Then they had me go to Dr. Seamans, another Episcopal

priest, in Federal Way, because of his philosophy. I joined the Episcopal Church and was finally confirmed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was quite a period of turmoil for you in some ways?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never accepted anything on face value, I guess. If something happened that was distorted, I just didn’t put up with it. I left. This is me. I’m still doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m still curious about the Hilltop people. Did you meet a lot of people from there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I only met them through the labor movement. I found out about them wanting to do the voter registration drive in order to get enough people to the polls. They thought they could help with that. The secretary/treasurer of the Pierce County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, L.H. Pedersen, is the one who introduced me to them, and I had conversations with them. But I did know about the movement by the people in Fircrest who felt there should be open housing. This is just through my normal discourse. I was going to the University of Puget Sound on a United Nations thing I was interested in at that time. It wasn’t a course; it was just a group of people interested in the United Nations who met at UPS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like a discussion group?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. A discussion group. A UPS Professor, Dr. Warren Tomlinson, led it. It was the American Association for the United Nations. I got interested in that. I think it’s through them that I found out about the open housing and understood what the Fircrest people were talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These were the years of the civil rights movement. Did you follow that on TV like so many people did? Were there things happening in Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think there was anything particularly happening in Tacoma. I followed the Mississippi march, and I knew that my brother-in-law, Glenn Wojahn, my husband’s brother, was working with the communications staff for the march. He was with the Treasury

Department. He was in the Secret Service. They set up the communications for the Mississippi march to be sure it was handled fairly and squarely and that no one was injured or killed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this to keep track of the protestors? Which side was he supposedly on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** His job was to keep communications with the Presidential administration. Bobby Kennedy was a part of that. It was just to communicate so that there would be constant communication with D.C. That's when they permitted eavesdropping.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering whether it was friendly surveillance or the other kind.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was non-political, supposedly. In other words, if they needed to get someone in there to help them, like the Army, they needed the communications set up. It was done for that purpose, I'm sure. To set up so the National Guard could be alerted and the National Guard could alert the Feds. That's when they were allowed to do that, but they are not allowed to do that anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he tell you about his experiences? What it was like down there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not much. He lived in the South and we lived in the West. We didn't communicate that often.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had you ever been in the South yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I've been through the South. We took the kids on a trip through the United States when they were about fourteen or sixteen years old, around 1959 or 1960. It was the same year that Marilyn Monroe died. We went all the way from Tacoma to Daytona Beach, Florida. Then we came back along the coast through the south so the kids could see it. They saw the "darkies" working the cotton fields. As we were driving through Mississippi, our sixteen year old son, Toby, all of a sudden said, "Look! Look!" and we had already gone by the scene he had observed. He said, "There was a house there and there were people sitting out on the porch and the house didn't have any windows in it." They were just very poor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So just to see the poverty? To see that side of life?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Poverty. The kids really saw it. Toby was really stricken by what he saw.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What impression did it make on you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very impressed. Impressed the kids. Our oldest son was the one who noticed that. It got by me, and we went by too fast. I had to look back to see it. I couldn't see it very well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a bit of an eye-opener?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That this is part of your own country?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That this is the way it is down here. We got off in a black area in Montgomery, Alabama, and we were lost. We were kind of afraid because we didn't know what to do. We went into a hotel which was in the black sector and the manager just told us where to get back on the road and just to get out of there as fast as we could. We hadn't had dinner. We wanted to eat. But we had to get out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you just weren't in the right place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I remember that's when the kids wouldn't eat salad. The only vegetable they'd eat was green beans. But by the time we got back from that trip, they were eating salads. It was too hot on the trip to eat anything else. We had a great, big old Buick Riviera and we had all the windows down. No air conditioning. People didn't really need air conditioning up here, or didn't think they did, and I remember we had to stop every fifteen minutes going through the state of Texas to get a drink of water. And we stopped in Abilene to have lunch and it was hot – that's in the Panhandle – at noon. We'd left Dallas about nine o'clock that morning, and after we were finished with lunch and my husband was paying the bill, I said to the proprietor, "We've hardly passed any cars at all since we left Dallas this morning," and he said to me, "Ma'am, nobody drives the state of Texas during the daytime."



**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were supposed to do that at night?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right! "Nobody drives through Texas in the daytime." Right! The kids remembered that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you stop and wait, or just push on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We kept on going. We mushed on! We got into El Paso that night about nine p.m. My brother was living in El Paso.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have been a little frazzled by then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seeing the country and seeing those places before all the changes would be pretty impressive all right.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We saw everything. We stopped in St. Louis and saw a baseball game. We went through East St. Louis, which was a shantytown. Went over a bridge there and you looked down and it was just desperate. It was awful. The kids saw a lot. It was the best thing that could have happened to them. They developed a sensitivity that you'd never be able to tell them about, that you wouldn't see up here, not to the degree that it was there.

We stopped in Atlanta because my husband's brother, Glenn, was living there at the time; they had just stopped the bugging and he'd gone into other office work for the Secret Service, and that's where he told us about having worked the Mississippi area and working on the march. They were living in Decatur, Georgia, which is just outside of Atlanta, where General Sherman met for the assault on Atlanta, during the Civil War. Decatur, Georgia was where the three rivers met.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you watch some of the civil rights marches and events on TV? It was very powerful just to think about what was really going on down there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember watching it on TV and being angry that it was going on. And applauding the people who left their work and went down to help – men and women. And

attorneys – people were there helping. My feeling was: how dare they do this! How dare they do this! And then Medgar Evers was murdered. I was insulted and angry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As an American?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That this is not my America! We'd been through there and we knew how desperate they were. They were burning their churches.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Blowing them up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The Washington State Labor Council was launching the initiative drive on the finance charges. We used the initiative to remove the eighteen percent interest on retail installment credit. We said twelve percent is enough. The day we were launching the initiative – we had a press conference on the day that Martin Luther King was killed, so no one came to our press conference. It all happened the same day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of his death?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was something you thought couldn't happen here after seeing John F. Kennedy assassinated. And then Bobby Kennedy being assassinated. I guess it was just a great sadness that we lived in a country in which this could happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it make you feel more determined or frightened to do things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, more than ever it just reinforced my desire to continue to do what I was doing. It was just reinforcement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were raising your kids to be involved, and to be sensitive to these issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** To be sensitive to issues and to be aware and to be available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To make the world a better place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And the kids were sensitive.



Giblert "Toby" Wojahn, Jr.



Mark Wojahn

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, when President Kennedy called people to serve their country in his eloquent way... that spoke to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. His words have become classic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Earlier you told me that you always knew you were a Democrat, right from the thirties.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew when I was going to college that I was no Republican. When I was taking sociology, I just knew I wasn't. And my parents were ambivalent. They always voted, but they never discussed it. My Grandpa was vocal because he was living alone when he wasn't living with us, and he used to talk about Governor Hartley, but I didn't pay any attention to him. I was too little. Then he got mad at Governor Martin and wouldn't buy anything with tax tokens and wouldn't eat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would you say would be the first political figure you noticed? Do you remember? Would it have been Roosevelt?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. It was Herbert Hoover because of the Depression.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask you what you thought of Eleanor Roosevelt.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I loved her. I thought she was a great lady.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever see her? I know she traveled around a lot.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I met her, but I can't remember where it was. I met President Johnson. I met President Nixon. I liked them. I liked President Nixon. I think he was a far cry better man than Reagan. I thought Reagan was an ass. Nixon was a Quaker and I think he always thought he was doing right, but sometimes he was so wrong. I always kind of felt sorry for him. I don't know why. I just did. I never hated him. I hated Reagan because of his involvement with the Iran-Contra episode and I hate this idiot who's there now. I just don't like them. But I never hated Nixon. How soon we forget!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You told me that one of the things which formed your views was the Westbrook Pegler columns. There was something about what he said that drove you the other way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pegler was a national columnist whose columns appeared in the Seattle newspapers. He just rubbed me the wrong way every time he wrote. I used to pick up the P-I when I was growing up and just get furious at what he was saying. He was a cynic. He talked about the inauguration of President Eisenhower and how the press had demeaned Eisenhower when he was running for office. Then when Eisenhower was elected, the public fawned all over him. I just thought Pegler was the most cynical person I'd ever read. I don't remember anything he ever wrote that impressed me except that when he did write about how fickle American people were. He was insulting about it. I thought he was most insulting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he belittle the political process? Is that the kind of thing that would rub you the wrong way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was a columnist. The P-I always carried him. I was going to major in journalism and I remember Pegler with his editorial statements and how rotten I thought he was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd be really a student of this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Looking for it. So I read it. This Mona Charen now, I think, is just awful in

the Tribune. I can't stand to read her. She used to work for Reagan, I think, in the White House. Oh, she's awful. She writes a lot like Pegler. She's not as vitriolic as he was. He was brilliant.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had a sharp pen, by all accounts. I've only read about him; I've never read his work. He is said to enjoy tearing people down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very sharp pen. Yes. He seemed to enjoy it. He got his kicks out of that, I'm sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another thing that was certainly tearing people down in those days was the McCarthy hearings. Did you know anybody who was active on the left?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a dreadful time, too. Frances Farmer was being abused at that time. She was born and raised in Washington – Seattle. Graduated in journalism from the University of Washington and was a good writer and also a movie star. In our Western State Hospital all the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know Washington had its own Canwell Commission. Did you watch that in the papers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Somewhat. It was dreadful. They took on that fellow whose son was murdered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** John Goldmark.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They took him on, called him a communist. His son became an attorney and then the son was murdered because the murderer thought he was Jewish. He was not Jewish! That family suffered. They were a neat family. I remember the trial in eastern Washington. The county didn't have the money to hire the court reporters. They didn't have any money over there, and they had to do it. Canwell was just rotten. Of course, he didn't make his case, but he destroyed a family.

When I was in the Legislature, I was back in D.C. and I was at a Washington State celebration, a party they had for Washington people who were members of Congress. It was in the Longworth Building where the party was being held, and I went to get a cab and I

couldn't get one. I went back in the room and there was a Boeing lobbyist there and I asked him if he would mind dropping me off by the hotel where I could get a cab. And he refused! He had other things to do. It was just awful. I was standing there wondering what I was going to do and this aide to Senator Brock Adams came by and I said, "I don't know what to do. I was going to walk to get a cab, but when I got to the door of the building the guard said, 'Don't go out there, it's too dangerous. It's dangerous in D.C.'" And I said, "Can you get me a cab?" And the aide said, "Cabs won't come up here at this time of night." It was early evening, about seven p.m.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what were you supposed to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I said to this gal, "I have to get to my hotel – I've been told not to try to walk, and I have to get to the Shoreham Hotel, but if I could just get to the closest hotel like the Mayflower, I'll take a cab to the Shoreham or somewhere I can get a cab." She said, "I'll take you. Come with me." The aide was leaving the party to have dinner with Mrs. Goldmark and invited me to go along. And then she took me home. It was really a lovely evening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That turned out better than you expected!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was better, yes. So I met Mrs. Goldmark at that time. Then, around 1977, when her son was lobbying for the historic tax credits in the Legislature, I told him I had met his mother, Sally. This was after Mr. Goldmark was dead. Sally Goldmark was living in D.C. I remember we had moussaka. I remember what we had to eat!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That made a big impression. Another story that I wanted to ask you about is when you worked with your mother-in-law as a precinct person. Tell me about that one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Christina Wojahn, Gil's mother, was a precinct committee person for the Republican Party, and she had a job working at the polls on McKinley Hill. She was often a judge or inspector at the polls, depending upon

whether the county went Republican or Democrat. The party in power in the county got two poll worker slots at every polling place and the minority party got one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me what those people did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Republicans were in the majority, so she was the inspector for the Republican Party at her polling place and she asked me to work in her place because she was having trouble with her eye and couldn't see very well. She said, "I want you to keep my place for me, and if you'll do it for me, your name is the same so you can just do it, and I'll tell them." I did it for her that one time, and I think that was for the Eisenhower election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when people came to vote, you'd be one of the people sitting at the table?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Right. Checking names against the poll book. That's all. She couldn't work this time so she asked me. She was an inspector and so she had to open the machine after the polls closed and inspect it with two Republicans and one Democrat. She had to tally the votes from the machine on a piece of paper and take the report down to the court house. She wanted me to keep her seat there, and so she asked me to do it for her as a Republican, so I did. Another election was coming up a few years later, I said, "I can't do it anymore, because I'm not a Republican." I had to go to a Republican meeting on her behalf, and it was too embarrassing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you like a fish out of water?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. There weren't more than about six people there at the Republican Party meeting. They were all from McKinley Hill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you kind of keep your mouth shut?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I had nothing to say to them. I don't even know what they talked about. I worked that election for her, and then when it came time for the next one I said, "You'll have to get somebody else, because I can't."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you told me that your husband was a Republican, but not a very strong one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He just inherited his politics. I don't think he ever took much of an interest in politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it sounds like you were getting more and more involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was involved only to the degree that I voted every time before I went to work for the Labor Council. A friend of ours was running for mayor. The mayor's job is non-partisan, but he was a known Republican. His name was "Big John" Anderson, and he came to the house to ask Gil to endorse his campaign. This is embarrassing, but it's true: I had worked for two or three days and hired the neighbor's kids to help me clean out this garage. We had two garages and one of them was just full of junk. I needed to get at my canning jars because I was going to be canning peaches, I guess. I had cleaned out this garage and we had even sorted nails and put different sizes in different jars. We did the whole thing and it was perfect. I threw all the things out by the garbage can that I wanted to throw out that were just pieces of junk. There was an old mattress, old furniture, a lot of paper, just junk. It was all stacked up for the garbage man. Gil came home from work – this was before I was working, and he was commuting to Seattle at that time. I think he was still working for the architects in Seattle, and he saw all this garbage out in back, and he said, "Why are you throwing all this stuff away?" He saved everything. "What are these things stacked out here for?" I said, "I'm getting rid of it. The garbage man comes tomorrow." We hadn't had dinner, there was a knock at the front door and the fellow who was running for mayor and his campaign manager were at the front door and he wanted to come in and talk to my husband about endorsing him for mayor. I invited him in and I said, "I'll have to go get my husband, he's out going through the garbage can." He was so mad at me!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You shouldn't have said that!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I couldn't help it. I was so mad at him! My husband came in and explained what he was doing. So what I did, I threw all the jars out there and gave them away. I never canned another thing. That was it. No more. He had thrown everything back in all over my canning jars. So the next day I called Goodwill and had them come up and take all the canning jars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had your breaking point there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I'll never forget that. He didn't care. He kept his junk, and I got rid of my jars, and I didn't have to work anymore. I bought fresh fruit or canned. That's when we lost our good Alberta freestone peaches. We always canned Alberta freestones, and you can't buy Alberta freestones on the open market. They're the heavy syrup stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it cause any kind of problem for you to have different political views?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He used to kid me and say we'd just cancel each other's votes. We were not that imbued with our political agenda that it bothered us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes when you're raising your kids—

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think one of my sons was a Republican and one of them is a Democrat. The Republican had seen misery, but he was working at St. Regis as a computer programmer. My dad actually represented management. But my parents were ambiguous as far as politics were concerned. They never figured they were affected by politics that much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mentioned that you were aware that the women's movement was starting up at this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was always aware of the women's movement from the time it started. The first thing I recall with that was when I was a member of the Board of Directors of the YWCA. But I became more aware when the Commission on the Status of Women was formed. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As a result of Congress' action, there was

a push to develop human rights commissions. I was aware that we needed a human rights commission, and I worked to try to get a commission to be formed in the city. Now, we have a human rights commission in the city of Tacoma. I think the city had a human rights commission before the state formed one. The Commission on the Status of Women probably was an offshoot of the Human Rights Commission, dealing with women's issues. President Kennedy had a commission and when Governor Rosellini started a commission in Washington State, I was appointed and then Governor Evans reappointed me to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you come to the Governor's attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was working for the Washington State Labor Council at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had kind of a state presence then; you had already made a name for yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did have a state presence when I went to work for the Washington State Labor Council because they were very much a part of the lobbying efforts in Olympia at that time. Christina Alden, the Labor Council field agent for eastern Washington, and I both were appointed to the Commission on the Status of Women, first by Governor Rosellini and then by Governor Evans. As members of the Commission on the Status of Women, we were reviewing retail union contracts and I realized that the contracts were different. We went through and found that at Rhodes Department Store in the men's department, the salesmen made more money than the women made, no matter what their job was. The men were being paid substantially more per hour. In general, any man working in retail sales was making more money than the women. That finally got straightened out after several years of buffeting back and forth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you read Betty Friedan when her book came out, *The Feminine Mystique*?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember reading Betty Friedan, particularly. I knew of the book and I

knew of Gloria Steinem. Of course, that was a little later, too. I also met Bella Abzug in D.C. I was on the elevator with her going into the Longworth Building. I talked with her. I told her how great she was and she said it was just a lot of blarney. Really down-to-earth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she have on one of those hats?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Had a hat on, yes. Never saw her without a hat. I never took it too much to heart except that the one thing I did know which really angered me – I was working for the Washington State Labor Council. I was a field agent and then I was expected to lobby during session. The way I got the job was that the Labor Council assessed an additional amount from the local unions to pay for three additional positions. They got the per capita so there were two field agent positions opened up, and also a PR person. All three of us were going to be doing PR; the field agents did PR for their territories and the PR person covered the whole state. And so I got hired on as a field agent for western Washington. Christina Alden got it for eastern Washington, and then Ken Fleming was appointed as the overall PR. We worked with him always on our jobs. I was expected to cover the labor councils in western Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The whole west side?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The whole west side of the mountains. And Christine had the east side. She only had about seven councils, but she had a lot of driving to do. I had twenty-four or twenty-six. They were all over here. We were paid the same, but Ken was getting a little more than us because he had to do the PR for the whole state. We did our sections and he did the overall. Two years later the Labor Council voted for another per capita increase in order to hire three more people. One person was hired to study and propose a tax structure for the state of Washington. One was hired to do education – that was Lou Stewart. Harold Tipton was assigned the tax structure, and Sam Kinville was to do health, overall. But they only had one area of research to do. I was lobbying consumer protection, and before they were hired, I also had education and elections. Chris had an equal

number of assignments, as I remember. My first assignment was consumer. I guess Chris and I shared education and election laws. The president took care of the labor laws. We had nothing to do with those, such as employment security and industrial insurance. The president was also working on the tax structure. Anyway, we had the new hires, one to do education, which Chris and I had been sharing. Chris retained election laws.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they're peeling off part of your job?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They're peeling off parts of what we doing. And they were each given a secretary. They had a secretary to do their typing and all they had to do was to lobby and to write and do research. Chris and I were doing research, lobbying, and our own typing, plus we had the responsibility of covering our respective districts. They were being paid twice as much as we were. And sometimes we had to help them with their jobs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Plus having an assistant.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. So I complained.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was because they were men and you were women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. Yes, it had to be. I didn't even analyze it that far. It didn't seem right and I complained and they told me, "Tough, you can use their secretary." Well, how the hell could I use their secretary when they had her tied up the whole time?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were your own secretary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was starting to make policy decisions out in the field. I'd call the office and they'd say, "You make the decisions." They let us make policy decisions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, on one hand, they're not really giving you proper pay or support, but lots of responsibility?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No pay, but giving us policy decisions to be made. Which is not fair. Gross!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were doing some real work out there!



## CHAPTER 3: LOBBYING FOR THE LABOR COUNCIL

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was just getting my sea legs as far as the Washington State Labor Council that whole year. I think I started lobbying in '65.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at your activities. You were up there in Ulcer Gulch. You were haunting the halls; you're working – it sounds like – day and night.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Reading bills to decide what we were going to support and not support. When I first started to lobby, I was lobbying about seventeen bills, several of which I had helped develop. One was the retail installment credit act. Because I'd been working on that already. One was on debt adjusters. We had debt adjusters permitted in the state at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you describe what kind of people they were? What they did?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were independent business people, their attorneys helped persons involved in garnishment of their wages. Wage garnishment was a major problem because it often was the cause of a person losing his job. If you owed a bill the creditor could tie up your entire wage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you bought a TV and missed a payment or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Missed several payments. They could garnish your wages for that payment, but they could tie up your whole paycheck in so doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess I don't really understand how they do that. Do they take your entire pay check?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they did at that time. At that time the employer became a part of the garnishment. The law, as written, made the employer responsible for collecting the money, withholding your entire paycheck even though you might only owe fifteen dollars to the creditor. In other words, the employer was in violation of the law if he did not comply.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The whole thing? Then how are you supposed to live?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You couldn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who cares?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who cares? That's right! Instead of taking a portion of the amount, they held your whole paycheck, and if the employer didn't do it, he became a part of the action against you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, obviously, he would do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was forced to by law, and then often fired the employee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is a real threat.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a real tragedy. So I said, "Something has to be done. We need to change the law." So the debt adjuster came into being.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you just come across this as an issue yourself? Did people come to you with their stories, or you just were aware that this was happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I found the issue. I was aware of debt adjusters. I don't know how I found out about it. I was reading about it and apparently I went out and sought people. I went out and found these people, and their whole paycheck was being held. They were fired, so they didn't have a job. They were going to have to go on public assistance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were just way out there on a limb?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Way out there. I decided there had to be something done, and at the same time there was a bill in Congress to outlaw or adjust the garnishment in some way. The garnishment amendments were part of the Truth in Lending bill. So I was sent back to D.C. to lobby the bill. Representative Leonora Sullivan was a Congresswoman from Missouri, and she was chairman of the Subcommittee on Banking. She was in charge of the garnishment amendment in



which the creditor could only take a portion of the paycheck.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was surprised to hear they could take the whole paycheck and just not the amount per month you owed. Say you owed thirty dollars. I could imagine them taking thirty dollars, but not the whole paycheck.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could do that. It was a rotten way to do business. If the employer didn't respond, he became a partner of the creditor. The amendment provided that the most the creditor could get would be one-fourth of the paycheck. The rest of it would belong to the debtor. I don't remember the details, but that was the substance of it. I talked to Representative Sullivan. She gave me an hour of her time, and then she suggested that the best help I could give her would be for me to lobby Senators Magnuson and Jackson who, because of their seniority in office, could influence the Democratic members of the conference committee – Senator Muskie of Maine, Senator Sparkman of Alabama, and Senator Moss from Utah – to support the amendment. She was a Democrat. I don't know who the Republicans were. There were three Democrats and two Republicans, because the Democrats were in the majority. I went back and I talked to both of Senator Magnuson and Jackson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had you even met either of them before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew them both. They assured me that they would do everything they could to help. That was a Friday night and I had finished the bill. So I went to stay with my friend who was the head of nursing research at Walter Reed Hospital with whom I had grown up when we lived in Missoula, Montana, Phyllis Verhonik. She said that they were having a party at Walter Reed for one of the doctors who was leaving, a goodbye party with a dinner. We had cocktails and dinner; we had too much to drink and we were really pretty loaded. We left there and went back to her apartment and were sitting there having an after-dinner drink – we were still loaded...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were going to finish yourselves off?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Going to finish ourselves off is right. I said to her, "Phyllis, do you know anybody in Congress who could help me with this bill?" I explained what was going on and about my conversation with Representative Sullivan, and how I'd asked Senator Jackson and Magnuson to approach the conferees. I said, "Do you know anybody who could give us a little bit more of a lift?" I didn't need to even do that, but I was still in my cups.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this your first bill that you were working in D.C.?

**Sen. Wojahn:** First bill I ever did. I did the Wholesome Meat Act too, but I did this bill first. She said to me, "Well, would Uncle Mike help?" Uncle Mike! When I lived in Missoula, Montana, I remembered Uncle Mike was Mike Mansfield, Majority leader in the Senate! He was a senator. She went to the telephone and called him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of high up there! I imagine he would probably be pretty useful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She called him, and the bill came out and passed. Clean. I know that he helped. These are the experiences I've had that I could never, ever make up. It was an experience.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Uncle Mike."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an experience. And I rode with Senator Jackson on the little railroad from his office to the Senate chambers and I had to go to the gallery. They have a little underground railroad that they ride on from their office building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like a little trolley?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It's underground. I had lots of experiences that were really good in D.C.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where had you met Senators Magnuson and Jackson?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I met Jackson when he spoke to the Washington State Labor Council at some of their conventions, and knew him well there. I

met Senator Magnuson through my office, through Joe Davis, president of the Washington State Labor Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** From what I understand, Senator Magnuson was already very interested in consumer rights. That from about 1962 that he took that on as his big focus.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. His whole focus. He was involved, deeply involved. He's the one who really pushed through the Truth in Lending bill. And Tom Foley was the Agriculture chair and he was the one who pushed through the Wholesome Meat Act. I helped lobby that through. There were two "truth" bills: Truth in Lending and Truth in Packaging. Truth in Packaging was handled by Senator Douglas of Illinois, a Democrat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were actually a series of "truth" bills?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Senator Magnuson wrote a book and he autographed and gave me the first copy. The Dark Side of the Marketplace, which I still have. He told the Legislature that he considered me his right arm in the state of Washington, and the Teamsters picked that up and used it in one of their stories when Ed Donohoe was the editor of the Teamster paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been quite a boost for your career.



*US Senator Warren Magnuson's "right arm" on consumer issues.*

**Sen. Wojahn:** I worked quite closely with the staff attorney for the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee and he presented me with Senator Magnuson's autographed book. He was the staff person for the Commerce Committee; Senator Magnuson was chair of the Commerce Committee before he was chair of Ways and Means. But he became really involved with the Consumer Federation of America and I was elected as a member of the National Advisory Board of the Consumer Federation of America.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is a big era for those issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a big era when I first started with the Washington State Labor Council. That's what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember President Kennedy's speech in 1962? It's supposed to be one of the early expressions of this movement, where he talks about a consumer's bill of rights? He lays it out in this big speech and gives the issue a lot of push.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that part of that package became the Truth in Lending and Truth in Packaging bills. They evolved from that. At that time, Senator Magnuson was chair of the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee, and he carried them through and Tom Foley, Chairman of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee, picked up the Wholesome Meat Act and carried that through. That was done in 1965 when he was first went in office. Foley was involved with agriculture and then became chair of Agriculture. That's when the Wholesome Meat Act began to evolve.

But at the same time I knew all of the aides of all of the congressmen. Lloyd Meeds, I knew his aide; I knew the aides for Tom Foley, Brock Adams and Floyd Hicks. Eventually these aides went to work for the state of Washington or for the Legislature. I knew the aide for Congressman Hicks because I hired him when I chaired the Commerce Committee in the House, Bob O'Brien; he was my aide as the chief of the committee. Congressman Foley's aide, Richard Larsen, went to work for the Seattle Times. He worked for the Times up until recently retiring.

The one who worked for Senator Adams was the PR person for the aeromechanics union. He eventually came to work for a state agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who was it that hired you when you went to work for the Washington State Labor Council?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was hired by Joe Davis, who was the president.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was already president? I wasn't sure if Ed Weston was still on board.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He had just left. He retired just prior to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you review for me what the structure of the Washington State Labor Council was and how it worked at that time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO in the lobby arm of the AFL-CIO unions in the state. When the Legislature is in session, the Washington State Labor Council AFL-CIO merges with the Teamsters, the Longshoremens and the timber workers, who are an independent union, to form the United Labor Lobby and to present a united front on behalf of labor. If we split on some issues each went his own way on those issues, so that we were never in conflict with one another. But getting back to the structure of the WSLC, AFL-CIO, the president is the chief spokesman for the group, and the secretary/treasurer is the financial officer. There is a board made up of vice-presidents who are from the various labor councils throughout the state. I don't remember how many there are, but there are a number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you reported in, you reported to Joe Davis directly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was he like to work for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was pretty easy to work with as far as policy was concerned. The fact is he kind of ducked some policy issues and let Chris and me make them, which wasn't good because it became very difficult sometimes for us to make a policy decision on the spot with a local labor council. So that wasn't good, but normally he was pretty fair about the division of

responsibilities. The only thing he wasn't fair about was salary. Chris and I were the only two women with policy responsibilities on staff and we were being paid less and doing more work with no secretarial help than the new hires. She usually had her office in her home or her car. I had a little cubbyhole in Seattle, but most of my work was done in the car or at home. But I liked my job and she liked hers. She had a lot more territory to cover. Mine was more concentrated, but I had more labor councils. I think I had about twenty-six of them in western Washington and she had about five in eastern, but she was traveling all the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot to keep track of.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he give you direction? How did you know what to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We sort of felt our way. I had come out of the labor movement as an officer of the local union, but they didn't give us any direction. I really learned more what to do through Chris Alden because her family was more participatory in labor issues. I was not raised in a labor union family. So I had to really learn my way through her letters about what she was doing. We had to report what we were doing and I really didn't know what I was supposed to be doing. I learned from her the things to look for.

We were assigned to help local labor councils set up what was called the Committee on Political Education, COPE, and to set up voter registration and get-out-the vote programs within the unions and to coordinate COPE programs within each local labor council. Each labor council in an area was made up of a number of local unions and each council eventually had a COPE program. You sort of learned fast when you had to. Yes, so I set up programs of voter registration and getting out the vote with the labor councils which I had under my jurisdiction. We won the first time out by organizing and doing a thorough job. I won three new congressmen in my district. Chris won one. She won Foley and I won with Meeds and Adams and Hicks. We took all of

Washington State but the Seventh District. We defeated Walter Horan, Thor Tollefson, Jack Westland and Bill Stinson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty good work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Except for Tom Pelly. We didn't get him. He was in a totally Republican district. I think it ran from Bellevue clear over to Bainbridge Island. It went right through the heart of Seattle. We couldn't get him. So I actually feel partially responsible for the election of those three congressmen. I went into each of their offices, worked with them and with the Washington State Labor Council, tying them into the labor councils within their congressional districts. At the same time I worked with the local candidates for the state Legislature. I worked on Dick King's election and Hugh Kalich's election and actually won. Montgomery Johnson – "Gummie" Johnson was running some campaign down in the territory which ran from Morton clear down into McCleary and he thought he'd won that race too, but I beat him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And he was a professional campaigner!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very! And we beat him there and also in the Mukilteo-Everett area with Dick King and Dick Taylor. He thought he had that and he didn't. We won both of them. I did one mailer in which I used both their pictures and did a wrap-around on their history and why they should be re-elected, and they won. I did the same thing for Hugh Kalich and a fellow from Morton. He was a pharmacist: [Elmer] Jastad. Jastad and Kalich. I did one for those and we won. We beat Gummie Johnson!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was very satisfying, I'm sure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. I'll never forget that. At the same time we were working on congressional races. I was working through Meeds' office in Everett and the Adams' office in King County and Hicks' office here in Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds like a twenty-four hour-a-day thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was, practically. That's when we did the registration drive in Pierce County at the same time. I don't think I got much sleep. I was working like a dog.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel really high?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt really high. Everything just kind of fell into place. It happens when you are totally imbued with what you're doing, and I was. At the same time I had a cook who came in and cooked my kids' and husband's dinner.

One of the things we did as a campaign tactic, we were having a Washington State Labor Council convention and we had a fellow on staff who could do good sketches. He did this huge sketch of our candidates running for office that was hilarious. It was really well done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Caricatures?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Caricatures of Meeds and Hicks and Foley hanging out of this train. The caboose was loose and when the caboose caught up, the election ended and we won. I'll never forget that. I wish I had pictures of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get to take a break afterwards, or did you kind of sail on through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Because we went right from the voter registration drive which ended just prior to the primary election, and the only time I could get a break would be after the primary for a very brief time, but we were too close. We couldn't. We couldn't take any break at all. That's when we did the cartoon sketch we used for the convention. But we didn't connect the two until after the election, and then they came together. Everything came out well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What year was this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sixty-four.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be the year Dan Evans was elected Governor, as well as the Johnson sweep against Goldwater. What were the main labor issues of that time period?

**Sen. Wojahn:** One of them was to establish a hospital commission to try to control hospital costs, which I was not involved with because the Council had hired Sam Kinville to handle

health care. I was lobbying a bill which would grant teachers' time-out to eat, instead of doing playground duty during their lunchtime. I remember that bill was one that I lobbied for education. We also lobbied for "an hour later" on the election laws, for the polls to stay open until nine p.m. The Legislature – this was before I was a member – reverted backwards and opened the polls an hour earlier at seven a.m. and that bill passed. Now it's good because people are going to work earlier. We lobbied for labor laws, but I didn't have to lobby those. The only labor law I was permitted to lobby was a bill which Senator Kupka gave to me. I took it to Joe Davis and said that Senator Kupka had given me this and suggested it was a good bill. So Joe said, "You go ahead and lobby it." It was a bill in which, when bankruptcy was declared in an industry or business, the debtors would be paid after the employees' wages were paid. I went with fear and trepidation because it was one of the very first bills I had outside of my assigned areas. I handled education, but consumer protection and election laws were two areas in which I was more comfortable. Anyway, the bill did pass and employee wages were paid before the first debtor was paid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me, as a lobbyist, you've got this issue; now what did you do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I went to see the Republicans because they were the ones we really needed to lobby, because Democrats usually would support our bills. I remember going to the fellow from Yelm, Representative Hal Wolf, and he said, "This is one of the best bills I've ever seen." He liked it. Then I went to see Representative Helmut Jueling; he was in the House and he liked it. He said it was a great bill. Representative Jueling was very conservative. Representative Hal Wolf was conservative, but a moderate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where did the bill come from? Did you have actual legislative language?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the bill was drafted with Senator Kupka's name on it. It was a bill that apparently Senator Kupka had worked on and

hadn't had any success with. Some of the bills I had helped draft, but not that one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that the norm to take around an actual bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I often would work with a legislator with ideas and they would help. Or I would take the idea, with their consent, to the Code Reviser. The first thing I did, when I was first appointed to start lobbying, was to go to Olympia before session started and I would rent an apartment, because I was going to have to live in Olympia. Then I went into the Code Reviser because I figured that was where the bills started. Nobody told me. I didn't realize the ideas came from a legislator. I knew they all got dumped on the Code Reviser. I went in and introduced myself to Gay Keplinger, who became Gay Marchesini, and I said, "I don't know what I'm doing. I'm brand new. I don't know where anything is around here, but I figured I should come here first." She took me under her wing and took me all around and showed me everything. She showed me where the bills were taken at that time. They were all taken up to the Floor and tossed on a big table in front of the bar of the Senate and House. She said, "After the bills are drafted, they're thrown there." To be read in to the record.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd be really grounded. You'd know what to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think I did know where the coat closet was. I think Joe Davis took Chris and me down and showed us where the coat closet was, and pointed out the direction of the Code Reviser's office and showed us both Chambers, but that was the extent of it. A big overall view. Joe Davis told us that the bills were always tossed on these tables in the morning about seven a.m. and he said that sometimes lobbyists go in and read the bills before they're ever read into the record, so I took it upon myself – I lived right there in that apartment, Maple Vista – I would get up about 6:30 a.m. and go over and read the bills. Enough lobbyists would go there and we'd sort of compare notes. They'd often say, "Here, Wojahn, here's a bill you ought to read."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were all looking out for each other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was friendly. And I'd help them. Then I'd make a list of them and give them to my boss so he could go over them, too. Joe Davis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was considered a consummate lobbyist.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He would take all the labor bills. I didn't have anything to do with those, and I would take the consumer bills, some of which I had asked to be drafted. I had asked to be drafted a bill outlawing debt adjusters, which eventually we got. And a bill lobbying the interest rates which could be charged. There was a rule which was very detrimental to debtors – that was “the rule of seventy-eight” which was used by banks and small loan companies. They would collect seventy-eight percent of the interest right off the top so that even though you had a declining balance, they would first collect most of the interest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had theirs before you ever touched it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. We got that rule changed. Another thing the retail stores had been doing was rounding up the charged amount to the next ten-cent mark and charging interest on it. So, if someone's bill totaled \$50.64 cents, the store was charging interest on \$50.70. The bill established a median for charging interest such that if a bill was for \$50.64 cents, the stores could charge interest on \$50.60. If the bill was for \$60.65 or more, then they could charge interest on \$60.70. Prior to action by the Office of the State Attorney General, the retail stores were making hundreds of dollars on pennies from customers. And I thought that eighteen percent interest was too much and I talked with some attorneys about that. One of them was a former AG, Herb Gelman, who had entered private practice, and Ted Bottiger, who was in the Legislature. They both had been AGs. I met with Herb Gelman about the whole area of consumer legislation and retail installment credit, and things he thought we needed to do. He told me that when he was an assistant

attorney general, he was offended by the manner in which department stores cheated customers. He said that he had run some of his own store bills and figured out that over a year's time a major department store had collected a substantial amount of money derived from rounding up to the highest decimal instead of an established median. He took several people's accounts and figured out that by charging to the next decimal they were making this substantial amount of money every year. He said, “Multiply that by the population of the state of Washington with retail store accounts and you've got a huge figure.” So the AG's office had corrected some of the problems facing consumers. However, the banks had come out with a credit card in which they were charging eighteen-plus percent interest in competition with retail stores. So the Washington State Labor Council sponsored an initiative to the people, using the slogan “Twelve-percent is enough” as an answer to the bank card interest problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would make an appointment with a legislator and go in and you had your information...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Once I had an idea, I would make an appointment to talk with whatever people I needed to get more information about my idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you vetted your information to make sure your idea worked?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. After I gave the bill to Joe to get drafted. I took the idea and said, “This is what I want to do; does it sound like a rational idea?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you take these endorsements around—

**Sen. Wojahn:** The same thing with some acts on the twelve percent interest rate. Senator Woodall was a real tough nut to crack. He was extremely conservative. He was from Yakima. I took my consumer bill on credit to him and said, “It seems to me that eighteen percent is too much. We need a study.” I told him why I thought eighteen percent was too much, and he

immediately said, "My father was ninety years old and a door-to-door salesman came to him and sold him about three hundred-dollars worth of magazines that he would continue to get for a number of years after he had passed on. He also said that when he was practicing law in Yakima he had represented a young Mexican-American farm laborer who had come to him because his son had signed up for some magazines and they were holding the father responsible for what his son had signed up for. The father came to him and told him this, and Woodall said, "They can't do that," because the boy was thirteen years old. He was under age and they can't hold him to a contract. Then he remembered what had happened to his father and he said, "That's a great idea, and we need to control the door-to-door salesman and also to cut back the interest rate." So he helped sponsor the bill for the study on the interest rates and also a bill on door-to-door salesmen. That there should be a cooling-off period.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That personal experience of his—

**Sen. Wojahn:** That got him going. And Representative Hal Wolf just said that changing the garnishment laws was a good idea. He was in the retail grocery business, but he agreed that an employer should not be required to hold the whole paycheck of an employee to satisfy a minimal amount of debt. That bill passed. And then the door-to-door salesmen act passed. I went in with quite a few bills, a whole bundle, and a whole bundle of them passed. It was like ten or fifteen. It was a lot of them. I can't think of all of them, but they all passed. Some of them were other people's ideas, but I asked if I could help lobby them. One was on modular homes, which were badly built. I asked the lobbyist if I could help lobby for that. I helped to lobby that because it seemed like a practical idea. Under the terms of the modular homes bill certain standards were established by the Department of Labor and Industries. A lot of these bills did pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you particularly hunting out practical down-to-earth things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there some other ideas that maybe were a little more out there that you said to yourself, "I don't want to lobby that." Did you have a choice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was never imposed upon to lobby anything I didn't agree with. No, they didn't force that on me. I was doing my own thing and getting agreement from my employers, and they were letting me do my own thing because they were getting results.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were building a track record?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And the only thing they demanded was that I stay in the area of my expertise. I was not permitted to lobby main labor issues. It wasn't my area of expertise. I'm trying to think if they ever forced me to do anything I didn't want to do. One thing I did that they really were angry with me over, we were getting ready to do the voter registration drive, they were endorsing candidates for office and they'd endorsed Foley and Meeds and they were going to endorse Floyd Hicks, but they weren't going to give him any money because they didn't feel he could win. Thor Tollefson, who was so well-known, had been in Congress for a long time. He was a senior congressman. Dick Clevenger was the vice-president on the State Labor Council board, he was a delegate from the Pierce County Labor Council and I knew him well. It was at this meeting that the staff was just supposed to sit back and observe. We weren't supposed to get into the debate. The Board was giving money and they had discussed Floyd Hicks, but they made a decision. They weren't going to give him any money. I sent a note up to Dick Clevenger and said, "Are you going to let them get away with this? Floyd Hicks should get some money." Clevenger then spoke up and demanded a contribution for Floyd Hicks. As a result, the State Labor Council made a \$3,000 contribution to the Hicks campaign. I was, at that time, working on a voter registration drive for Pierce County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were really stepping out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I stepped on their toes. Joe saw me pass the note. A lot of them saw it. I made a bitter enemy over that. It was a vice-president from eastern Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who preferred the other candidate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He just didn't think I should be doing that. Then he got angry with me for something else. Because I was staff. I wasn't supposed to be doing it. He was fair about women, but I think that was the beginning of a problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He saw you as sort of 'uppity' or something? Out of your place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. And I was. And he saw it. I didn't mean to be, I just was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You couldn't help yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they give the money then? Did they take your advice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes! Dick Clevenger said, "You can't do this. How about Floyd Hicks?" And Joe said, "He can't win." And the other members agreed and Dick said, "Wait a minute, we in Pierce County are doing a voter registration drive. Who says he can't win? He's got a chance."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then he did win.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He got three thousand dollars. They had voted that, but I got called on the carpet. I was told, "If you ever do that again, you're fired." And I said, "He's going to win." I wasn't going to be put down. And I said to Joe Davis, "He's going to win and I'll bet you five dollars he's going to win," and I put my money on the table and he started to laugh, except he was still angry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have a temper?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He was slow to get angry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not somebody you'd want to tangle with?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Nobody ever tangled with him, but I did. Even his secretary/treasurer

never tangled with him. Nobody ever tangled with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there kind of a stillness around when you were standing up to him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody heard the reprimand. He called me into his office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you afraid?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I wasn't afraid. If I thought I was right, I did it. If I thought I was wrong, I apologized. I would apologize. I never felt I was above apologizing. I just felt that if I was right, I had to be listened to. I guess that's as simple as I can say it. I've always been that way. People don't like me for that. That's tough. They call me a strong woman. They tell me I think like a man. I don't know that I think like a man. I don't think so. But I'm practical. That actually happened, and then Hicks did win. He won by a slight majority, but he won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And continued to win after that. That must have been a great validation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Then Meeds came in and I worked on his campaign. Not as hard, but I went up and helped with his fundraisers. I helped Adams – and got a kiss!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Joe Davis come back to you after the election and give you your five dollars?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I got my five dollars. I think he figured I was indestructible at that point. We won. And the voter registration drive was what did it. He'd never have won without that. He acknowledges that. When I was running for office and didn't have an income, Floyd Hicks hired me to help with some minor campaigns that he was helping. There was a young man running for office over in Kitsap County, and also I helped on a state Senate campaign. Floyd Hicks generated some money for me for my campaign. That was the first time I ran, and I won. Barely, but I won. So it paid off. He acknowledged my efforts on his behalf. I was able to present him with the \$3,000 check at a Labor Council meeting in Tacoma.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he know at that point that you had spoken up for him and turned the tide?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think Dick Clevenger told him. He got tears in his eyes. He said, "This is the most money that I've been given so far." Dick Clevenger got the credit, which is fine, but I think he knew, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what counts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was good. I did stand up to it that time. But I don't remember ever having been told to do something that I disagreed with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At that time did lobbyists still congregate in the hallway on the third floor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had telephones in the lobby between the two Houses. It's all gone now. It was all there. They had davenport on which you could sit and pout or strategize. The telephone booths were all there; they were always busy. You would have to wait in line for a telephone. If it was long distance, you could get help from the telephone operator. AT&T operators manned a huge desk and serviced all the pay telephones. You could tell the operators if you needed to get hold of a member of the Legislature and they would dial the member's number and get them on the line. It was: wait in line, take your turn, the operator will do the dialing for you and get them fast. It could be Olympia, it could be Seattle, it could be anywhere in the country. Lobbyists would sit there and talk, congregate, battle, in front of each other and run to the doors of the House and Senate to talk to members. It was a zoo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And pass information to each other and help each other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pass information to the House and Senate members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who were the key lobbyists at the time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought Tom Owens was a really good lobbyist. He and I tangled because he was lobbying small loan companies. He was so angry with me when I got the bill for the study on small loans. Senator Jack Petrich got that for me. He was chairman of the Senate

Judiciary Committee and I was a freshman lobbyist trying to get the study. He told me how to strategize it. He told me he would take up the concurrent resolution bill at nine a.m. that morning and the committee would send it immediately to the floor of the Senate to be read in and placed on the Senate calendar of the day. He said, "Then I will bump it to final passage and immediately send it to the House. You go over to the House and talk to the Speaker of the House, Robert Schaefer and Bob Charette and ask them to do the same." The strategy worked. The concurrent resolution was passed by the Senate, and immediately sent to the House. Soon as the House took up, it was placed on the calendar of the day, and passed by the House. It had the force of law and we had the study. That got us the study on all interest rates in the state of Washington, including installment credit. And that was a big one. It wasn't really a bill, but it was a big issue and I got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people would be impacted.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I don't know if we got the bill on the door-to-door selling or not that year. I got a lot of bills through that year. I guess I got Senator Woodall to vote for the concurrent resolution, and then from that came the door-to-door salesmen act. I think that was passed the same year. And a bill on proprietary schools which were charging too much and not offering courses that would lead to jobs. Students had no hope of getting a job after they got through. Proprietary schools was another one that I just helped lobby. And Labor and Industries were setting standards for mobile homes. Washington became a leader as a result of that bill. I can't remember any more. But there were a number of bills all related to consumers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read a speech you gave about being a lobbyist. You talked a lot about the ethics of lobbying. About what you promise people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** All you have as a lobbyist and as a legislator is your word. If you give your word, you'd better not break it. That's

something to which I've adhered. I got a couple of bad votes because of that. I voted for a highway signboard bill that the environmentalists opposed because I had promised a lobbyist, Marty Sangster, a 'yes' vote. But I never did that again. I got smart and never gave my word unless I was sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a lobbyist, too, it goes both ways?

**Sen. Wojahn:** As a lobbyist you give your word, you bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you give good information too, as best you've got?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You never cheat on a legislator. Two of my very best friends in the Legislature – one was Senator Woodall who trusted me implicitly and he didn't vote a lot my way. One thing he voted for was a bill to put the retail store employees under the industrial insurance laws of the state of Washington, because I told him that if they don't get industrial insurance they would have to go on welfare, and he was an avid opponent of welfare; he figured it was better that they have the right to industrial insurance than to go on welfare. Another was Representative Helmut Jueling, who became a very good friend. These are two extreme conservatives. Helmut Jueling was from Tacoma and he always called me one of his best friends. And Hal Wolf was a friend. He apologized because he wasn't on the floor when the bill on truth in lending passed – a big bill on interest rates because he was busy getting a bill establishing the Evergreen State College passed. He apologized because no one from his caucus spoke for the bill. They were in the majority and no one spoke in support of the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What's your opinion as a lobbyist of what people call "wining and dining?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** I used to take some legislators to dinner. I remember one time I was taking a group to dinner because we were battling over an education issue and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the Washington Education Association (WEA) were at each

other's throats over it. I was with the AFT and not with the WEA.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you brought the two sides together for dinner? Is that what you did?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I took some people to dinner who were supportive of teachers but were kind of on the fence and weren't really supportive. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) was part of the labor movement, so they weren't totally with the educators on that. I remember taking a legislator who was a school principal, I think, from Whatcom County – can't think of his name, a Democrat. Usually I took Democrats to dinner. I invited this principal/legislator to dinner and he said, "You don't have to take me to dinner to lobby me." I remember him saying that. "You don't have to take me to dinner to lobby me. It's not necessary." I think I still took him to dinner, but I don't remember ever taking a lot of people to dinner. We never lobbied members when we took them to dinner. We just got acquainted. We didn't talk issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just to build a relationship?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And to let them understand how you felt about things in general and to establish a basis for trust.



*Sharing a quiet moment with Senator Reuben Knoblauch of Pierce County*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a kind of code you set up? Did other people act that way, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that was a code of what the lobbyists always did at that time. One thing that Joe Davis told us, “Don’t ever talk issues in depth with anybody at a social dinner.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just give them a break?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just get to know them, let them get to know you, and don’t press issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just building that level of trust?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Building a level of trust. I would take two or three. I think the most I ever took was five or six, and that was at one time when the legislator told me, “You don’t have to take me to dinner to lobby me.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about drinks?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If they ordered a cocktail, they got a cocktail, but we didn’t ply them with alcohol. I was one of the few women lobbyists – there was about three of us when I first started. I think it was a novelty for legislators to be hosted by a women lobbyist at that time. But no one took advantage of the situation.

We used to have the Legislative Council at that time so all the bills developed during the interim were drafted by the Legislative Council in cooperation with the respective standing committee with which they were working. So I attended all of those meetings in which I was responsible for the legislation. So that’s where you met lobbyists and legislators. It was a common meeting ground which we don’t have now. Now we have interim committee meetings. But they are different because the Legislative Council was made up of all staff people and they had a small nucleus of people deciding all issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Council met in between sessions, right? Would the atmosphere be less of a pressure cooker during the Legislative Council meetings? Would it be a little more relaxed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was more relaxed. Now you have to be in too many places at one time. There, you concentrated on the Legislative Council during the interim and then, during session you concentrated on the legislators with

the bills you had developed with the Legislative Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At those Council meetings, would you all be at the table, lobbyists too, or just legislators and you would kind of be in the background? How did that work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sometimes you were at the table with them. During the time we were developing the study on interest rates, I was at the table with them all the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Exchanging ideas and information?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Exchanging ideas. Lobbying has changed substantially. People’s word became less and less important. I finally reached the point in which I only had a few people I totally trusted to lobby me as a legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they more the old school kind, the old style?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The old kind. At first, I didn’t like Tom Owens, but I trusted him. He was always honest with me. I liked Don Brazier, who was a former legislator who later became head of the Utilities and Transportation Committee. He was on the same side that I was on for the consumer. I remember that, and I always trusted Don Brazier. He was a Republican. So there was a camaraderie which developed between legislators with lobbyists, Republicans and Democrats – who I trusted totally. And that’s the way I learned to do my work, through my ability to trust people and to make decisions based upon that trust. Joe Davis was trustworthy. The Boeing lobbyists were very good and there were others, many others.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they kind of set a standard?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. The Boeing lobbyist at that time – they called him the ‘gray ghost’ – I trusted him. He was a good guy. And Sid Abrams, I adore him. I trust him totally. And Sharon Case, who worked for me; she’s now a lobbyist. These are people I totally trust. Because of my lobbying experience, I had many good friends who either worked with me, for

me, or lobbied with me, I knew who I could trust and who I couldn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a great way to get started.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I especially liked Dave Broderick; he was a great lobbyist. He lobbied for the WEA when I first knew him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What makes a great lobbyist?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Friendly, open, honest, ethical. Integrity – which goes a long way – but that's part of honesty. Dave would sometimes say, "I wish I'd asked that question," as I did when I was lobbying. Anytime I got in a position in which I was asked a question I didn't like, I used to say, "I wish you hadn't asked that question; however, this is the way it is." Sometimes you didn't get what you wanted because of that. But you do it because it's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And next time around the person will think that you're going to give them the straight goods?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lobbyist isn't someone you look for to treat you to dinner. A lobbyist is someone you enjoy being around, someone knowledgeable you look to for technical advice, whether just exchanging ideas or exchanging gossip. What makes a good lobbyist? I like knowledgeable, well-groomed lobbyists. I don't think that's asking too much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It shows respect?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It shows respect, and it shows that they care about themselves. If you care about yourself, you're going to have half a chance of caring for somebody else. That's the way I feel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why do you think lobbyists have a bad reputation? Why are they so misunderstood, put it that way, in their role?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lobbyists got a bad rap when they shouldn't have, I believe, because people suspect them. I never looked at a lobbyist that way, probably because I was one myself. I assumed that because I was who I was, that they were the same way, and until you found out

differently, you trusted people until they created an atmosphere of distrust.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or proved otherwise. Do you think people misunderstand their role in the Legislature? There's that "special interest" label.

**Sen. Wojahn:** People think lobbyists sneak around in smoke-filled rooms and wine and dine you and get you to the point where you can't think straight. I think that's what used to be the impression. I don't know that that is continuing. I think that any person who is somewhat sophisticated doesn't look at people that way anymore. I think people are better informed than they used to be. And thank God for that. Anytime anyone asks me about it, I tell them that we could not survive without lobbyists. They offer technical information. The only thing you have to be able to do is to know whom you can trust and who you can't, and that's a matter of being able to judge character. That comes with maturity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because you have to deal with so many kinds of bills there's no way you can know so many areas?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There's no way that you can absorb that much. You have to trust your colleagues. You have to trust the committee chair. Or, if there's someone on the committee who you trust that could explain the pros and cons of a bill. You usually have someone on every committee that you trust, that you can go to if you have a real problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you say, "If so-and-so is for this, it must be okay?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you do, but you don't stop there. Unless it's someone I implicitly trust who has the same philosophy as I. And you have to know who does. Then I dig further. Research isn't always reading out of a book. Research is listening and talking to people and observing. You see a lot of things. It's body language. It isn't just word-of-mouth. It's a lot of different elements that have to enter in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Partly intuitive, partly intellectual?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Intellectual. Partly body language, partly past experience with them and your own.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are you ever swayed simply by sheer information? If somebody has really good information but perhaps is not very skilled?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If somebody has too much information I tend to not believe it all and ask questions, that if they can answer, then I will believe. But sometimes you don't know the right question to ask. And if you don't know the right question to ask, you'd better not give your word. You better do some further investigation. And listen to constituents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever – now I'm asking you in your role as a legislator – do legislators get different lobbyists together who have opposing views and then listen to one and listen to the other and weigh the different points of view that way? Would that be something that would happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Occasionally you'd get them to come in together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not necessarily together, but one after the other, say? Just to get a bigger picture? To see what the sides are?

**Sen. Wojahn:** On rare occasions. I've been there too long. Maybe when I was first starting I did that, I can't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering, as a lobbyist, would you be aware that legislators might be checking in with other people too, and that you would be competing with each other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, sure. The thing which would sway me most would be a personal story, a personal experience that someone had. I really relied on them a lot. Anytime anybody told me a personal experience which created a problem or a problem was created because of the experience, then you listen real hard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Puts a human face on it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. I guess that's the most important thing of all because if somebody can look you in the eye and tell you a story, it's hard

not to believe unless there's an element there that doesn't ring true, that you can question. But again, if you can't ask the right question, you don't make a decision right away. Sometimes you don't know the right question to ask, and it's tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You get a lot of issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And sometimes you trust somebody who probably gave you the right information but you either misunderstood or wanted to believe it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd be susceptible in certain directions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a lobbyist, would you study legislators to find out what would move them? Would you get to know them to that degree that you would understand – now this person really cares about x and y?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I would. Some things you always find that everyone has a vulnerable spot. And yes, you look for that. You try to find it. Because you care. It isn't because you're spying or because you have an ulterior motive. You want to know what makes her tick. Why does she do this? Make your judgments on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then shape your response that way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's one way to figure it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Human relations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. You know those who are absolutely true. I love and trust – there are several – from Olympia – who's your senator?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Karen Fraser.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I totally trust her as a legislator. As a lobbyist, I totally trust Sharon Case; I totally trust the gal who was Governor Cherberg's attorney, Gail Ditlevson. I think her name is different now – Toraason, I believe. Ken Bertrand, I trust. He was on the Republican staff before he was a lobbyist. When I chaired the Human Services Committee in the Senate, Senator Kiskaddon used to sit next to me

because he was the ranking member of the Republican Party. I liked Bill Kiskaddon, but he was always like a gnat – he was coming at me like a mosquito all the time, and I told Ken Bertrand that. And Ken said, “I can’t figure out why you don’t turn around and punch him in the nose once in a while.” He actually said that, and I loved that! It made me laugh!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So humor is a good thing, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Humor is absolutely essential.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d have to keep your balance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. And dry humor is even better, I love it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That little comment on the side that helps keep you going?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. Margaret Casey I loved. She’s lobbying again. She was a former Nun, you know. She was a principal of a high school I think. She lobbied for the Archbishop. She was, really, I think, his right-hand gal. Bishop Hunthausen, I loved him. He was a dear man. Really good. Dave Broderick I totally trusted. And I loved Linda, Dave Broderick’s wife. She’s retired now, but she lobbied for vocational schools, private trade-type schools. Later she worked for the Commission on Vocational Education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine lobbyists, like legislators, come from all different walks of life.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Dick Ducharme was a very good lobbyist, often on the other side of the issues which I supported, but trustworthy. He was okay. Bob Mack, lobbyist for the City of Tacoma, was always a valuable source of information and I always sought him out to find out what the City of Tacoma needed. And Denny Eliason. Linda Hull who lobbied for the dentists, I liked and trusted. Also Tom Owens. These are the ones I knew well and who were always welcome in my office. Some lobbyists weren’t. They didn’t bother. And they shall remain nameless at this point. Let people figure it out for themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** About how many people lobbied when you first started out? It was a smaller number then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, it was much smaller.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it have been a ‘clubbier’ atmosphere?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very much so. We had an organization called “the Third House” but it was a cozier group. The man who lobbied for the bank, what was his name?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was Joe Brennan.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Joe Brennan I remember. I liked Joe Brennan. And before him was a lobbyist by the name of Joe Gould. Joe Gould left just before I became a lobbyist, but Joe Brennan learned his lobbying tools from him. He was very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did lobbyists have leaders amongst themselves? I know you were called the Third House, but did you have an actual formal organization?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We had a chairman of the Third House. I think Joe Brennan was one at one time. We used to meet for lunch once in awhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of things would they do? What would the structure do to help you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing in particular. Just be friendly. We used to have “wildlife parties,” too, together. You probably don’t remember those, but that’s where legislators and lobbyists all got together and just let their hair down. Everybody! You couldn’t possibly be mad at anybody because they were all buddies. There were so many lobbyists with all different interests, but we were all friendly. You didn’t misrepresent the truth, because if you did, you never were trusted again. You didn’t get back in a legislator’s office if you ever misrepresented the truth. And if you were asked a direct question, you answered truthfully, even though it would hurt your cause. I often prefaced my remarks with “I wish you hadn’t asked that question.”

It's changed; now both sides distort the truth. Some give their word, then break it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you think changed the culture of lobbying? Can you put your finger on it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. After public disclosure came in, I believe. Disclosure did a lot to precipitate controversy. It's impossible to legislate ethics. We lost a lot of fine legislators, many of them attorneys, because under the terms of the disclosure act they were required to disclose the names of their clients.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's probably not what was intended.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it wasn't, but that's exactly what happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting. Now, when you first came in, didn't you have to register with the Speaker and receive some kind of pass?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess I did. I don't remember. You give them your card.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wasn't as formal, I don't think. Did you have to report any of your expenses or anything?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. It was wide open. But I don't know that evil things happened at that time. Maybe there was some skullduggery, but generally speaking, legislators and lobbyists were people with integrity. I didn't distrust anybody; I just didn't always like their philosophy, but I didn't think they were lying to me or misrepresenting the truth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was there so much energy behind the creation of the Public Disclosure Commission in 1972? Seventy-two percent of the people voted for that initiative.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because of the suspicion that legislators were susceptible to strong lobbies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you, yourself, didn't agree with that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Never.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the energy behind this partly to do with campaign contributions at the same time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In part. It was about campaign contributions, but we didn't have to report them. But I kept good records and I didn't cheat. I never accepted a lot of money. Everybody gave to just about everybody. We got money from all sides. Because I had been a lobbyist, I usually got a little money from all sides, but not a lot from anybody. I think the most money I ever got prior to disclosure, was two-hundred and fifty dollars, and other legislators from your political party would give you money so you'd vote for them for leadership positions. They would generate the money and then they'd help others. The lobbyists knew it was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a lobbyist, did you hand out money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I didn't hand out any money as a lobbyist. It was all done by the Washington State Labor Council. The officers and directors did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you, yourself, never had any dealings at the campaign level?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I never had anything to do with giving out money. I wasn't at that level of lobbying. Later, as a legislator, I had fundraisers. I usually charged twenty-five dollars per person and often had family bean-feeds at which I charged twenty-five dollars for a family of four. I never charged fifty dollars; I thought that was terrible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a lobbyist, would you have attended things like that yourself? Would you have gone to fundraisers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. I didn't have to pay for them. The Washington State Labor Council paid for them. I never gave more than fifty dollars. I never went to anything that cost one hundred dollars, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was big money. Would you recommend people that the Washington State Labor Council should support? Would you be able to do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. I would recommend to the Washington State Labor Council candidates I believed they should support and I would suggest to candidates that they ask the Labor Council for what they needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, even if you're not handing out money yourself, you were playing a role?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The only thing I ever did was to give out of my own pocket to a candidate already endorsed by the Labor Council; then I was reimbursed by the Washington State Labor Council. I think that's the way it was always done prior to disclosure. Now, the sky's the limit. Nobody ever raised five-hundred thousand dollars to run for a twenty-five thousand dollar a year job like they do now. The most I ever raised when I was running didn't even add up to what I was making as a legislator. The most I raised the first time I ran was just enough to cover expenses, which was twenty-three-hundred dollars in the primary and about one thousand dollars in the general. I don't believe I ever raised more than thirty thousand at any time, and that was more than I needed or wanted. I used to give other candidates money when I was running for leadership. I've given to more people who have lost races than I've given to those who've won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe you shouldn't bet on horses, either!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember a candidate by the name of Tollefson in eastern Washington who was running for the Legislature and I gave him two hundred dollars out of my campaign fund. He lost, and then became a county commissioner. Later he helped me pass a bill to keep the State Board of Health and to eventually separate the State Department of Health from DSHS. It all works together!

I have a philosophy and it's a poem by Edwin Markham that I heard when I was about ten years old. I was listening to soap operas on the radio, and there was this one particular one, Ma Perkins, in which they recited this Edwin Markham poem every day as an introduction along with background music. I may not have all the words right, but it goes, "There is a

destiny that makes us brothers. None goes his way alone. All that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own." And for some reason, it stuck. I remember that, and it comes back in spades. You give to somebody as an anonymous gift, and it comes back even though no one knew. It's an incredible philosophy, and it works. At eighty years of age I can say that, because I've seen it happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm glad it plays out. You want that to be true.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You want it to be true, and that's the reason you tend to trust until you find that you can't trust. You always trust until you can't any more, and that's good. Then you develop dislikes. There are people I don't like, and that's firm. I never will like them. They can't do anything to make me like them. I won't be less than tactful, but I will never like them and they know it. That's the way it is. I've got those little books of proverbs which tell about that. It's just wonderful. It's full of little homilies that I agree with. Somebody gave it to me and I sat and laughed over it. You asked about my philosophy. My philosophy was developed by osmosis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By experience?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Experience and just by doing and by witnessing and by seeing and it just happens. It just becomes a part of you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you kind of watch other lobbyists and think, "That person, I really like what they're doing?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had your own sense of how to do things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had my own sense. I either liked them or disapproved of what they did or their philosophy. Some of it was philosophy. It wasn't anything that they could help or would change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you impressed by certain people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was impressed by watching Joe Davis. He always laid out good background.



He always laid out how it would affect the working person and how it could injure them or hurt them. I remember when there was an attempt to raid the unemployment compensation fund because there was an overage of money in the fund, and the industry and business wanted it back. He always said, "If we ever had a recession, that money would disappear," and it happened. That was the reason I opposed the taking of unemployment comp funds to finance the Work-First training fund.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Things go up and down. Just because you have it now, doesn't mean you'll always have it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's the reason it's good to have a trigger in anything you do. Any kind of an escalator clause or de-escalator, you'd need that and a means to control or help things when there's a recession.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which seem to come around pretty regularly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And no matter what you do, we're heading into one right now. That's the thing that most young people don't understand, don't know the depth of the feelings which occurred during the Depression, which I went through, and I know how traumatic it was. They have no concept. They have no idea, or they would be willing to share. That's the reason I rarely fret over my income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On the national level and on the state level, you were involved in consumer affairs. I was struck that most of the leaders I read about in that field were women. Was that seen as a women's specialty area because they were the chief consumers in the home?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that they were involved with it because they usually handle the pocketbook for the family. The Consumer Federation of America was started by a mix of consumer groups, labor organizations, HMOs – including Group Health, rural electrification groups, mutual insurance groups and cooperatives throughout the United States. They all became a part of that super-consumer affairs

group, Consumer Federation of America. That was all a part of the consumer movement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was struck by you two women in Washington State, but then, when I was looking at the national level, was it President Kennedy who appointed Esther Peterson?

**Sen. Wojahn:** With the Consumer Federation of America, she was one of the initiators of it under President Kennedy, and she stayed through President Johnson. Then she got fired when Nixon came in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was Betty Furness, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Betty Furness. I was so angry for Esther Peterson because she'd done so much, and she said, "No, that Betty Furness could do much more handling business and industry than I could ever do." And she was very genuine about that.

I remember writing letters when I was trying to get the bacon bill passed in the state of Washington. I sponsored the bill because I was aware of the National Wholesome Meat Act passed by Congress in 1967, which I lobbied as a member of the Washington State Labor Council staff. Later, as a legislator, while working on the bacon bill, I wrote to the Consumer Federation of America and to President Nixon's Consumer Advocate. Because New York and Oregon had passed their own bacon bills copied from the Washington bill, which were either thrown out or declared unconstitutional, I was concerned that my bacon bill would have a similar fate. The National Wholesome Meat Act stated that there could be no mislabeling or misbranding of meat and that part of the Act was not being enforced. The bacon bill was being sponsored on the state level because companies were mislabeling and misbranding meat. I called to their attention the fact that the mislabeling and misbranding portion of the Act was not being enforced and the President's Consumer Advocate insisted that it be enforced. That's the way we got the bill and actually forced the acknowledgment of the federal law. It was incredible because two states copied the Washington bill, New York and

Oregon and enacted them prior to the passage of the Washington bill and had them thrown out as being unconstitutional. Here it was a part of the national Wholesome Meat Act and being ignored. I remember telling you about Don Moos, Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture asking for an extension on the deadline because there were only two meat packers in the country doing all the bacon packaging and they couldn't get the packaging done in time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But they did switch over eventually?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They switched over. Washington State actually changed federal law because it forced the Feds to make it work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, everybody would have to have the same rules. We also wanted to discuss the Flammable Fabrics Act, too. That started here in Washington too, didn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It started through the Children's Hospital. That became a real hot issue when I was a member in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** My impression was that there was a doctor, Doctor Abe Bergman, working with Senator Magnuson?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator Magnuson actually started that, and they passed a bill in Congress, but it hadn't gone into effect yet. Abe Bergman was trying to get a bill passed here that would go into effect before the national act. I thought he was wrong. I chaired the committee and I believed we should comply with the federal act, not preempt it. We didn't need a separate law here. The supporters of the bill finally made it so difficult for me that I let the bill go, but I didn't believe it was necessary or that it would work. It had already passed nationally, it would just give the public a sense of false security. And at the same time I had heard that some of the people making baby clothes were sending the clothes overseas to be sold there. I remember the Carter people coming out publicly. It was in the Consumer Reports where they said, "Babies are babies everywhere; we

will not send our flammable fabrics to foreign countries to be sold." And they didn't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some manufacturers continued to—

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of them, they didn't continue to do it, but they were exporting the clothing they had already made. But the whole thing was that Representative Georgette Valle was pushing for the bill here. It has already passed nationally. It was in the process of being enforced and we didn't even have to adopt it at the state level because it superseded anything we could do. It was just a state no-law law. On television I remember she said we needed it, and I went on television and said, "No, we do not." It was Charlie Royer that m.c.'d that one. He was with Channel Five at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And people just couldn't understand that? They just continued to push it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They continued, it finally passed, but I think the thing was that retailers had some flammable clothing left and they were being given a chance to get rid of it, with the full knowledge that there was a problem with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did all this start? Is this something that was generated from a personal story?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think because doctors witnessed these things happening to children. Some of the children's clothing was so flammable that if they got near an electric stove, within a few inches, it could become flammable. That was a rarity, but it had happened. So what happens, the exception forces the rule. Now it wasn't going to happen, I didn't believe, and we didn't need to kill local businesses in order to enforce the law, because there was a chance in five million that it would ever happen here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a very big law with a big impact, but I wondered how often would children's clothes catch on fire?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't happen very often. Usually it was caused by children playing with fire, playing with matches, and things like that. And yes, it was necessary to get flammable fabric off the market. Then Channel Five went

on. Representative Georgette Valle got them all stirred up. This guy who was a reporter on Channel Five at that time, Don McGaffin, he was blabbing about that and he came down to the Legislature and talked to the House. We had a hearing on the bill but we didn't broadcast it because we didn't want to go through that ordeal again with Representative Valle. It was dumb. You don't do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She just simply didn't understand? She was on a roller-coaster there and kept going?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was on a roller-coaster being pushed by Channel Five and Dr. Bergman. The bill passed, it got signed, but it was already in effect. It was a no-law law. It got lots of publicity and a lot of people got to see people being burned up, or facsimiles, and it wasn't happening. It was an untruth. It wasn't true, as I saw it. I didn't think that we had the right to use that to ignite or scare or frighten people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work on it on the national level previously? Did you have anything to do with this? Somehow your name got connected with this but I was not able to trace it very far.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I was chairing the committee in the House. National acts which affected state bills included the Wholesome Meat Act which affected the bacon bill, and the Garnishment Act, which was part of the National Truth in Lending Act. We didn't help to change anything with that flammable fabrics bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay. I just had two more things on the federal level that I want to discuss. There's a funny story by Emmett Watson about you meeting George Meany in an elevator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. We had gotten all these congressmen elected. We had changed the face of Congress. We elected Senator Magnuson and Jackson, the only two senators. We elected Lloyd Meeds, Tom Foley, Brock Adams and Floyd Hicks. Julia Butler Hansen was already there. We didn't change Congress, but we

changed Washington State from being represented by Republicans, to being represented by Democrats. After we had done that and been recognized by the Democratic Party nationally, over the voter registration drive – this was right after the election of '64 – I was back in D.C. for a COPE meeting. We were in the AFL-CIO building and I had gotten on the elevator and rang for my floor. I was going down and someone on the elevator had come from the top floor and I got on about the fifth floor, and it was George Meany. He was the only other one on the elevator. I recognized him and I said to him, "You must be George Meany." He sort of grinned, half shy – he was kind of shy – and he said, "Yes, I am." We got to the main floor and he started to get out and I said, "Would you mind riding up to the top floor again and down again so I can look at you for a while?" He cracked up! He didn't ride up. He got off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you talk or just look at him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just looked at him. I just stared. I think he said something about the state of Washington and what a great job we had done. I think he said that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You introduced yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I introduced myself and that I was from Washington State, "Lorraine Wojahn," and he recognized the state, not me. And I asked him if he'd ride up and down again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it just being in the presence of a great man? What were you doing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was just awestruck. I don't know why because I wasn't particularly enthused about him. But he was there. And he'd been telling world leaders what to do. I guess I really wanted to talk to him but couldn't think of anything to say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were just in the presence of some kind of power.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was in the presence of something different, yes. Let me tell you what happened when I met Vice President Humphrey. I had my picture taken on the steps of the

Capitol with him. Then when we went into the Senate Chambers, there were about fifty COPE people from the various states, and we were all introducing ourselves and I was so excited that I went up to him and held out my hand and said, "I'm Lorraine Washington from the state of Wojahn." He blinked at me and he started to laugh!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know what you had said when it came out of your mouth?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He started to laugh and then I realized what I'd said, yes. He was really funny. He was really tall, you know, but not when he stood beside President Johnson who was 6'4". Vice President Humphrey was over six feet. Much taller than I. He only looked short when beside President Johnson. He was a great man, I thought. He shouldn't have lost, but he did. Those are two funny things. They really happened. And I remember at that same time it was so cold; it was late November just after the 1964 election that they had us all back in D.C. It was sort of a thank-you tour. We'd all been in the AFL-CIO building. I don't know why I was late getting on the elevator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe you were just exhausted.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was. I went to see Kennedy's grave at that time. I went all by myself. No one would go with me because it was so cold. I took a cab and went over to Arlington Cemetery. I let the cab go and I damn near froze to death, because I had to walk and walk to find another cab. The flame was lit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it like a pilgrimage, going to the grave, for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. I needed to do it and I was going home the next day and I needed to do it that afternoon. So I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you plan to do it, or was it just something that when you got there you felt you ought to do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted to do it, and I knew I was going to do it, but I didn't know when. I just got up early that morning and went out and got a cab. I had a hat and coat on, but I didn't

have a scarf, and I didn't realize how bitterly cold the cemetery was with the wind blowing through it. It's kind of like a little valley and the wind blew. The George Washington Curtis mansion – who gave the land – was right above that, and the wind blew down and whipped across there. I needed a scarf over my head. I remember when I got back to the hotel and ran into a staff person with the AFL-CIO who was doing consumer work, he looked at me and I looked like I was half dead. He said, "What happened to you?" And I said, "I went to the Kennedy grave." He said, "You should have let us know. Someone would have gone with you or taken you." I did things on my own. I didn't know that you could ask and get things done for you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you want to go by yourself? Was it a private thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I really didn't. I wanted someone to go with me. It didn't matter. I didn't care. I knew I was going and I didn't push anybody to go. Maybe I really wanted to go by myself, I don't know, but I did. That's always the way I am. You end up doing something for yourself because nobody wants to do it or you don't think they want to do it, and so you do it.



## CHAPTER 4: FIRST CAMPAIGN FOR THE LEGISLATURE

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We've talked about your work as a lobbyist leading up to your decision to enter the Legislature. Let's explore now what happened to get you into the Legislature. Sometime in 1968 Representative George Sheridan from the Twenty-seventh District retired after serving two terms. Did that start the ball rolling?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He elected to run for county commissioner because the person who had been commissioner for a number of years in Pierce County did not tell the Party that he was going to retire until the Friday before the first day of filing. He had rather paved the way for his buddy who happened to be a Republican – we believed – to replace him. This was Harry Sprinker who was retiring and he had a very good friend who was a football coach – although it was never really confirmed. But anyway, the Party struggled to find someone over the weekend to file for the Democratic nomination and they immediately struck on George Sheridan because he had been county chair of the Democratic Party for years and was very well known. They approached him and he said he wouldn't run unless he could have someone replace him in the House of Representatives he believed could carry on the work that he had started. So the Party struggled to find someone. I was approached to run and I finally decided to do it, but by that time it was Wednesday of filing week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting right up to it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. So George and I met at the County-City Building and he filed for county commissioner and I filed for the Representative from the Twenty-Seventh Legislative District.

He just barely won the election. I just barely won by 309 votes. But prior to that, after talking with my employers, they had told me that I should run and that they would have a different job for me if I won. Then, towards the end of the campaign, when it looked as though I was

going to lose, the Labor Council hired someone to replace me. They told me that one of the Board members had challenged their decision to keep me on. I would not have run for office if I had known they would not keep me on. So I went down to withdraw, thinking I would get my job back, and the county auditor, Jack Sonntag talked me out of it because the labor movement in Pierce County was strongly in support of my candidacy, although the labor movement at the state level was not supportive, and I worked for the State Labor Council. So I was persuaded to stay in the race. There was a wife of a former legislator running for my seat, Ann Burns. There was a former legislator, Marian Gleason, also running. And then there was a man running on the Republican ticket.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And John Sullivan and Kenneth Fernandez, both Democrats running for the nomination, so you had a crowd.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. There were three women, two men and then one man running on the Republican side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hal Howell was the Republican.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Hal Howell was a Republican, right. Jack Pyle, who then covered politics for the Tacoma News Tribune, called it a "girly" game because it was really a battle between a former legislator's wife, a former legislator, and me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were these two men considered non-contenders?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not strong contenders because neither one had held office before. But Sullivan was a very strong name in the Twenty-seventh Legislative District. Very good name – good Irish name. We had three little "Romes" in the district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Three ethnic groups that were mainly Catholic?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Roman Catholic, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would be the Irish, the Slavs and who was the third?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Italian. The two men were Italian and Irish, and then there were the three women contenders. One who had never held office before – me. One who had held office before, Marian Gleason, and one whose husband had held office, Ann Burns. Bruce Burns had been a prominent attorney in Tacoma and had served several terms in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what was he doing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was practicing law and didn't choose to run again. He had given up the seat, I think, to George Sheridan. I don't think he'd run the last time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To back up just a bit. George Sheridan wanted someone to carry on his work. What was he known for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a good representative of the people. He knew the philosophy of the Party because he had been the chairman of the district for a number of years. He knew everyone in the district, I think. He wanted someone who was equally approachable as he was. Someone who was knowledgeable in politics, which I was because I'd been working for the Labor Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he consider you the proper successor out of all these people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He refused to get into it. But he did agree to go down with me to file, which was the only show of support that he was willing to give.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Subtle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Subtle, but it was all right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get in the paper that way? Both of you filing at the same time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every night they announced who'd filed, and it showed that he had filed for County Commissioner and I filed for his seat, but they didn't editorialize on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody made any connection?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Nothing was ever said.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it would be very subtle, indeed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They'd have had to editorialize and do a byline article if they'd done that, but they didn't. They may have done a byline article, but there was no editorializing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you just hear about this race or did someone come to you and say, "Will you do this?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was approached by L.H. Pedersen, who was secretary of the Pierce County Central Labor Council at the time. George did not approach me. He just listened to who was being suggested.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He didn't object?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn't object. Marian Gleason had fallen out of the favor of the Party because she had taken a chairmanship in the coalition in 1963.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain a bit more extensively what that was all about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a coalition formed in 1963. It was over public power – electrical power. A lot of eastern Washington legislators fell in with private power. It was a public/private power battle and Bill Day was running for Speaker in a coalition with Republicans. John O'Brien was running as a Democrat and it got to be very bitter. It got to be very bad, and Bill Day won because of the coalition they were able to form. Republicans had the majority and they took over, and the whole session was grim. It was so bad that legislators were not speaking to one another. Marian Gleason took a chairmanship under the coalition and fell out of favor with the Democrats because of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, because she was willing to work with the coalition, she was then ostracized?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She did not work with them. She voted to organize the House which everybody did, and objected at the proper times, but she took a chairmanship, which I don't think should ever have created a situation for her, but it did. I

was never angry with her over this. I never felt that it was appropriate to take it out on her. Of course, there was another coalitionist from the district, a fellow by the name of O'Connell, who had joined with the coalition to elect the Speaker. She did not vote to support the coalition Speaker, but O'Connell did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She didn't go as far as that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She stayed with the Party, and was a Democrat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he punished in the same way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was ousted the next time around. Ted Bottiger took him out in 1964. That's the reason a number of Democrats were going to run against him. I think there were about eight or ten people running and the Party – the majority share of them – got together and told the others, "You can't run – Sullivan had run at that time – because Bottiger is the strongest candidate and we've got to have the strongest candidate. If we get them all up there we're going to split it up and no one will win." So the Party came out in favor of Bottiger, as I remember. And he won, but would not have, probably, otherwise. And he was a very strong candidate. He was an assistant attorney general. He later became majority leader of the House and Senate. He was very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had a big career. Just to be clear, is Tacoma a public or private power area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Public. More public, because we had built our own dams and provided our own power. We still have a substantial amount of power from our own dams, although Puget Sound Power and Light, a private power company, still is available in Pierce County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unlike Spokane...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which was private power. That was a battle. It was eastern Washington against western Washington, except for a few like Representative Bob Perry who was a private power person. He worked for private power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had a slightly different interest.

**Sen. Wojahn:** As a matter of fact, the private power people would gather their employees and they would go out doorbelling for candidates. On behalf of private power candidates. That happened a lot. Tacoma was public power. Tacoma was more Democrat. It always has been. It's a working man's town. We built our own dams and provided our own utilities. So it would be public power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Marian Gleason seen as a person who was enabling private power?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think so. She was called a coalitionist. It was just the idea that she took a chairmanship and maybe should not have. Chairmen are usually strong in their own right and are able to wield a fair amount of power. If used wisely, it would not create a problem. As I remember, there were no problems created by her as a chairman. But she did take a chairmanship so they took her out. George Sheridan replaced her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was also wondering if – she had served in '57, '59, '61 and '63 – because a woman had already served the District, did it make it easier or make no difference for another woman to come in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it made it easier, perhaps, for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People were a bit used to the idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it made it easier. But you have to remember that I had some things going for me, too. My husband was an architect; he was known. My son was the first bat boy for the Tacoma Giants baseball team, precursor to the Tacoma Rainiers, and got a lot of publicity when the team came to Tacoma. They held a contest for bat boy and he won it. So he got a lot of publicity through that, and so the name had gotten stronger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were doing a lot of things yourself.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I'd been president of McKinley Pre-school, but only a small fish in a big pond. I came from the eastside of Tacoma; it



was the blue-collar working man's area of Tacoma, always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, could you describe your Twenty-seventh District. Who lived there? What were the boundaries?

**Sen. Wojahn:** At that time it was a melting pot because most of the minorities lived here. The blacks and the orientals were almost all concentrated in the Hilltop of Tacoma or in Fife, where the orientals had their truck farms. Most of the oriental population was confined to the Twenty-seventh Legislative District, either through the Hilltop area with the blacks, or also in Fife.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you say "oriental," who is that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Japanese truck gardeners.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they all came back after the internment?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They were back by that time. A lot of the lettuce growers in Fife were oriental, but not all. One of them had a greenhouse doing flowers and plants, but most of the berry farmers were Caucasians. And then the large Columbia Gardens, which was a large corporate farming area in Pierce, hired a lot of Japanese, I believe, to work in their gardens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had this very urban/rural mixture?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had farmers. I had dairy farmers and fruit growers and truck farming and berry farms in the valley. I had the Port-industrial, which was in the district. I had all downtown Tacoma, which was business. Later, the Twenty-seventh Legislative District encompassed most of the North end, but not at first. I always had all the downtown area and the Port-industrial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had the Hilltop area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Hilltop, McKinley Hill, Eastside Fife, Milton, Fife Heights and Brown's Point, which took in the Port-industrial, all around to Dash Point. I had Dash Point. All the way to the King County line.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A real mixture of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a huge district. But the population in some areas was not dense and therefore I had a larger territory.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, a lot of different kinds of interests.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of different interests, but we had melded with them. Our dry cleaner was oriental. They were close friends of ours. Many of the kids who played sports with our son were blacks, like Eddy Anderson and Dave Carr. Luther Carr was a wonderful University of Washington football player. As a matter of fact, my son, when he was a junior in high school and had a date, he would always go down – I'd begun to work by that time – to Eddy Anderson's mother to ask if she thought the corsage he'd bought for his girl was all right. Eddy was black and they were really good friends. I remember my son Mark was going with Alice Hale whose father later became a Supreme Court justice, Frank Hale. She was going to Stadium High School and they were invited somewhere for a party, but Eddie was not invited, so Alice and Mark said, "We're not going, either. Anywhere that Eddie can't go, we're not going to go." These things were subtle. And I had Salishan in the district, a housing project which was built for the war workers during the war and which became public housing. A lot of minorities moved in. So I had all of that. And that's probably where I won many of my votes, because we did get them out to vote. I had worked that area getting out the vote and registering people. Prior to that, I had organized a voter registration drive in which we registered a whole bundle of new people. The next election I was running for office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Little did you know that you were creating your own base.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is true and it actually happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is amazing. Well, good things come around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything that goes around comes around. I really sealed my own election,

but I've never thought of it that way before because I only won by 309 votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there some areas of the district that were more difficult for you? Was it a pretty Democratic district?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was a Democratic district. Not so much in Fife, because I wasn't well known out there. The service clubs out there had me out to speak to their groups. John O'Connell was Attorney General. He was running – he didn't live in the district, he lived in the Twenty-sixth District at that time – but he and the prosecuting attorney John McCutcheon, who was also running, would take me out with them to campaign in Fife. I'm sure they appeared on platforms with Ann Burns, also. She was a good candidate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somehow though, you won.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know of anything that was particularly earth-shattering. I attended a lot of meetings, although I found that doorbelling was much more effective because you only get a handful of people at meetings. You can be more effective by doorbelling, so I doorbelled the whole district. I had doorbelling parties.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go into your campaign already knowing how to campaign?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. I'd been working campaigns. I set up doorbelling crews and get-out-the-vote crews, and I knew what to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just hit the ground running?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. I hit the ground running because I was so late in filing and the other two had had an advantage because they were really better known by their participation. I'd never participated in party politics beyond the extent of the Labor Council. We did endorse both sides, but very few Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have much support from the Party?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not during the primary. Although individual politicians supported me because they were angry at Marian Gleason.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Party hold off and wait?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Now that I think about it, John O'Connell and McCutcheon, who was prosecuting attorney or worked for the prosecutor, took me under their wing after the primary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the primary was a sort of free-for-all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A free-for-all. I don't think I had much support from any Party people, except those that did it under cover.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a personal thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** As a personal thing. One of my dear friends, Ethel Walk, was very, very helpful to me, and she was a Party regular. I knew her from the Labor Council and she'd helped with some of our COPE projects. She helped me. She did all of Fife. She mailed all of Fife on my behalf. I remember that because she got writer's cramp. She didn't complain, but she said by the time she got through she was scribbling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She did it by hand?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You had to do it by hand then. You didn't have typists. We didn't have anything. We had a card index of everybody that we'd gotten from the auditor's office and we had them all on three by five cards. I had a stack of small little cards that tall—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are gesturing like it was three feet tall?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was five feet tall and they were all little, tiny cards, three by five cards, with the names of people on them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was a "kitchen table" operation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. That's the way we did it. I had people coming in to help me. I had a crew of women who are all dead now. Only one of them is still living, Mary Triplett. I had a crew of five people led by Reba Verlo, who had organized doorbelling crews also. She was a very good friend of L.H. Pedersen who was the Central Labor Council

secretary/treasurer. I'd worked with L.H. Pedersen on COPE issues, and his secretary, Charlotte Zenk, and Reba. Reba organized the card indexing and the mailing for me. I would leave my door open at night. People would come in all during the day or night because some of them worked days. Some of them who worked nights would come in a few hours in the daytime before they went to bed, and they made up a card file for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this was literally in your kitchen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In my kitchen. The house was designed by my husband's father and it was an English Tudor design, and in the kitchen we had these kitchen queens, free standing cabinets made of solid mahogany. You remember those? But they didn't go clear to the ceiling, they just went part way up to the ceiling, and we had the cat perch up there with a basket because it was real warm by the furnace. One day, the cat, who was up in the upper deck sleeping, all of a sudden she decided to come down and she jumped right down onto the cards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, no! All your work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Scared the woman to death! Oh, no. Coffee all over! She had a perch right by the card table. She jumped from the perch onto the card table, but it was still quite high, and landed right in the middle of all of our work. Three women working and coffee went all over. The gal shrieked. It was frightening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd be concentrating, and all of a sudden – cat!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had people working for me, from bartenders who tended bar in the evening and came by when the bar closed. They would go home late. Others who worked swing shift would come in about eleven a.m. and work until about three p.m. until they had to go to work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work round the clock, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had everything laid out for them, always. And we fed them. The coffee pot was always on. I cooked for them and I just kept things going. I didn't actually do anything

myself. I was busy making coffee and baking cookies and fixing their lunch or dinner. It was a wild go-round. During this time we were landscaping our front yard, so we'd ripped up everything and were ready to pour the concrete before the primary and it poured down rain. We had a plank running from our front porch clear out to the sidewalk so that people could get onto the front porch and not walk through the mud and drag it into the house. It was awful, but it worked!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's always that way, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was so funny. I remember someone called me and they wanted a recipe for a punch which I had made for church. I belonged to Holy Communion, which was an Episcopal Church. But anyway, I'd done some work for them and I'd made some punch for a Sunday after-church coffee hour, and someone called me in the middle of all this and wanted the recipe for my punch. I said, "I haven't got time to write it for you. I'll get the book out and if you want to come and write it down you can come and do it, but I can't spare the time." They thought I was crazy. You have no time. Every minute was taken up. I would fall into bed about one a.m. and get up at seven a.m. because someone would be coming in. We just left the door unlocked. They could come and go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were excited by this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Ensley Llewellyn was my PR person. I remember he came in one day to get some more information and we had some fresh peaches. Reba said, "Do you want some fresh peaches?" and he said, "Yes," so she got him dished up with some peaches and it was the cat's dish!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, no! Maybe you were working a little too hard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She didn't know the difference. We had a pantry and a kitchen, so the pantry was where I could work without interfering with my working staff in the kitchen. We had some at the dining room table and some in the living room, depending on how busy we were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what did your family think of this invasion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were never home anyway. My older son was married by that time. Just one left. He was at Oregon State University.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought one boy was in the Marines at that time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was Mark. He'd gone to Oregon State and then he was in the Marine Corps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'd read somewhere that he was actually in Vietnam.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was on Okinawa. He never went to Vietnam. Alan Hale did. They enlisted under the buddy system. They both enlisted at the same time. And Mark did not tell us. He told us that Alan had enlisted in the Marine Corps and Alan told Frank and Mary Hale that Mark had enlisted, but neither one of them told us that they had enlisted. We were comparing notes once, I called Mary to commiserate and she was commiserating with me and we found out that they'd enlisted at the same time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how did you feel about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Terrible. Frank had been in the paratroopers and he knew the Marine Corps is the lousiest branch of the service you can get in to because they are the step-child of the Navy. They are under the Navy Department and they get all the leavings. It's a very bad branch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Most people think that Marines are the elite.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's not an elite. It's assault troops and it is strongest as far as activity, but the weakest as far as financing is concerned. They take the leavings. Frank knew that. I didn't know that. My brother knew that. He was in the Army. He had a fit that Mark had done that. He didn't tell us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why did he do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was in college and they told him that if they would enlist they only had to go for one year. They guaranteed them one year.

Well, naturally, they were cannon fodder. They didn't last a year, usually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he feel that he would be drafted anyway, so he might as well take charge of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** As long as they stayed in school they weren't taking kids. But he wasn't doing very well in school, and he really didn't know what he wanted to do with his life. So it was kind of an interim that he chose to do this. But it would have been better if he'd enlisted in the Navy or Army, not the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps was so desperate for people that they were actually drafting them into the Marine Corps. We found that out. A neighbor of mine's son was one of those drafted into the Army. The Army had them all line up when they were inducted and they had them number off, one, two, three, one, two, three, and then they said, "Everyone with number three step forward." And Tom stepped forward and his buddy and they said, "You're now in the U.S. Marine Corps." And I contacted Congressman Floyd Hicks about that and he blew up. They stopped that, but they got a whole batch of kids that way. One of them was killed. Tom Osinski's buddy was killed; the buddy was a neighbor of my older son, Toby.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a bad time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Marine Corps is supposed to be a selective branch. They never drafted. They never drafted in the Navy. Only the Army was able to draft. But they did that, and that is an absolute fact, because I immediately wrote a letter to Floyd Hicks who was our congressman, and said, "This is wrong." That's after the young man was killed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did your family feel about the Vietnam war?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was wrong. I thought we had no business being there. I blew up all over Senator Magnuson's wife's secretary. Senator Magnuson found out and was very angry with me. After the Tet Offensive, all the abuses became public. For example, it became known that the U.S. was drafting

eighteen year old boys and sending them to Vietnam but that the Vietnamese weren't drafting their own eighteen year old boys. I just blew up, because I said, "We have no reason for being there. We're just taking the part of the Vietnamese and the landowners in favor of land." And after I had blown up at Fredrika in Seattle, I went back to D.C. to lobby. Senator Magnuson called me into his office, and he was very blunt. He said, "How dare you do that?" But, I was able to tell him that the Monday after I had blown up to Fredrika, the Senate had called for land reforms in Vietnam, which addressed my main concern.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he heard you on some level?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He heard me. And that's when it all began to come apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was it you understood that, because it seems like the general run of people did not understand that at that early date? Had you been reading something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think you could work for the Labor Council without knowing that. We read things and knew what was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The labor movement itself was very split over Vietnam.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know they were, and I was one who was split over it because I believed it was wrong. We were sending our kids over there to be killed, and up until the Tet Offensive, they wouldn't even draft their own kids. Vietnam did not draft any kids, I'm told, until they got to be twenty-one, and our kids were being sent over after their eighteenth birthday. Before they were nineteen they could be sent. And that was wrong. After the Tet Offensive that's when it all came out. Some of these things came out that we did not know. I was in and out of Washington, D.C. lobbying or attending meetings of the AFL-CIO, national COPE meetings, actually, and voting things. And so you become aware of what was going on. So it was probably through osmosis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a certain amount of tension in the labor movement over this question.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was tension over that, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In fact, it has been said that by 1968 the labor movement was so badly split that that was one of the reasons President Nixon was elected. The labor movement kind of stepped back from the Democratic Party over Vietnam.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was badly split, and I don't even know which unions did what. All I know is that I was adamantly opposed to the war and I thought it was wrong. I thought it was wrong to draft our kids and send them over and not have the cooperation of the Vietnamese. It was the same thing in Korea. The same idea. No declared war. We weren't allowed to go in and fight it like we were going to win it. My brother was in Korea. I knew what was going on there, and I guess that that maybe colored my thinking, too. Although I didn't resent his being there because he was in the Army and he was permanent and that was his job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He chose it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He chose it. But it did bother me with Vietnam because by that time he was retired. Mark stayed stationed on Okinawa and he worked seven days a week. He was in supply and Alan Hale was in the Corps of Engineers. Alan Hale ended up in Vietnam and ended up with diabetes probably brought on by stress, I don't know. Mark was stationed in Okinawa the whole time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he managed to avoid it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** By working seven days a week; they told them, "If you're not on the job, you're going to end up going south." That meant they were going to Vietnam.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would get your attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That got his attention. He said that all he did was work and sleep. He said he didn't even buy a Coke. He spent no money; he sent it all home because he was going to get married when he got back and because he saved all of his money, he had to pay income tax on

his savings account. He was very upset over that. He paid \$14.07 as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least it wasn't a huge amount.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. But he was offended. He was a Lance Corporal. No money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your other son, what was he doing? Did he avoid all this somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Toby was in a medical/dental reserve unit stationed at the Presidio in San Francisco. He later developed Hodgkin's Disease. He died in June of 1969.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did his illness come on suddenly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't know it. He had it, but they didn't recognize it. They hadn't done an X-ray of his lung. They did one the year before and there was nothing there, and then they did one after his six-month Army service. He was not drafted because he was in the reserves, and then after his one-weekend-a-month where he was going through the maneuvers, he passed out. He belonged to Western Clinic because he was working at St. Regis. They discovered that there was a problem and they did a thoracotomy and found out it was Hodgkin's Disease.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he had been sick for a little while but nobody knew what was happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody knew what it was. I remember when he told us, we were in the kitchen having dinner and he and his wife came in and it looked like the sky had fallen, and they told us, and I just felt like the end of the world had come. He lasted less than a year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have to have chemotherapy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not chemo, he had cobalt treatment. They were doing cobalt. During that time he almost died several times.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty horrendous, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. He never did get it to go into remission. They couldn't give him any

more cobalt because it would paralyze him. I remember taking him to the doctor and he said, "We have to give him more, but I know how to do it." He took him into the hospital on Friday and he died on Sunday. He was at death's door at that time. The doctor had sense enough to realize it. The doctor was giving him cobalt. Later, he had chemo too, I believe. He had both. It wasn't X-ray, it was actual cobalt treatments. Developed it in '68 and died in '69.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's too fast.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Not as fast as cancer of the pancreas, but fast. Nothing they could do. If they'd discovered it in time they could have saved him because Hubert Humphrey's son lived. They discovered it early.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand you donated his records for medical research?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We gave them all to Western Clinic. They used his records. Through the Western Clinic they were given to the University of Washington to work on. It was after that that they discovered a treatment that was fairly effective, and they cut back on the cobalt, which was very damaging. The breakthrough came at the University of Washington, as I understand it. The one for leukemia and also Hodgkin's.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that help you feel that it wasn't all just a waste?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That it wasn't all for nothing. Yes. We were glad to do it. They called and asked if we would be willing to do that, and of course we would. They had done a post mortem on him anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think a parent can get over things like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You never do. Never. But it happens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can imagine. And this is at the same time that you're making this whole big change in your life. How did you keep yourself going?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was going to give up the Legislature because I needed to be home, I

thought, and I was advised not to. The doctor said, “Don’t do it, because anything you do isn’t going to last anyway.” He was either in the hospital or I had care for him. We brought him home because his wife was working. They had bought a house. We had someone with him. I had to be in the Legislature because we were still in session, I guess a special session by that time, and his wife took her vacation time; then my husband took his vacation time to care for him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did those experiences influence how you felt about health care and hospice, and all those issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. The issues, yes. He had really good care because he had special nurses. Shortly after that, hospitals developed intensive care units.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can just imagine that going through such a thing would color all your views on health care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It sure sensitizes you to what can happen. You understand how it could destroy a family. The cost, for one thing. They had no children and his wife could continue to work, and we didn’t want her to give up her job. She was working for a neurosurgeon and we didn’t want her to give that up. And that’s when St. Regis adopted a better health plan as a result of it; because of Toby, they went into a health plan that would help him and help future employees. Their health plan was very bad; it didn’t cover a lot, but they were able to change it and they did that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some good came of this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of changes occurred as a result of that that I look back on now. I realize that intensive care became a uniform part of hospital care. The cobalt treatment was abandoned and a search for the cure was intensified, and the large corporation he worked for was humanized.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s some kind of legacy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When he was in high school he worked for a painter and I wonder if that contributed to his breathing problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean he might have poisoned himself somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was sanding things down in anticipation for the coatings and they didn’t wear masks. He worked on a bridge on the Skookumchuck River between here and Centralia. They were sanding that down in anticipation of red-leading and painting that. He was a “gofer” doing all these things, and I just have an idea that this is what caused it, because now they wear masks. We were not aware of environmental hazards at that time. They were using all kinds of paints and lacquers. He worked for this painting contractor, and my other son worked in supply. He worked for the Johns Manville Company working with asbestos. They got jobs with the help of their dad who was an architect and they always got summer work. They went to the berry fields before that. They worked in the berry fields out in Fife picking berries from when they were about eight years old and on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a big thing for a lot of kids.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of kids did it, and if they stayed the season they got a bonus. I know that one time I took them out to work and this gal looked at them and she said, “Are any of them in high school yet?” and I said, “No.” She said, “Okay, they can work. Otherwise we’d make one of their parents come with them,” because they’d throw berries at each other. The older the kids would play.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d think it would be the other way around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the little kids worked fine. Toby picked cucumbers one year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hard work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was easier than picking berries, almost. Especially raspberries are not too hard to pick, but strawberries were terrible. Cucumbers, that wasn’t too bad. They could sit on the ground and pick them. They liked to. These are the hallmarks of growing up. I remember the day that Toby said, as a three-year-old, “I’ll never drink any more milk

because all it is, is grass.” I’ll never forget that. I’ll never forget the day that Mark admitted to breaking a neighbor’s window. I’ll never forget the day they went and picked some pansies in the neighbor’s yard and brought them home to me and how angry the neighbor was until the boys apologized. I was a den mother for Cub Scouts. I had a large den because we had the biggest house. Our house was always a disaster when the kids came.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if all the things you did in the community over the years, when you did come to run, people remembered you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably it helped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was, perhaps, a case of “good associations.” Here you show up again and you’re a trustworthy person.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I attended the city-wide PTA meetings because I was the McKinley Elementary School Preschool President, but I never became a city-wide PTA officer. I got to know some of the people, but I didn’t get to

know them city-wide because we were confined to our own little areas, mostly. We only came together once a month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somehow it added up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It happened, yes. I had moved here from Seattle when the boys were little. I think Toby was five and Mark was two-and-one-half. My husband’s brother was born in the house that we bought which was the Wojahn family home designed and built by my husband’s father who was an architect. Gil was born a block away. So they were there forever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Deep roots. That helps. When you were campaigning, how did you raise money? Did you go to all these groups?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had fundraisers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have them in your home?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I knew most of the lobbyists because I had been a lobbyist and I think I wrote letters.



*Raising first campaign funds with Lt. Governor John Cherberg, L.H. Pedersen, Congressman Floyd Hicks*



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a philosophy about who you would accept money from?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I accepted from everybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn't have any kind of rule for yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Anybody could contribute. I wouldn't take a lot. No one would give me very much anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You weren't in any danger!

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Like fifty dollars, one hundred dollars. I think the biggest contribution I got was two hundred and fifty dollars, which was a lot of money. And then legislators helped one another. We could do that because it was before disclosure. So Bob Charette gave me money and John O'Brien gave me money and Leonard Sawyer gave me money. Even as a novice going in, I got money from lobbyists and they would encourage lobbyists to send to me. I had a budget of thirteen hundred dollars, I think, for the primary and I think I had to advance that and then I got it all back. I've never put one penny of my own money into any campaign I've ever run. You never do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the Maria Cantwell model is not for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Not for me. That was before disclosure, too. Nobody knew where the money came from, although my records were clear. We kept good records. I had a treasurer, even then. Actually, my PR person was my treasurer. I think I had the money sent to him and we both had to sign the checks. It was Ensley Llewellyn, who had been the Commanding General of Washington National Guard and he did it all, collected the money, knew how much we had always and what we could spend. I used institutional advertising, which consisted of three items: a doorbell brochure; yard signs; and as much newspaper advertising as our campaign could afford.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Endorsement lists?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, no. I didn't use endorsement lists so much. You needed to tell the voter what you wanted to accomplish if elected, what your

values were and then you had to have a few yard signs. Those are the three things you needed to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that's where your money would go?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's where our money went.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your platform? Do you remember what you said you wanted to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A review of the property taxes. A review of the whole tax structure of the state of Washington. I didn't mention an income tax, but that was, of course, one of the big ones. The unfairness of the B&O tax. So it was based mostly on taxes and consumer protection.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that resonated with your people in this community?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And it was okay with the labor movement. They were for an income tax. I don't think I ever mentioned an income tax, but it was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Governor Evans already coming out for an income tax, or did that come a little bit later?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he came out a little bit later. But he was Governor when I was first elected and he was there for eight more years, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Twelve altogether. Dan Evans was first elected in 1964.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was re-elected in '68. That's when I was first elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The same as you, and then again in '72. And then went out of office in '76. I've read that your campaign was organized by – he was described as – an aspiring law student.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, that was Ramon Escure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then also the Reverend Ernest Brazil.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was first co-chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you get involved with him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** L.H. Pedersen, who was secretary/treasurer of the Pierce County Labor Council, knew him. Hilltop was in my district and he introduced me to the Reverend Brazil. Harlan S. McCord was my first campaign chair. He was an old-time Democrat and a disciple of Eugene Debs. He believed in everything Debs did and had followed his career – for which Debs spent one-third of his career in jail advocating for everything that’s now law. I really wanted someone else to co-chair my committee and when Mr. Pedersen introduced me to the Reverend Brazil, I liked him and asked him if he would co-chair my election committee and he accepted. He was a dear man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What sort of things did he do for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He did things you can’t do now. I prepared this little blue handout to fit in with the church bulletin with my picture and my platform on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have special things that would appeal to that community?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just the standard?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The standard one, but I just used it for that church, and he put it in the church bulletin. And then the Reverend Boles, the Minister of St. John Baptist Church, did the same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn’t that a bit unusual?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. You can’t do that anymore! I just said, “Do you suppose you could help me?” And he said, “I’ll put it in the church bulletin.” We didn’t use the bulletin; we used a separate piece of paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he speak up on your behalf?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He doorbelled some. And a priest at Holy Communion Church, Father Winkley, doorbelled with me. All over Hilltop.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would look good, wouldn’t it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All over Hilltop. I remember I went to one family and I asked to see the lady of the house, and they said, “Come in, she’s in here,” and she was in a coffin!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was awful! Awful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you just pretend you knew her?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Father Winkley was doorbelling with me. I called him in and he said a prayer over her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quick thinking.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One day my husband was doorbelling up in Hilltop in the early evening, and he introduced himself; they didn’t get the name, and he said that Reverend Brazil had endorsed me and asked if they knew Reverend Brazil? They said no, they didn’t know him, but they asked, “Are you Reverend Brazil?” And Reverend Brazil was black! Another time I went to the door and a little boy about four years old answered the door and I said, “Is your mother home?” and he didn’t say a word, he just took off running and yelled, “Mother, the Avon lady is here.” It was so funny: “The Avon lady’s here!” We doorbelled everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that’s the way to reach people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn’t know whether they were registered or not. We didn’t buy a list. I don’t think you could get them at that time. I’ve never bought a doorbelling list; I just doorbelled everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People talk to each other, so even if that person doesn’t vote... Every person you touch reaches out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One person represents six other votes. Reaches six people more. That’s a rule of thumb I’ve used and also, that one-sixth of the jobs in the State of Washington are created by the ports. I don’t know how many. It’s huge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A big number, anyway. More than you’d think. Some campaigners study different precincts and only go to the precincts

where they think they will get supported. Did you just go everywhere or were you a little more selective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. We did it scientifically. I knew enough to do this and I knew enough to use a reverse directory too, so I knew who was living there. I would use a reverse directory some of the time so that I knew the names of people with the address that I doorbelled myself. You can't even get reverse directories anymore, or they're very expensive. What we would do is take the last election or the last several elections, and figure out the precincts where the greatest majority of Democrat votes were cast. We'd start with the eighty percent Democrat precincts and go down to fifty percent and doorbell those precincts first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then if you had any energy left over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then we'd do the others. Then if we had any energy left we would go back and do the eighty percent precincts again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many times would you manage to sweep through your district?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Only once. And that was with help. I never did it all by myself, but I always wrote a note. I didn't let other people write a note on the literature if no one was at home; I wrote a note myself if I was at their door. And I would sign it. Several years ago, I doorbelled for Congressman Dicks and myself, I had someone working the other side of the street. If anyone wanted to talk to me she would call me over and I'd go over and talk to them. That's as short a time as four years ago. The last time I ran for office, I only did one precinct, but it was big one. I did parts of about six, but one full one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That takes a lot of energy. How did you keep yourself going through all this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Once you start – I couldn't do it now – I could work with a person and spend some time, but I'd cave in before I was even close to being through. I was tired, but it was good for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people gain energy, actually, from talking with people. Rather than feeling depleted, they actually feel buoyed up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did. I gained energy. And the more I did it the better I became, but I was exhausted when I got through. I suffered for a couple of days after that, but it was worth doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people have a way of shaking hands to save their hands. Did you do that, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If they opened the door I did shake hands. Some of them would never come out from behind their screen door. One of my people was bitten by a dog. She went to the hospital and we paid for her tetanus shot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be one of the perils.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I told them never to go if there's a sign or a dog or if you hear a dog barking, just get out of the yard because the door might open and the dog might pounce on them. This happened. Any place that was fenced, if they had their mail box on the fence, I never went in. You know enough not to do that. It's just by osmosis again. You feel your way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure. Thinking it through. You gave speeches. Were you on the radio at all or anything like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I bought some time on the radio. I bought saturation advertising the first time out because you needed to have all the radio stations in the Tacoma area saying the same thing at the same time. I did it at lunch time, to get the people who would take a sack lunch, go somewhere and eat while listening to the radio.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a slogan with your name?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The radio slots for the campaign were prepared by an advertising firm. I bought saturation at noon, lunch time, and at five p.m. and seven a.m., driving time. Radio time in those slots was real inexpensive. I spent money on radio advertising the first few times I ran. After that I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jumping ahead, did you ever use television? That's where the money certainly comes in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Couldn't afford it. I never raised that much money. The most I ever raised was about forty thousand and I didn't need that. I gave it to charity, the bulk of it. I stopped advertising in the News Tribune, except in 2000 I thanked the people, publicly, for electing me by buying a banner about an inch wide across a whole page of the paper. Just enough to say thank you. That's all the advertising they got. I didn't have any weeklies in the district, so there was nothing to spend money on there. I had to go to the Tribune which was very expensive. I only used one endorsement ad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people really swear by those, but you didn't find them very effective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I didn't. I'm willing to let someone else publish an endorsement ad using my name, but I used an endorsement ad only once. In the first place, you have to have the endorser's signature. And you have to spell their name correctly. Ensley Llewellyn didn't believe in endorsement ads either, because he believed you could lose votes by publishing names, if people reading the ad found names of people they distrusted or didn't like. But I talked him into an endorsement ad once when my opponent was a television personality, and I felt I needed it then. We asked everyone for two dollars and their signature and some people said, "We'll give you the two dollars, but we don't want you to use our names." Endorsement ads can be precarious. Your enemies are out there. The Tribune was one of them. And they tried to tarnish my reputation, but they didn't succeed. Every time I see an endorsement ad, I read it. I read every name on it. It rarely influences my vote, but sometimes it has and that's usually a vote against.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It can be loaded either way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet it can. You can get into trouble. McCord and Brazil were just wonderful. Everybody knew McCord. He was about 6'4", tall and skinny, and he was old and he wore a black tam. He was just a riot, and he

knew everybody. I believe he and Reba Verlo knew everybody in Tacoma. She could sit on the telephone for hours and call people and say, "You vote for Lorraine Wojahn, she's running." Sometimes she got people out of the district and they'd say, "We can't, we're not in her district."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, well, yes. "Tell your friends." She and McCord lived in the district. They lived right across the street from each other and she's the one who told me I had to have McCord as my campaign chairman. His son, Evan, is a Republican, but Harlan was a strong Democrat. They probably got so sick of listening to him talk about Eugene Debs growing up that one of them became a Republican. I hope his son, Evan, voted for me anyway. But it was real funny. Those were fun days, and the people that I worked with were also fun. Five of my closest campaign workers and precinct workers had a Christmas luncheon every year and we'd exchange little gifts, and I always had something special for them that I'd bought in Mexico or in Europe. Something that was fun. None are still living.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did these people stay with you year after year?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All the way through. Year after year. They were always there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that first campaign really set the tone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The first campaign set the tone for the ones ever after that. And I never stopped taking money from anyone who sent it. All they had with that was a right to talk to me about their issue. There were no promises. They knew where I was coming from. I was with the labor movement. I would always be with them, I believed. But when elected, I refused to go on the Labor committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask you about that. You said that the local labor people supported you but the state people were not as supportive. Is that because they didn't want to lose you as a worker?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Most of the state people were just fine, but there were unions that were split on the Vietnam war and I never learned to keep my mouth shut. That could have been. I could have created my own misery. I don't know. But I had enemies and I think I made an enemy when I got money for Floyd Hicks because that meant less money for their candidate. The vice presidents of the labor movement came from all over the state – eastern Washington. When I got money for Hicks, that meant less money for Foley, but they both won. It didn't matter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have been doing something right because you won the primary: 2,666 votes and Marian Gleason came second with 2,377.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Was it 360-vote difference?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** About 300 or so votes. A little less.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew that I was cooked with the Labor Council because they wouldn't have hired me back. You see, they found out, or believed – and they had their antennas out – that Marian Gleason was going to win, and they gave my job to somebody else just before the primary election. So I knew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were burning your bridges. Did you know her personally?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn't know her personally, but I never felt any animosity toward her. It was sort of "every man for himself." She was a nice lady. Her son worked for the Senate, you know. Bill Gleason worked for years for the Senate. He was always a gentleman. I ran out of gas on South Tacoma Way one day. I was running for the Senate, years after I had beaten his mother, and who came along but Bill Gleason when I was getting out of the car. I said, "I'm out of gas," and he took me to get more gas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was nice.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a professional.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She had worked pretty hard and was in the House for four sessions, but I

wondered what ever happened to her. What she did next.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What happened was that after she lost her election to George Sheridan, she ran for Tacoma City Clerk as a Republican and against a well-known Democrat incumbent. And that's where she got into trouble.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would she run as a Republican?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because if she'd run as a Democrat she'd have been eliminated in the primary. She wanted the job. Bobby Morris had been City Clerk for ages. Eventually, that became an appointed job, but at that time it was an elected job. He was the Democratic nominee and had been City Clerk for years and she ran against him as a Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That wouldn't make her very popular.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She should have run against him as a Democrat, but she couldn't win and she knew it and she figured she might win as a Republican. She should have taken stock of her district and known that a Republican didn't have much of a chance in Pierce County at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the general election, you got 12,287 and Mr. Hal Howell, the Republican, got only 5,701. So it was clear, you won hands down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Clear winner, yes. And it was that way ever after.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how did you celebrate your win?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. I don't think I did anything. We went down to the courthouse to watch the election returns, that's all I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you just tired? Did you know you would win once you got through the primary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew I was going to win. Al Howell was an airline pilot, a very attractive candidate. Also, he was a clown. He'd go to kids' parties. And that got him votes. I think he

became a clown to help himself win votes, I don't know. I thought it was kind of neat, you know. He was a clown to think he was going to win, too. I think I told him that. "You're a clown if you think you're going to win." But it wasn't fractious. It wasn't a negative campaign. I never liked negative campaigns. When I ran campaigns for various people running for office, I told them, "If you do a negative campaign, then I'm out." The labor movement did not do that at that time. That's the reason we lost sure races, because we wouldn't get into negative campaigning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it better to be for something, than just against things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You use their record against them, that's okay, but you never use personalities, a personal vendetta. Republicans did, often. Still do. Now they do it under cover. I'm told they did it to John McCutcheon. They went down to southwest Washington and spread rumors that McCutcheon was a drunk and a womanizer. He just barely lost. We know that. We picked up information. This is one of the things that I did when I worked for the Labor Council. When I went into an area, I would usually stay all night because I had to travel to evening meetings. I'd eat dinner and I'd mix with the people as much as possible and I picked up a lot of gossip. And I always took the gossip back. That's what they wanted to know. I picked up some bad things that were being said about different people, and I would report that to my superiors. This would be in a written report that I would record.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was just what you would hear?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted everything. They particularly wanted information on anybody who was a coalitionist, and they were still out there. They were never trusted again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Never? It didn't fade away after a while?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It never died. They mostly all lost eventually because the labor movement put in a strong effort to beat them. Anytime there

was a right-to-work law or an initiative out there, the labor movement would entrap them. And on public power, the labor movement would try to trap them. I remember one of the dams was a public/private power fight, a dam in Idaho, and I don't think that ever got built. There was a knock-down-drag-out over that one. You see, Bob Perry worked for private power, and he was one of the coalition votes for Bill Day, who became Speaker of the House during the coalition legislative years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just fierce at the time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very bad. Yes. And John O'Brien figured that he could have won as Speaker of the House if his caucus had supported him. But it didn't support him. The coalitionists took a few Democrat votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seven, I think it was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Marian Gleason was not among them, as I remember. She was not one. She did not vote with the Republicans to organize the House. She voted with the Democrats, but she took the chairmanship. But I don't think all of that would have hurt her in a local election if she hadn't run as a Republican next.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That kind of sealed it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It comes back to me eventually, that that's the reason – and the only reason – she lost in my race. And the one reason that George Sheridan wanted me to win – or Ann Burns, but I don't think he figured Ann could win. He stayed out of it except for that one subtle thing he did. I doorbelled for George Sheridan, too. We doorbelled for him together. That helped me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because of the name association?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you came in to the Legislature, the senator for your district was also a new member. Did you work with him at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Joe Stortini. Not really. We didn't communicate too much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the other representative, Frank Marzano? He had served a couple of terms already.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We worked together well. But Stortini had run against a Democrat member of the Senate and everybody was pretty well teed off with him. He ran against Senator Kupka, a sitting senator. He'd been there for a number of years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he didn't retire, he was beaten?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He got ousted by Stortini. And so I didn't work particularly with Stortini because he was out of favor in the Senate. There was a lot of animosity in the Senate. And if I wanted my bills to go through, I kept my distance. You were friendly and nice, but you never went over and asked favors. I asked favors of others like Augie Mardesich and even Senator Woodall, a Republican, who I had worked with as a lobbyist, but never Stortini. He double-crossed us. He came over and told Frank and me that he was voting for the income tax, and the bill went through the House first and he asked us to vote for it because he planned to vote for it. We both voted for it, and then he voted against it. Although he apologized later, it was too late, we had voted for it first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd never forget that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That happened right away. And so, no, I was tactful and I supported him when he ran the second time, but I was careful the first time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, of course, during that same election, Nixon became the president over Hubert Humphrey. Did you have any thoughts on the infamous Democratic convention in Chicago that year of 1968?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I didn't go. I didn't pay that much attention. I really didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what was happening on the national level was separate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had never been really involved in politics as a Party person. I never was. As I

told you, growing up I was sort of comme ci, comme ça. My grandfather was the only one who was really a Democrat, but he got mad at them over tax tokens, three for a penny, as I remember. I don't know how he voted, but he always bitched about them. He didn't like "the damned old Democrats" because they did this. I was never political until I worked for the labor movement. And then I became politicized; they did it. But I was good for them because I could see both sides of issues. Once in a while we would endorse a Republican. Usually it was at my insistence or as much as I could insist: "That he had done this and this and this, and how could we turn our back on him?" After I left, I don't think they ever endorsed another Republican. I don't know.

## CHAPTER 5: A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE, 1969



*Representative Wojahn at her desk on the floor of the House*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You came down to Olympia. Obviously, you'd been there before, but now when you came to Olympia, how did you feel coming as a legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt very comfortable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you excited?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Not really excited. I really wasn't. I was sort of commiserating the loss of my salary. I was going to get only three hundred dollars a month compared to a job that paid a lot more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a big change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I had my eyes open wide and I knew that I had to live in Olympia because even as a part-time legislator you've got to be there. I knew that from lobbying. That's the reason there are problems right now, I think. People think they can commute and they can't. You cannot do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you live in a hotel? Did you share, or did you have your own place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I lived at the Tyee twice. I rented a house with Representative Frances North and Representative Eleanor Fortson, and I

rented a mobile home out on the Bay with Frances North. I rented the mobile home the first year I went to the Senate. I guess I lived at the Tyee when I was first at the Legislature. Then I finally bought a home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Earlier legislators only worked at their desks. They didn't have offices, but by your time that was changed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had an office, but we shared it with another legislator. And we shared a secretary. That's when we moved into what is now the John L. O'Brien Building. But it was known then as the Public Health Building. Public Health had the first and second floors and we had the third and fourth floors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get to choose your secretary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We found one. Representative Al Adams and I – Al was the representative from the Twenty-sixth District, the adjoining District – we shared a secretary and an office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get to choose that space or did it just get assigned to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The office was assigned us. It was so nice to have an office. Representative Adams took the front and I took the back office, and we had a secretary named Helen who was hard of hearing. She was a darling lady and we worked her pretty hard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At one point John O'Brien gave classes to the freshmen. Was that still happening when you came in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was giving them when I came in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that helpful to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was on parliamentary procedure and I went a few times and stopped going because I didn't seem to get much out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You probably had used some of it already.



**Sen. Wojahn:** I probably did, but didn't know it. By osmosis, sitting in the gallery, listening to it all. And so I did take his class, but you remember at that time everything was closed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The committee meetings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The meetings. The executive sessions of the committees were all closed to the public. The Rules Committee was closed. Caucus meetings always have been closed – and will remain closed forever, I hope. And so a lot of the things you learned when everything opened up, you had to talk with and lobby your fellow legislators to find out what was going on with issues that you were interested in or needed to vote on because you knew nothing about them. And you didn't know what went on behind the scenes so you had to ask questions of those whom you trusted. You always had someone, not by design, but by absolute necessity you found a person in almost every committee that you could trust and you worked with them to find out what was good and bad on all the bills. And then the attorneys always carefully screened the bills and wrote a synopsis of them, and at that time they'd put in warnings of bad legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be helpful. Warnings such as?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was always helpful. They would say that "this could happen" if this bill passed. "This could be the ripple effect of this bill on other legislation." Our caucus attorney, Ed Wheeler, was particularly good at ferreting out bad legislation. Donald Navoni, another caucus attorney had been an Assistant Attorney General and head of the consumer protection division under John O'Connell and became the caucus attorney when John O'Connell ran for Governor. Caucus attorneys always put warnings in our digest. The good attorneys always did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would imagine that would be immensely helpful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. And now after working with legislation, you find discrepancies that sort of jump out in a bill after a while. And

I got so I could find them. I can remember trying to tell other legislators but they wouldn't always listen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd be tuned in. You'd know what the key phrases would be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I always knew how I was going to vote. And if I found some bad issue after I'd promised to vote for the bill I would always contact the lobbyist and explain my problem with the bill. If I couldn't get back in time to tell the lobbyist there was a problem, I had to keep my word and vote for the bill. That was as a freshman. As a sophomore I learned never to give my word unless I was absolutely, philosophically supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you come in to the Legislature with particular goals? I know you were interested in tax issues, but did you say to yourself as a legislator, "This is what I want to do?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Actually, my first platform was taxes and consumer protection. I'd been working in the consumer area for years for the Labor Council and that was my big one, but also taxes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you said you purposefully did not get on the Labor committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would not go on the Labor committee because they always tried to get people to sponsor their bills and sometimes their bills were trouble.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you start to separate yourself a bit from the labor movement?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt they double-crossed me and I was very upset about it, and I refused to go on the Labor committee. The first thing they did when I went to the Senate was put me on the Labor committee. I remember Gordon Walgren was majority leader and I walked into his office and he looked at me and said, "I know what you're here for." And I said, "I absolutely refuse to serve on the Labor committee. If you insist that I stay on it, I will attend the meetings, but I will never vote and I will never make decisions." So he took me off. He said, "That's

telling it like it is.” I said, “They double-crossed me and I don’t want to hurt them, but I’m not going to be there to help them. But I will never vote against a working man or an injured workman.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you separated out working people’s issues from union politics?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then I became chairman of the Commerce Committee, which is diametrically opposed to labor. It doesn’t have to be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You came in as part of the minority party. Your leader in those days was John O’Brien and you already knew him, it sounds like?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Not well, but I knew John.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about him? Was he a good leader?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Very good. He should never have ever lost an election, you know. He was a good leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it sounds like you already knew the organization leader, Robert Charette. And then the caucus chair, Bill Chatalas. Did you know him before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. I knew him well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When I look at these lists of who was in leadership, it seems like, other than John O’Brien, these were all rising people – they had been assistants, previously.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody gets a title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have all these titles that sound a little ambiguous to me. Gary Grant, Richard King and Mark Litchman, they all had the same title. Did you know any of them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew them all because I’d lobbied them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, of course, Ted Bottiger.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew Ted very well because I



*Representative Wojahn entered the Legislature already acquainted with such leaders as Robert Charette, Speaker Don Eldridge & former Speaker John O’Brien*

lobbied him on the retail installment credit bill and on the series of bills we did as a result of the resolution establishing the study on credit I'd gotten the year before, when I was lobbying. From that came a lot of bills that we presented that year. We got some of the bills while I was still lobbying and then we got the residue of the bills the next year I was elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have been an unusual freshman to come in and know everyone, know the process, already have a bit of a track record. Did that help you get on your feet?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Within this group, there was beginning to develop a bit of a challenge to John O'Brien, from Leonard Sawyer. Was this a pretty solid, good working group, still?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. I think John was willing to step down, as I remember. We were in the minority at first and Representative Copeland was Speaker Pro-tem. Representative Eldridge was Speaker. As freshmen, we had very little to say about anything that happened including the structure and proceedings in our own caucus. But I was never felt bashful pushing my position on issues and I always did. But I knew that it would be tough to get a leadership position because of the men.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These were all men.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were all men and you had to do it subtly. You had to do it but you couldn't push too hard. You could not afford to make anybody angry, which was tough. Everybody there was vying for leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a strong group of names, that's for sure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always I knew those legislators who'd helped me to be elected and helped me to get campaign funds. If a legislator talked a lobbyist into giving me money, they let me know the name of the lobbyist who had helped me and made sure I knew it was because of them. So you knew which side your bread was buttered on and you just followed through. It was easy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the women legislators kind of club together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not particularly. We finally got a room for women legislators, but it was pretty dismal. It had been a men's room before, and the couches were old leather ones in which the springs were all sprung. We were constantly being "goosed" by the couches. It was terrible, so we insisted on something a little nicer, so an interior designer was hired. And Tom Copeland was the one who got it done, and I know he got us a hairdresser.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the men had a barber, didn't they?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We never knew that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've always read that upstairs on the third or fourth floor was a little room with a barber in it. The men could go in there and get their hair trimmed. At least for a time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did the Legislature pay for it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm not clear about who paid for it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know that a group of us met with Tom Copeland. His assignment as the Speaker Pro-tem was to take care of the chambers, I guess, and he got this room for us and then he got an interior designer to come in and let us do anything we wanted to do. They paid for a hairdresser and her budget category read "machine operator."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was her category? Well, I guess she used machines.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A hair dryer machine, yes. After a couple of years, we didn't get new carpeting, but we got all the furniture reupholstered and a standing closet for our coats was made, which also served as a room divider. It was paneled in green velvet. It was lovely. The same green velvet was used to cover the telephone chair. And then hidden, the little room off of the main room was found the hair dryer and the sink for shampooing hair, and they could close the door and lock it so no one knew. If they ever saw a woman going in and coming out they'd know something had happened in there. There were

only a few women at that time – about seven, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Democratic and Republican women share this room?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they shared it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the men of both parties share their facilities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Democrats and Republicans shared the facilities, but not the caucus rooms. We had our own caucus rooms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. The women serving at that time were Margaret Hurley, Geraldine McCormick, Gladys Kirk, Marjorie Lynch, Mary Ellen McCaffree and Lois North and yourself.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seven.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Four of these women are Republicans and three Democrats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Margaret, Gerry and me. But we got along.



*In the Women's Lounge of the House with Representatives (L to R) Lois North, Peggie Maxie, Doris Johnson, Margaret Hurley, Gladys Kirk, Lorraine Wojahn and Geraldine McCormick*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Margaret Hurley, of course, had been a coalitionist. Did that make a difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She had been. I was sort of standoffish with her because of my background, but I eventually got over it. We were on opposite issues on abortion, of course. So between the coalition and the abortion issue we were never really friendly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were sharing this small room together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was all right. We were friendly enough. I think we left our politics at the door when we went in. I liked Marjorie Lynch and I liked Gladys who was dear, and I helped Lois North with some of her legislation and Mary Ellen was chair of Revenue and Taxation Committee and helped me with legislation.

The leaders were nice men. Really nice legislators. It's different now. They were gentlemen and fun. Copeland was as decent a man as you would ever find. I knew Hal Zimmerman's brother who was an orthopedic surgeon in Tacoma. He was a friend of ours and he treated our son Mark, who broke his collar bone playing football. There was never any non-acceptance. Gary Grant, who was the most outspoken labor person, was very much liked. They'd listen to him and roll their eyes and vote no, and jolly him up when it was all over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you felt that the women were listened to?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. In general, women were a little hesitant about asking for anything, especially women's issues. I think Marjorie Lynch was the most outspoken. She was a Republican and very good. She got things through that would never have passed had they not been handled so tactfully. She got through bills that young girls could get help with birth control without telling their parents, and go to the doctor

without telling their parents. She was married to a physician, and she was very good. There were several bills which dealt with children that she was very up-front on. I think that Lois North was a prime sponsor of the abortion bill. Naturally I would support Lois North. Things were more lined up against labor and business and industry than social issues. We just didn't spend much money on social issues. No one spoke up for the poor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Private/public power was still a major issue. That was the year we resolved that problem, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think right about then it seemed to go away as an issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did. We got them to share. I don't even remember what happened, but it all disappeared.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They all started to work together and meld a little bit, as I understand it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Each side gave a little bit and it worked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think they'd reached kind of a pitch where neither side was actually achieving anything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Then the banks were opposing the credit unions; they kind of worked that out, so that things were not as amalgamated at that time as they are now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like it worked better as a process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was the art of the possible then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More pragmatic?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's now impossible. It's an impossibility!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With the abortion bill and the support for environmental issues and what not, were Republicans and Democrats closer to each other then, except over labor issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Environmental issues, too, we were somewhat apart on, but—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they considered non partisan issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Environmental issues only became apparent after Earth Day was established, which was a couple of years later. I remember someone put a note on my office door – I think it was Gerry McCormick's aide – saying, "Tomorrow is Earth Day. Take a clod to lunch." I'll never forget that! That was in '70. That was when the environmental movement began to take root, and the environmentalists were pounding nails into trees. What were they doing that for?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've always understood it was to prevent people using chain saws, because they would hit the nails.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was it. It would kill the tree too, eventually, if you put in enough nails. My own children pounded nails into our cherry tree and we didn't know it and it killed the pie cherry tree. So I remembered that that had happened. Environmentalism was beginning to be apparent and people were beginning to talk about food being grown organically and all this other, but it wasn't a popular issue, just then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just beginning. Of course, one of the people pushing all this was Governor Evans. Could give me your thoughts on Dan Evans as Governor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a very good Governor. Very liberal. When I was working for the Washington State Labor Council, attending a Labor Council meeting in Port Angeles, Governor Evans was in Port Angeles with the leaders of the Republican Party the year they threw the super conservatives out. Oh, yes, I remember the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The John Birchers. There must have been a lot of ferment about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know about that speech when it happened or later?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I knew it because Democrats were saying to Joe Davis, president of the Washington State Labor Council, "I guess



*Escorting Governor Dan Evans to the House rostrum with Rep. Gladys Kirk: "He was a very good governor."*

they're going to try to join our Party now," meaning the Democratic Party. I was there. I remember the whole thing. Montgomery Johnson, a Republican campaign organizer, was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that create a big splash when he did that? Was that very controversial?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure it was with the Republican Party, but I don't remember a lot being said about it in the press. I don't remember anybody talking to me about it except labor people. I knew it because I'd been in Port Angeles where it took place. I don't remember there being a brouhaha about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In retrospect, a lot of people thought that was pretty significant. I was wondering at the time if you thought this really mattered?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. I guess I was waiting for the next shoe to fall. What the repercussions were going to be. Were they going to try to join our Party? Were they going to try to join the Democrats now? The John Birchers. They tried!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have made a pretty odd combination.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. But then let me tell you, a lot of the labor people are rednecks. And they could have infiltrated through the unions, through the basic unions. I think that occurred to all of us, that some of them – like the more conservative unions, sheet metal workers, I don't know, but there were conservative unions. And the Teamsters usually voted Republican. And so we didn't know what appearance it would take. If it would happen at all. Eventually, it just disappeared, or they went underground. They're not called John Birchers anymore; they're called something else. Next they were called the "moral majority." Now, I think they're called the religious right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are so many different stripes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember being particularly excited or dismayed by it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot of turmoil in the Republican Party over the Goldwater issues, and then these people, and one thing or another.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Goldwater. I don't know if he was ever a Bircher, but his sympathies were certainly conservative. He was kind of liberal in some areas, too. He was the first one to talk about a negative income tax, which was a very liberal idea. He's the one who brought about the recognition of the women who served with the Army and Navy, the WACS and WAVES during the Second World War and to ultimately gain retirement credit for all the time they served in the military.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't mean to suggest he was. It's just that during these years the Republicans had some issues within their own Party about their direction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think there was any direction. I think there was an attempt to take control, but they were not able to control it. The Republicans lost the next election. And it's all because of that, I'm sure. That was the tug-of-war that went on with the conservatives. There was a three-way war going on: social liberals, the fiscal conservatives, and the moderates. It's

always going to be there. It's there right now in spades.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where would you put yourself in that spectrum in the Democratic Party?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Moderate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the middle? Sometimes pulled a little one way, sometimes another?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm a social liberal. I believe there are some people who will never be able to take care of themselves – that they will need help so then children do not suffer. We have to help them to help themselves. My philosophy is: help people to help themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure that will be evident when we look at your legislation. Let's explore your committee assignments from your first session now. Who did the appointing in those days? Did you get to choose your committees?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was appointed by the Democratic leadership. Now there's a Committee on Committees in each caucus that appoints legislators to various committees. I don't think it was in existence at that time. Each legislator had three choices for committee assignments. You were supposed to list your choices in the order of preference. Then they'd try to give you your first choice. I sacrificed my first choice. I asked for Rules, number one, but I didn't get it, because freshmen never were placed on the Rules Committee at that time and I should have known better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of your other assignments was the Business and Professions Committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which later became the Commerce Committee. I asked for that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that was interesting is that you were on the Judiciary Committee and you were, of course, not a lawyer. Did you request that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I was the first non-lawyer ever to go on the Judiciary Committee. I requested that because of consumer legislation and because I had sponsored legislation dealing with wage garnishment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That legislation would go through that committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of it would. Also, I had a friend, Filis Otto, who was a district court judge and I'd sat in her court many times as an observer. So I asked for Judiciary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any problem getting on there? I always thought that you had to be a lawyer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I wanted that committee because I had been working the national Truth in Lending bill and Congress was in the process of adopting garnishment amendments to that bill. The bill I was sponsoring meshed with the national bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that makes sense. And the Revenue and Taxation Committee was somewhat by default, but you were interested in taxes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't want on that committee, though. I wanted Appropriations. I wanted a say in the expenditure of money. But they put me on the Revenue and Taxation Committee instead and we got some things resolved. At one time you had to pay your property taxes all at once by the thirtieth of April, otherwise you were charged interest. We passed legislation which permitted one half-payment April 30 and a second payment on October 30, not recognizing that there were thirty-one days in October. So we amended the law to read October 31. It was just an accommodation because people would forget that it wasn't the thirty-first, it was the thirtieth. The other was the thirtieth of April. The month of April has only thirty days.

One other thing I was instrumental in getting changed: if the tax assessor sent you the wrong taxes and you paid them, you could never recover the amount you had paid. It was terrible and that happened on some property that we had bought in Seattle. Someone paid the taxes for us, and they came to us and said that it was the fault of the tax assessor but there was no way for them to get their money back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, no credit? And if you underpaid, I suppose you would be fined.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No credit. If you underpaid, you'd get fined. You'd have to pay interest. But there was no way to get a credit or to get it bounced into the next year. You just lost it unless you could get the person who owed it to pay it to you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn't seem very fair.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't. We got that changed. I remember I had some trouble explaining it. Nobody could understand what I was talking about. It was kind of complicated but once you understand it, it's very clear. If you ever mistakenly paid someone else's property taxes, you'd know exactly what I was talking about. You couldn't get your money back. You could garnish their wages, I suppose, if you wanted to go through that. That costs money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you would already have these identified interests that the Committee on Committees would be aware of?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I had been working on garnishment legislation for the Washington State Labor Council and Judiciary was going to be handling the bill. And we did have enough attorneys then because it was before disclosure. But I was appointed to the Judiciary Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Revenue Committee turned into quite a hot seat for that session because Governor Evans wanted to bring in tax reform. He was promoting what he called the 'three-legged stool' for taxation. We already had property and sales taxes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and I voted for it. Sales tax, property tax and the income tax. We are still functioning under two legs right now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't work very well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It still doesn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your opinion, why was the income tax a good thing, and why didn't it ever pass?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's about sharing and sharing equally. It seems to me it's the most practical approach as evidenced by forty-four or forty-five states, I believe, that now have an income tax. It's much more fair than the sales tax,

which is the most regressive tax of all. You pay whether you have the money or not. That's the reason it remains so negative, because people with less income and large families are paying the most tax. They have no way of saving it for the future, because it takes every penny they have to live.

And the B&O tax is very regressive. It assesses on the gross income rather than the net, and it's very unfair. The high volume industries or businesses, like retailers, grocery stores and the like, are the ones who pay the most. The lower volume companies do not. And that's the reason the industries in Washington really liked the B&O tax: they pay very little. Industries like: the Boeing Company, Weyerhaeuser, Paccar, and Burlington Northern.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the biggest corporations pay the least and yet, as we see now with Boeing, they do not like the result of an under-funded state?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course they don't and they complain about it, but they do nothing. They have begun to reassess the position, I believe, but they always fought against an income tax because there would be a corporate income tax placed on them which would be much more fair for the grocers and the large retailers who are paying the bulk of the B&O tax because of their high volume, but they were not strong enough to offset the power of the big five.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that, in your opinion, why the income tax would never pass in this state?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that and the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's just too much against it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the facts are distorted. And the people still don't realize that you can subtract your state income tax from your federal tax. That's one reason that Congress did not use the retail sales as an offset for the income tax at a federal level. That's the only thing that's not included, and that's the biggest item in the state. They were trying, I think, to force those states that did not have an income tax to develop one and it didn't work.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not here. No.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not here or for Texas and Florida and Connecticut, Washington, Nevada, Tennessee, and one or two others.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This seemed to be a somewhat bipartisan idea. You were for the income tax and so was the Republican Governor, Evans, and several of his group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And the Republicans nearly passed the income tax and I voted for it. There were very few Democrats, because we were in the minority that voted for it, but those of us who voted for it let some of the Republicans off the hook which generally is not politically smart. But I've always believed in an income tax and I felt it was much more fair than the system under which we operate now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would some Democrats not be for the income tax if it helps the smaller businesses and people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Politically. They were forcing the Republicans to vote for it and giving only a few Democrat votes to pass it. Our senator, Senator Stortini, had come over and told Frank Marzano and me, who were his seatmates in the House, that he was going to support the income tax in the Senate and asked us to support it, which we did. When the Senate voted for it, he voted against it, but he didn't come and tell us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would he do that? It seems that he went out of his way to tell you he was for it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who knows? He went out of his way to come over to tell us that he was going to vote for it. He didn't tell us to vote for it, he just suggested that he was going to vote for it and I voted for it. It's neither here nor there because I did and Frank probably did, too. But for our district it was better because we represent one of the poorest districts in the state, or did at that time, and it was good for our people, many of whom would not pay an income tax because they did not have enough income.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They would be below the level. Did the people understand this issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it well explained in the press or did the press—

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not very well, no. The press—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ducked this one?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The letters to the editor seemed to be one-sided against an income tax and were often poorly written and misleading. And they didn't bother to print very many that were for it. Letters that were well written weren't printed. I think the working press probably did support an income tax, but the publishers did not; they would be hit. After the Legislature passed the bill, it went to the voters as a constitutional amendment and the voters rejected it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was brought in again and the same thing happened again and again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Governor Evans went public again. He covered the state. He went personally into various areas and walked through the streets of Seattle and Tacoma advocating for an income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that require a particular kind of political courage at that time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very much so. I think he was getting his advice from his aide Dolliver, who was always intelligent about things and farsighted. Governor Evans, when he was in the House of Representatives, was very conservative as I look back and remember. But he was a far-reaching and forward-looking Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of that more activist government that he was trying to bring in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was appropriate. Of course that was the same agenda that the Washington State Labor Council had. We've always had an open government agenda. It wasn't always supported by some of the members who tended to call themselves Democrats, but really were very red-necked Democrats. So there was turmoil there but the leadership, by and large, was far-thinking and supported things that were appropriate for the

state. Of course the sales tax is very hard on the working man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, as it goes on and off food and medicine at various times.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had it on food all the time. That's the one thing that I was so adamantly opposed to. We even charged sales tax on food stamps, believe it or not. It was crazy. Food stamps were taxed and that was so wrong. It wasn't until 1977 that we removed the sales tax on food coupons. We went to a food stamp arrangement. Then we had surplus food outlets also which helped to bolster the coupons for the working poor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be like the cheese and the different things that were surpluses from the federal programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Butter and all. Which was basically to support farmers. It was just like unemployment compensation which as a program wasn't to help the working man or woman who was out of a job; it was to build the economy and put money back into the economy. That was the reason, otherwise I don't think it would have passed Republican muster. So you see, these are the things that the Washington State Labor Council stood for. Unemployment compensation which is a very far-reaching program administered by the state and mandated by the federal government. The way it's mandated, an industry or business could opt to not enter the program, but if they didn't, they paid a tax heavier than their unemployment tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rationally, they would do it, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were forced into it. That is right. And that is the way we could force coverage for health care; we could force business into it by doing the same thing as we do for unemployment comp. It could be done. It should be done at a national level.

But I am so adamantly opposed to the B&O tax. I think it's grossly unfair. Small grocers go out of business. They cannot sustain themselves. And more and more, we're getting into a monopoly. In the City of Tacoma I think most

of the grocery stores are owned by Kroger, which is a southern firm. They bought out Fred Meyer, they bought QFC and they bought out the Stock Market grocery chain. They almost have a monopoly in Tacoma. Then they can control prices. So, it's not good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tax reform was a big struggle throughout that whole session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The 1969-1970 Session, it was a struggle. And I remember that you could have heard a pin drop during the vote on the income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't know which way it was going to go? Did that add to the drama?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was an oral roll call vote in the House. Normally, it's the machine, but this was an oral roll call. Very few oral roll calls are demanded by the House. Most of the voting is done by machine. This vote was one of the few. The industrial insurance – Worker's Compensation – was a roll call. Whenever an important issue is before the Legislature and one in which the yes votes would be difficult to attain, a recorded voice vote is often called for, along with a call of the House. At which time, the doors are locked, the members were told to take their seats and the absent members are rounded up by the State Patrol, and a roll call ensues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A roll call vote is, obviously, where they call your name and you say yes or no. There's no proxy—

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Nobody can vote for you. If you are off the floor. You can't vote for anybody else. You have to vote yourself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But otherwise somebody can press your button?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does the electronic vote record in the same way who voted?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It records everything the same as a roll call, but it's much less dramatic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not as open where you actually have to say yea or nay?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You have to stand up and be counted. Everybody knows how you voted. They can get a roll call vote after the fact, but they know at the time and there can be no twisting of arms. They can hold up a roll call while they go find the people. Usually there's a call of the House put on, or a call of the Senate, so everybody is there and in their seats. They lock the doors, lock the elevators and they go looking for the absent members. They've even closed down while the State Patrol went looking for people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To make them vote?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you voted for Evans's income tax, was that any kind of issue within your Party? It was a matter of conscience?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think I was ever verbally abused for any vote I ever took.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you meet in caucus and discuss what the Party position was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we did. Often. Sometimes we were let off. Because there was a need for that to pass, on that bill the caucus just said that anybody who wants to vote for it, according to conscience, can do it. "We will not hold that against you." It was not a caucus position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the caucus take any kind of position, though?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they didn't. It was a painful vote for a lot of people and they didn't choose to vote for it, and so those who wanted to could and there were no repercussions as a result of it. If there's a caucus position and you vote against that position, then it does reverberate and causes a lot of hard feelings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because you can't be counted on, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Especially on a procedural vote. You are always expected to vote with your caucus on a procedural vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand one of the things really pushing this income tax issue was that schools were vastly under-funded. The baby

boom was coming through the schools but school levies were failing, so there was just this tremendous pressure with not very many solutions. So, when the income tax failed, what did you do? How would you solve those problems?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had to tax in another area. I can't remember. When I first started there, for the first several sessions, we always knew when the session was going to end because the Code Reviser had a copy of the appropriations bill and the tax package, and there was always a tax package. There's no tax package anymore, or hardly any. We always knew when the session would end because the cafeteria didn't order any more ice cream. They ordered food on a day-to-day basis because they knew we were going to be out of there within forty-eight hours.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And those bills – the spending and the revenue – have to match up, of course.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Absolutely. But now, usually, the taxes or fees are added to individual legislative proposals. There has not been a final-solution, general tax package as there was before. We used to, usually, have to have a conference committee on the tax package and the conferees would work out the tax package – four members from each House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why do you think they abandoned that practice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We still have a committee to work out tax issues, including the Ways and Means chair of the Senate, the Appropriations chair from the House and a few other members. When we went into annual sessions we were able to adjust the budget annually. Before, if we didn't get the budget straightened out satisfactorily during the regular session, we could always pick it up during what we called the special session. Now we have sessions every year. Until I started there was never a special session, I don't remember there being one. Maybe after the coalition there was, I don't remember, but before that there was never a special session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not as many, that's for sure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very few special sessions. Everything was done on a two-year basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right about when you came in they started to have extraordinary sessions fairly regularly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They started right away. They started calling special sessions. I think Governor Evans was the first Governor to call a special session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a special session called right after Sine Die on March 13<sup>th</sup> and on March 14<sup>th</sup> you were back in for another sixty days. And then the following January until February for another thirty-two days.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Was it two special sessions?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Two, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was during the income tax time. What happened was that we fell into some money. What they did was they went into a twenty-five month basis so they could use money into the next biennium and push it back into the existing biennium—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was sort of an accounting gimmick, wasn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was an accounting gimmick. They could use money into an additional month and they did. When that was stopped was when we had a windfall of money, federal funds that were supposed to be forthcoming that were not forthcoming. I think we achieved about a two-hundred million dollar windfall from the Feds and we were able to eliminate the twenty-fifth month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wouldn't you get into trouble if you had a shortfall and you were already into that money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We couldn't have a shortfall because the Budget and Accounting Act does not permit it. That was passed in the fifties so we could not operate on a deficit. But Governor Evans and the leadership – Republicans – figured that out and went to a twenty-fifth month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't that a way of spending into the next general biennium?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right and at the end of his second term we were out of the twenty-fifth month, or were just coming out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seems like a risky thing to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very risky. It was against the law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Evans, of course, had a lot of things that he was trying to do. He wanted to reorganize several departments, and create the Department of Transportation. I think that he was beginning to talk about the creation of DSHS then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was begun. Yes, it was. A number of agencies were all merged under the heading of DSHS, including Corrections, Health, Social Services, Veterans Affairs, Veterans Hospitals and retirement centers, mental health, the Blind Commission. I don't know if it was the second or first year. As I remember I was the only one who voted against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So already, right from the beginning, you thought this was not a good idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was a bad idea. And they kept lobbying me and the agencies were calling – this was before disclosure – and I had friends working in several of the affected agencies and they would call and say, "We really need the coordination. If a person's coming out of prison, they're going to need social services." So Corrections was added to the list of agencies to be merged. And people who were on social programs needed additional help and they could provide that because of the coordination.

Well, we merged them and then there was no coordination because the individual agencies' staffs, now all part of DSHS, refused to talk to one another or cooperate. Corrections wouldn't talk to Social Services. Social Services wouldn't talk to Health. They were all fighting

for their individual share of the DSHS budget. There was an obvious lack of coordination.

Representative Jerry Kopet, who was in the House with me at the time, and I sponsored a bill after DSHS became effective. All it said was that agencies involved in the new super-agency, DSHS, must talk to one another and budget together. It passed the House with an overwhelming vote. Got killed in the Senate, of course. I'll never forget that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems kind of obvious.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did it! And then I was so adamant at the same time about – I never voted for chiropractors because I didn't think they were part of the health area. I thought they were kind of – I don't know what to say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think they're not a legitimate practice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did at the time. I thought that they wouldn't step down when they had a problem they couldn't handle and refer their patients to a medical doctor. I feared that. And that was always my reason for not supporting them. I got zapped so much by that, that Representative Helmut Jueling and I in the House sponsored a bill that established a Department of Chiropractic within the University of Washington medical school. The chiropractors got mad at us and the University of Washington got mad, and killed the bill. We said, "If it's an adjunct to health, then it should be a part of the training at our state level and let's just add another item to the University of Washington medical school, School of Chiropractic." I'll never forget that. A real knock-down, drag-out!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing. The bill didn't get out of committee, of course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would be pretty hot to handle. They had such different philosophies, I don't know if they could co-exist.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't get out of committee, but the bill on making the members of DSHS talk to one another got out of committee in the

House and passed. I don't know whether Representative Jueling decided on that or not, but he was a conservative Republican and I was a moderately liberal Democrat, and here we came up with this goofy bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have some kind of axe to grind about chiropractors, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was the same position as I was on them. And they kept saying that it was a regular adjunct to traditional medicine, and so I said, "If it is, let's do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that like calling their bluff?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, maybe. We thought it was a good idea. But I know that that damn near blew up the state of Washington. Another thing that we did when I was chairing the Commerce Committee – this is later – Margaret Hurley and I sponsored a bill to permit slot machines on ferries. The reasoning was that everybody says that if you have slot machines and gambling, especially slot machines – they're the worst – that it always leads to prostitution. But we figured that nobody on the ferry boat would permit prostitution, so we'll have the slot machines on ferries and make a lot of money. Later on we were at the Governor's mansion for a joint social with the Governor, and I talked to, I think, Washington Supreme Court Justice Marshall Neill, and I was telling him about this bill and he said, "That makes sense. I worked my way through law school working for the Blackball Ferry Line and we had slot machines on our ferries."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before they were state run?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. He didn't think it was so bad. We brought that up, but the bill didn't get out. I was chairman and couldn't even get it out of my own committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Too hot to handle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have to remember all these things and with whom I did them, because it was audacious. That's where I got my reputation, I guess, for being audacious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I gather that under the Business and Professions Committee, that's where your first bills would have been brought forward. Perhaps we should talk about them, starting with the bacon bill because it's the most controversial.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I sponsored the bacon bill because I was annoyed at the fact that you couldn't see – the fat was not displayed. They put all the fat under the label. And all they had to do was turn the bacon around in the package, or else put a representative slice on the back. So the first bill just said that they had to disclose and we showed them how they could do it.

All the women in the House sponsored it with me. We all put on clear raincoats that you could see through and walked in so you could "see what you were getting." And that became a laughing matter. Bobby Grayson, who was a former well-known football hero, a Heisman Trophy winner, was lobbying for a major packing company, I don't know which one, and he was opposing it, of course. Handsome lobbyist, and the bill went down the tube.

So the next session we put it in again and put it under the Administrative Procedures Act because we needed to have someone writing the rules and regulations, and we didn't specify that in the original bill. I had been a lobbyist but I was a little green on using legislation prerogatives. We put it under the Administrative Procedures Act and Bobby Grayson had said that not all bacon was packaged using a cry-o-vac machine. Some of it was hand packed. Anyway, he made a good point. That was one of the conditions. That we had to let the administrative code make the decision. But all bacon was being packaged using a cry-o-vac machine we found out. And so we sponsored it again the next year and that time it passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would have been the following year, in 1970?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nineteen-seventy – when they were wearing mini-skirts. I had this little gal who lived in my district – and she was really a beautiful gal – and she went into the Agriculture Committee wearing her mini-skirt and charmed

all of the members – they were all men on Ag – into voting for the bill. Then I got up and said that I had rendered out a couple of pounds of bacon and weighed them both. The lean weighed nothing and the fat weighed two pounds or a pound and seven-eighths or fifteen-sixteenths, and I said, "You might as well fry dollar bills on the skillet." And so it passed out of committee.



*Passing the bacon bill, a win for consumers*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So people could finally relate to that and understand that it mattered to ordinary people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The first year though, you had this act relating to poultry and poultry products.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That passed the second year, too, didn't it? Did the poultry bill pass the first year? Maybe I put that in the second year along with the bacon bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it passed in 1969 in the extraordinary session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Because I was getting complaints from fryer farmers in the district or just barely out of the district, and they were going under, because all these frozen chickens were being shipped into our state from Arkansas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The southern chickens. What was the deal? They were saying that they were fresh, but actually they were frozen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They would thaw them and put them on the shelf as fresh chicken. So this bill said that if the chicken had ever been frozen it had to be labeled and could not be sold as fresh. They had to identify it as frozen chicken. The penalties were criminal penalties, plus about twenty-five thousand dollars a package. The Agriculture Committee said, "Don't you think this is a little bit harsh? Ten years in jail and twenty-five-thousand for one package?" So we changed that to make it a civil penalty, and then it passed. That was the beginnings of doing civil penalties as opposed to criminal penalties. We saved the chicken industry in the state of Washington with that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a lot of difference between buying a fresh chicken and a frozen chicken.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was the danger of taking it home and re-freezing it. The danger of getting salmonella or letting it lie out on the counter and then re-freezing it. It wasn't a good idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was probably before food was labeled. Nowadays, you pretty much know what you're getting. But this was maybe the beginning?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They don't put it on individual chickens, but when they advertise an item like chickens, they advertise "previously frozen." You have to tell people. So that bill passed and we amended onto that a bill for a Republican from Whidbey Island, Pat Wanamaker, who had a bill that he'd had in for a couple of years on grading of turkeys and he asked if he could amend that bill on and I said, "Sure. The more the merrier. Here's your chance to pass it." So we amended that on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Turkeys were added as an amendment by Pat Wanamaker of Coupeville?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was because the bill retained its identity. It was done on the floor of the House. I think he was on the Agriculture Committee but didn't add his amendment on in committee, but hung it in the House with my permission. I don't believe you should ever not permit a person to hang an amendment if it complimented the bill or was needed. If it was something done to kill the bill or something that expanded the title or scope, or something to embarrass the sponsor, then I can see that, but anything else was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like turkeys relate quite well to chickens.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It made sense. It could have been scoped I suppose, but they didn't scope it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds pretty reasonable. Another thing that you did that year, I imagine in the same committee, was the odometer bill. That must have been a popular measure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was one that was developed by the Legislative Council. I went before the Legislative Council on other bills like the interest rates and on the odometer turn-back, when I was a lobbying. They gave me the bill to sponsor once I was elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What brought the odometer issue to your attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd seen that the Legislative Council was studying the issue, and I appeared, I think, as a lobbyist for the committee while I was still lobbying. I ran that fall and testified in support because California had passed an odometer bill that they could not turn an odometer back, so car dealers were sending their the junk cars into Oregon and Washington and we needed to do something to stop it. So I sponsored the bill along with Gerry McCormick and I think a fellow from Everett, Representative John Martinis. I don't know if there was a Republican on the bill or not. All of us sponsoring the bill were three freshmen, I do remember that.

I know that it got stuck over in the Senate and I went over to Senator Mardesich before session and said, "What have you got against Democrats?" That got his attention. He said, "Nothing." And I said, "Well, I've got a little bill over in your committee." And it was near the end of the session and the bill had not come out and he was chairing the committee. I said, "It's an odometer turn-back bill." Of course, the auto dealers didn't like it, you see. The used car dealers didn't want the bill. And then I said, "It's sponsored by three freshmen, Democrats, in the House and we really need the bill, Senator. And it makes a lot of sense because we're getting all these junkers coming in from California and we have no way to protect the consumer in the state of Washington. They're junking them into Oregon and Washington. Let Oregon be the fall guy. Let's not do it to Washington State." So he went to the telephone. He didn't answer me. He just turned his back and walked over to his desk on the floor of the Senate – I was in the wings – picked up the telephone and said something and sat down. I still stood there and he said, "It's okay. Go on back."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he give you a little wink or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he did. He gave me a wink and said, "It's okay." He never acknowledged that he'd done anything. Never told anybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that was his way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Told his committee to bring it out and everybody voted with Augie. Nobody voted against him because if they voted against him, he'd kill their bill. He was so bright, everybody was afraid of him. The word that went out always in the House – one thing that I heard was one Republican saying to another one – we were going to meet somewhere for dinner that night – it was Lois North, I think – and she said, "I can't. I have to work tonight. I have to Mardesich my bill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Mardesich my bill." A revealing statement. He wasn't yet the majority leader, though. He must have been just rising.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bob Greive was the majority leader. But Augie pretty much controlled Greive, too. He was so smart he could get at anybody and some of them wouldn't even know what had happened, believe me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you don't sound like you were nervous around him. Somehow you felt comfortable with him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never was. I never felt uncomfortable with anybody. The Democrats were in control in the Senate. I got along with Bob Greive pretty much, until he tried to kill my hearing aid bill. They took the bill away from his committee; Grieve had kept the bill in committee. That comes later. I'm famous for my bills being the last to pass the Senate before Sine Die. They always passed; they got bogged down, but they always passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like those cliff-hangers. You had two more bills. One was to get absentee ballot requests printed in the state voters' pamphlet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The request for an absentee ballot was printed in the voters' pamphlet, but it was not there by statute and could have been taken out any time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you felt that they might?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We thought they might, maybe to save money or some other reason. We decided it was a good idea. It was my little, tiny bill that was not properly drafted. Tom Swayze was chair of the State Government Committee, and the Republicans were in the majority and he had to amend that bill but he didn't do a substitute bill. He was kind to me. He kept it in total and then amended it on the floor of the House so that it retained its original sponsors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did really well for a freshman. You had four different bills pass.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Three or four bills, yes. The voters' pamphlet bill, the frozen chicken bill, the odometer bill and the one—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The one that paves the way for the consumer credit counseling service, the debt adjuster.



**Sen. Wojahn:** The debt adjuster bill. That was another bill, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That didn't pass until 1970 but still, you sponsored that in your first session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a big bill because debt adjusting agencies which were set up were exceeding their authority to assist people facing wage garnishment because of serious debt and taking advantage of the people they were there to help. I had worked with Donald Navoni, who headed the consumer protection division for the Attorney General's office. He was investigating because in consolidating the debt of debtors, who were fearful of having their wages garnished, they were charging exorbitant fees for it. They included home mortgages, which was very bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Most people have mortgage debts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Mortgage debt should never have been included in a debt adjusting plan. And so a new nonprofit consumer credit counseling service was initiated. The program was started in Seattle and was the first to be established in the state of Washington. There was no cost to the debtor at first. Eventually, they had to charge a minimal fee for stamps and postage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a little. But that would make quite a difference.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The philosophy was that the creditors were the ones who paid for it. It really worked quite well. The creditors put in money: the banks, small loan companies, retailers, attorneys, health care, and hospitals and that paid for the debt counseling services for people. It was a very good idea, and that was my bill. Then we eliminated the debt adjusting agencies that were freelancing and charging huge amounts. People could never get out of debt through a debt adjuster, especially when their home mortgage was added to the equation. I remember one day I was driving down to meet Don Navoni and we were going to have lunch. I had to pick him up at the Dexter-Horton Building in Seattle, and they had a debt

adjusting ad on the radio, singing to the hymn of "Old Rugged Cross." It made me so mad! The wording was like "Come to the debt adjuster."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different kind of salvation. That's terrible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a good bill because Don knew how to draft bills. I wasn't able to explain the things to the Code Reviser succinctly enough for them to do it. Now, I can find the errors, but I couldn't at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's so specialized. That's why you have Code Revisers and all those lawyers. What do you do when there are parts of a bill you do like but there are parts that don't work at all and it's your idea? Do you vote against your own bill? Or if the nature of it is too changed by amendments?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have. The debt adjuster bill I didn't like because they did not outlaw debt adjusters the first time around, as I remember. I remember I killed the first debt adjuster bill on the floor of the House because amendments totally changed the intent of the bill. I know that Dave Ceccarelli was on the other side of the issue and he was running up and down the aisle saying, "This is Sparky's bill." That was Sparkman in Seattle, a debt adjuster. I said, "I don't care; he's wrong and you're wrong." I remember the debate on that, and all the time I was talking he was running up and down the aisle saying, "This is Sparky's bill. Vote for it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, there are two approaches that I understand you can take. You can go for the bill even if it's not perfect and call it half a loaf or you can hold out for what you really want.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I voted against it. I held out on that one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would half a loaf in this case make it hard to bring it up again and therefore it would never be corrected?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And I don't remember whether they killed the bill or not. I know I voted against it. Eventually we did get a good bill, and we were able to get an assessment of five dollars per adjustment, which has now gone

to ten dollars, I believe, in order to provide for the postage and the necessary telephone calls they needed to make if they were long distance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty nominal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because creditors were all contributing, it worked. Recently, private debt adjusters tried to be reinstated, and I fought it and we won. That never means that it's the end.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some things never completely go away, do they?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They never go away. Never.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another very controversial issue during that session, the wine bill. Some people call it the Washington wine bill and some people call it the California wine bill, depending on your point of view.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was another Ceccarelli bill, trying to save the Washington wines, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there were two points of view, it seems, on that, where some people thought that you had these protective tariffs and that would save the wine industry. And other people thought it was actually crippling the wine industry because then they were producing these inferior wines, just because they could, I guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Didn't we tax Washington wines?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, but not as much, I believe. You taxed California wines to keep them out, I understand, or make them more expensive to try to bolster the local industry.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So they both got it and that's what forced them out, because they couldn't meet the tax it was so bad. It was fortified wine; it was so bad that by taxing them both equally we were able to eliminate the bad Washington wine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There had been a lot of heavy lobbying – a lot of money had been poured into the fight the session before, and that seemed to bother many legislators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember Ceccarelli taking off his shoes and demonstrating how they stomped on the wine grapes. It was awful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was he trying to prove?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember what happened with that bill. Why I was not involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reputedly, the Speaker, Don Eldridge, opposed it the previous session partly because the lobbying tactics had been so heavy handed. They tried again in '69 but with a slightly different tact. They did it more as a promotion of Washington wines. Saying it would produce better wines and it would be better in the long run. And that Washington could do this. That they didn't need these artificial tariffs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They could compete. Apparently whatever we did helped the Washington wines. They produced better wines and were able to sell them and compete with the California wines, which is what is happening right now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a huge industry now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Before, it was a dead industry and they were using fortified wines which were very bad. But I don't remember how we did it. I don't remember how I voted, even. I don't think I voted with Ceccarelli. I don't think I ever voted with him on anything, but I may have. I don't know. And I don't remember my point of view on that and all I can remember was everybody laughing when he took off his shoes and rolled up his pants and showed them how they stomped the grapes in California – he was supporting the California wine industry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not Washington?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. But we managed to force out the bad ones and bring in the good ones. That was a Hal Wolf leadership thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was House Bill 100, introduced by Hal Wolf. I think it equalized the tax. California wines had had higher taxes on them to help protect this fledgling industry – like a protective tariff. But then the wine

lobbyists actually argued that it was impeding the wine industry in this state and the members were won over by that, eventually. I imagine this was a job of very skillful lobbying from what I've read about it. They changed their tactics and people saw that this could be seen in quite another way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did they tax them both?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did tax them both because there was concern about the revenue issue. If they'd lowered the taxes on the California wines, they would lose a lot of money, and that was part of the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was an issue that I was not involved with because it didn't hurt my consumers. Anybody who could afford wine you didn't worry about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was wine still a rather elitist thing to drink?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. It was and the winos were drinking that fortified wine and killing themselves. It was awful. I remember them saying that this will eliminate the fortified wine and assist the better wines, and it worked. It was very well done. Ceccarelli lost. I remember they were talking about how the Senate was living like kings because the bill was over there and we had already either done something with it so we didn't get any free wine, and they were living like sultans over there having wine with their meals and getting free wine and we were getting nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You voted too quickly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't matter. I didn't want it anyway. I wasn't a wine drinker at that time. I became a wine drinker after that. When people left the House to go for the Senate during the period of time when it was still under consideration, they were always saying, "You want to go live like a sultan, go to the Senate." The best of everything, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other controversial bill of that session was the abortion bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That became a referendum to the people. And I remember that when I was a

freshman I wanted to go on the bill but it wasn't offered to me because it was a Republican issue. They didn't hand the bill out for signatures. It just had three signatures, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When I looked to see who had sponsored it I wondered why you weren't on it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wasn't because it wasn't offered to me. And that wasn't a time that you could ask to go on a bill. They didn't do it. Lois North was the prime in the House, but I don't remember who else was on the bill. Joel Pritchard was, in the Senate. I'd gone to all the meetings at the University of Washington where they were writing the bill on the abortion because I was very interested in it and very supportive. They knew I was there, but they deliberately avoided offering me a sponsorship. It was alright. It was a political thing. They wanted all the glory and they got hit hard because of the controversial nature of the issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a fairly heavy Catholic constituency. Would that have been a problem for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an issue with many of my constituents who were Roman Catholics. I voted for the bill when a referendum clause was added to it to send it to the people for a vote. The next time when we actually voted on it, I think there was a referendum on it. And so I got hit and I got some nasty letters. I responded to every one. I didn't back down. I cited, as I remember, remarks by one of the Catholic bishops in one of the Iron Curtain countries who was supportive of abortion. Was that in Austria? I don't remember. But I cited that in my letter. I wrote a very good letter – I may still have it – on the issue and I got good letters back. Even though they opposed me they thanked me and some of them were nasty, but most of them were not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because you were sincere?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was sincere. I told my people when I was running for office the first time out that there were two issues that were very personal to me – that I would always support a woman's right to choose and I would never support the death penalty because I couldn't.

Philosophically, I couldn't. And I told them that right off the bat and I got a few nasty letters on both issues, but pretty soon they dropped it. It never came up again. I voted the way I had to vote and that was it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lois North tells the story that later, campaigning, when she was doorbelling that she had some rather bad confrontations with people that were somewhat frightening to her. I wondered if that kind of thing ever happened to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. No. I got some bad letters, but I doorbelled most of the district and I only had one door attempted to slam in my face when I was running for mayor of Tacoma. That was just after the recall of the members of the Tacoma City Council that was still fresh in a lot of people's minds. It wasn't in my legislative district; I was running city-wide, and I said to the guy, "Don't slam your door in my face. I will leave." He didn't slam the door, but he started to. I'll never forget that. But that's later. I never had a door slammed in my face, and I never had a door slammed in the faces of my helpers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you just frame the issue differently somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's just the way I told them. At every meeting that I attended, and publicly, I stated my position. And I stated it clearly after the bill. So there was never any doubt. Oh, there are people who don't like me out there, but there weren't enough of them to hurt me. And I never was unfriendly toward them. "Live and let live."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a very personal thing. All through this time – and we talked about it a little bit earlier – the civil rights movement was very active. There was quite a bit of activity in Tacoma itself. I gather that there were some – not riots – but disturbances or whatever they were called here. It was a lot of turmoil at any rate and a lot of issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Methodist convocation for the region met in Tacoma at UPS because it was started as a Methodist school. They had taken a position on open housing, which I approved.

There was an initiative out to provide for open housing, to approve it statewide. I was Christian Social Concerns chairman for our Methodist Church in our area and I asked the board of Trinity Methodist Church for permission to put a petition on the bulletin board to get signed, and they refused.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn't seem very consistent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very inconsistent. So I left the church. At the same time there was one on capital punishment and I asked to put that up and, again, they said no. I lived in a red-neck area which was mostly working people. But they liked me. I never offended the voters. So I bolted the church and I became an Episcopalian.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The issue divided a lot of people. The national Kerner Report talked about the two societies, unequal societies. And then in Washington State we had our own report, sometimes called the Kramer Report, for the Secretary of State Lud Kramer. The longer title was Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Civil Disorder, and he had several pieces in there about Tacoma. It seemed like there was quite a lot of unrest in what would have been your district.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I represented blacks. Most of the blacks and orientals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering, as a legislator, were there ways you could address that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think I ever had to. In the first place my co-chair when I first ran for office was a black minister. I'd always been supportive and I don't remember ever being affected by that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were trying to get the Model Cities funding for that area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The conservatives hated it. They got it through and did some remodeling, according to Model Cities, but then Rasmussen was elected and they stopped it all. They rescinded everything that they could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain a little bit more of what Model Cities would be trying to do? It's a federal program.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a federal program and apparently they could get funding and I don't know if it was tax cuts or how it was, if they would establish a certain area of the town that needed to be redone. If they could prove it out then they could get funding from the Feds to do this. The City of Tacoma undertook a portion around the south Tacoma area beyond Holy Rosary Church and up on the Hilltop and were attempting to do that. They had gotten some federal funding but it fell apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you know what their plan was? In some places the Model Cities program was used to bulldoze whole areas and put in project-like developments which didn't turn out to be a very good solution. Was that in store for Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think we ever got that far. What happened was that they wanted to declare it to do the Model Cities. They wanted to redo McKinley Hill and the people were up in arms there because they called it a slum area and the people were offended. We lived on McKinley Hill. I thought it was a slum area and I would have welcomed it, but no, I don't think they even got to first base. I think they got a little bit of help. They didn't use McKinley Hill; they went to another area, but did very little as I look back on it. I can't think of anything they really did except the Goodwill Industries got a portion of that to build a new installation and it's still there. Very nice. I think the Urban League got some place to rebuild, but as far as I know that's the only thing that was ever done with the Model Cities program, because the conservative forces came in and killed it. They misrepresented the facts. Later, we tried to do the same thing with tax increment financing, and could never get that. That was where you set aside a certain amount of area that you want to redevelop and you freeze the taxes in that area. So you encourage developers to come in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it like those enterprise zones?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the same idea. We did that. We got around it without doing a constitutional change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were ahead of your time. One of the very fascinating things that happened that session in 1969 was the Black Panthers coming down to Olympia, to the Legislature. It made a big splash in the press – the photos with them posing with their guns on the steps of the Legislature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember anything dramatic happening except I know that they increased the security in the Legislature. They've always had more security as a result of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand when they came that Governor Evans happened to be out of town and so was James Dolliver, and that it fell to Lieutenant Governor Cherberg to deal with them. They tried to lock the doors and they got quite worried about what would happen. It seemed like very little actually happened, but there was a lot of rumors and fear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was in the House then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would have been a little bit more shielded?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I remember Dave Sprague was afraid because he represented the same kind of a district in Seattle that I represented in Tacoma and he had threats. He got out of the Legislature after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a bit too much for him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He wanted to know if I wanted to go on a bill with him or speak on a bill he was sponsoring, and I didn't have the problem, and I said, "No. I don't have the problem and I don't know enough about it, and I really don't know what you're talking about." But he had threats. He was always outspoken. I found out it's better to be quiet and do, than to raise hell and not be able to do. I guess it was bad in Seattle.



*Working on civil rights issues ...*



*...and playing with Representative George Fleming. Rep. Bob Lewis as catcher*



## CHAPTER 6: CITY OF TACOMA ISSUES

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like Tacoma was going through a really tough time in the 1960s. Weyerhaeuser had moved its headquarters to Federal Way. There were articles in the paper asking, “Is Tacoma dying as a city?” There was a lot of concern; the paper ran pictures of Pacific Avenue with derelict buildings lining the street and people saying that “what we need is a good fire,” which seemed a little drastic.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What about absentee landlords? These landlords were slum lords who leased their buildings but refused to modernize or assist tenants with improvements. Many of them resided out of state, even. The whole downtown was disappearing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That created quite a problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of the land was owned by the Rhodes Investment Company. They were dragging their feet, also. The Olympic Hotel was in the process of being sold to Western International Hotels. Western International wanted to remodel it and put in a drive-through lobby. The owners would not permit Western International to remodel the building as they wished, so Western International backed out. They didn’t move in. Ultimately, the building was sold to a hotel owner from Aberdeen. Some remodeling was done by this new owner, but ultimately he was forced to sell it. Now it’s an old folks home. That gorgeous crystal ballroom in the old hotel. The whole downtown was dying.

So then they started doing the one-way streets and remodeled the interior of downtown on Broadway and closed it off to traffic. That may have been some Model Cities money, I don’t remember. And it still didn’t help. So between Ninth and Fifteenth, I guess, it was all closed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To make a pedestrian mall? They were really challenged by the building of the Tacoma Mall, which drew all those businesses out there by the freeway and left downtown bereft.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s when we had a voter registration drive. That was in 1964.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, of course, you had all the issues in city politics that got pretty hot at this time. Can you tell me about Slim Rasmussen? Did you know him before he was mayor? As a legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I always thought he was a very logical person. I found that he wasn’t. When he was in the Legislature, he was pretty liberal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There’s some indication that he changed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was liberal and believed in the working man. He did believe that there should be a decent living wage. When he became mayor, I thought he was going to be a great mayor. I probably voted for him. But it was a disaster, because he had a City Council composed of ultraconservative right-wing members. One of them was a police officer, Anthony Zatkovitch. Becky Banfield was the wife of a plastic surgeon. John O’Leary had a gas station by Lincoln High School and lived in the south end. Who was the other one?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Fred Dean.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Fred Dean – conservative pharmacist on Sixth Avenue. And they didn’t want to do anything and they vetoed everything. Rasmussen decided that the city manager had the best office, so he forced him out of his office and took over his office. A lovely office with a view, and he forced the city manager into a dumpy little office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They seemed to be feuding the whole time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always. He hated the city manager. He believed in a strong mayor and thought that the city manager didn’t know what he was doing. He was spending too much money. It got to be just a disaster. The headlines in the paper were always “what was not being done, what needs to be done and wasn’t being



done, and who said what about whom.” Jerry Vaughn was a local young liberal. I think he was a professor. I don’t know what he did, but he was so incensed by what he saw. We had the recall movement starting with Jack Warnke leading that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Slim Rasmussen replaced Harold Tollefson in 1967, and then there were two years of utter turmoil fighting with Dave Rowlands, the city manager. Then, the radio station KAYE seems to get involved, broadcasting the council meetings and hosting critical talk shows.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always editorializing. They’re out on the Puyallup River road. Not even in the city of Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then there was kind of a revolt against all this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Before that, during this time that all this was going on, Jerry Vaughn, who was an outspoken, funny guy – very intelligent – he sent a telegram to Howard Hughes – this is actual fact – suggesting that he might want to buy the largest circus in the world, the city of Tacoma. As the story goes, Howard Hughes wired back and said, “I’m considering your offer, just need to know how many cages to bring.” So help me God! That went on and that’s when I was running for office. When I was working for the Labor Council, running for office. We were trying, through the YWCA, to get a human rights commission started and we were working on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That group really seemed to be against any kind of human rights commission.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anyway, I was invited to go on KAYE to present my views – the first year I was in office, I guess. Session was not on. It was after session in 1969. I didn’t like them. I didn’t want to go on the station at all anyway, but other people were, and it was affecting what I was doing because the some of the things I stood for were being challenged. Rasmussen didn’t live in my district. They’d cut a several-block corridor for him that eliminated most of

his strong supporters. They hoped this new district composition would make him lose his next election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had a funny kind of district. Senator Greive had drawn quite an odd shaped map.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. They did it. Senator Greive and Senator McCutcheon did it. But anyway, I went on the radio and they said I was going to have fifteen minutes, so I got out there, grabbed the microphone, introduced myself and started to talk and I told them that I had been appointed to the Judicial Council, the first woman and non attorney to be appointed to the Judicial Council, and how thrilled I was. It was just after session. I talked and they tried to get the microphone away from me and I wouldn’t give it up and pretty soon they said, “We have to do a commercial and we need the microphone back.” After fifteen minutes I gave it back and walked out. They didn’t get a word in. I got several calls thanking me and congratulating me for having my say without interruption. It was funny. I just went on and on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you hear the tussle going on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was funny. Trying to get the microphone away from me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you ever invited back? You had your fifteen minutes of fame?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I got my fifteen minutes and I got to say anything I wanted to say. I didn’t politicize much of anything. I just talked. Anything that came to my head that was involved with the people and things I was trying to do. That’s when the recall movement was starting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You said that a friend of yours was heavily involved in that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Donna Gilman was deeply involved in that, along with Jack Warnke. They were the two precipitators of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People just finally got so upset that they said, “Enough of this!”

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. I doorbelled on that issue although I was doorbelling for myself. But I would tell people that I felt that we needed to recall these people, that they were doing terrible things. I had a lot of south Tacoma at that time around Lincoln High School and these were the conservative people. They were listening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems that Slim Rasmussen was not re-elected and that Gordon Johnson was. But there was that curious thing where the mayor's office didn't overlap quite with the city council and three new city council people were elected before the new mayor came in who were of the same stripe as Slim Rasmussen and they were able to push through some of his agenda even though he was on the way out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. They're not all elected at the same time, it's staggered. So that you never have a complete void of knowledgeable people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some vote about, I think it was hiring a new police chief, or something like that. And that seemed to inflame people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they got the chief they wanted. That was Zittle, I think, who was appointed police chief and he was not the favorite. He was not wanted by a lot of people, apparently. I remember that now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you know why Tacoma has such tumultuous politics? It's kind of famous that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because you have the 'haves' and the 'have-nots.' You have the working man and you have the other – Tacoma has a lot of wealth in and around Tacoma, and they have control of the activities of Tacoma. For years, Tacoma didn't grow because timber people wanted to maintain a steady work force. They didn't want a lot of influx of people coming in or businesses to take away their work force. So nothing happened. It was kind of a working man's town but controlled by another whole echelon of people. It was a company town.

But from that came some very good things, because in 1911 the very first industrial insurance was started in the City of Tacoma at the old Bridge Clinic, which was made up of physicians and prepaid medical. The first prepaid medical in the country. From that came the Pierce County Medical Bureau and the whole medical service plan came into effect as a result of the industrial insurance. It all started in Tacoma in 1911. But it was the 'haves' taking care of the 'have-nots,' but on their terms. And it continued up until a new regime and the city was changed. I think that Slim Rasmussen was the first – we've had a strong mayor and commission form of government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that was in the fifties that that changed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was redone when we started the city manager because things were out of control.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like there was a lot of corruption. They kept mentioning an "open-city" atmosphere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there was a lot of corruption and that's when the Rosellini Commission came in, and that was in the fifties. We didn't have a television so I used to run up to a friend of mine who lived about a mile away and watch it in the morning. Then I'd run home and fix the kids lunch and run back to hear the whole thing. It was hilarious. Rosellini chaired the commission and they were finding all this corruption going on. The sheriff was corrupt. Prostitution was rampant. And there was a gal named Amanda Truelove who ran a prostitution group in Tacoma. I remember this one episode. I'll never forget it. The chair asked, "Did she know a person by the name of," and he mentioned the name and I don't know what it was, and she said, "Yes, your Honor, I do." And he said, "Did he come to your place of business?" which was right across from the Labor Temple at that time, right on Market Street, "on such-and-such an evening?" And she said, "Well, your Honor, I can't rightly tell you, because I opened the door but I couldn't really

see him, because I only had one light and it was a red light.” It was hilarious! It was a circus!

And that’s when the electorate decided to change the form of government from a commission form to a city manager, I think. And the new people came in. And we were in the throes of that when Rasmussen and his group of conservatives were elected. We weren’t really stabilized in the city manager form and Rasmussen hated the city manager.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was trying undo all that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was trying to do Model Cities and using some new concepts for developing the city, and the conservatives didn’t want the city changed. They liked it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It worked for them? But meanwhile there were a lot of problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course. In the meantime, the city was deteriorating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rapidly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that was the time that the hotel was sold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They even sold the city hall. It looked like a beautiful building.

Seventeen-thousand dollars they sold it for – not very much. They made it into shops and offices, apparently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. They still have that, but that’s mostly offices. It was shops, but they turned it into offices because they could rent it for more money, and the shops weren’t doing very well because there wasn’t anything downtown to support them. The whole bulk of Tacoma from Ninth to Fifteenth, where there had been a music store and all these department stores, were leaving. The mall had a radius clause that if you moved out into the mall – if you were within fifteen miles of the mall – you could maintain your store downtown as long as you had had it before you moved into the mall. But if you ever gave up your store downtown you could never go back. It’s rotten. It should never be allowed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did the mall get so much power?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a radius clause that they got passed and it’s a federal act. The radius clause, I believe, conflicts with the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Nobody can do anything about it though. I’ve talked about that. It’s angered me because I don’t understand it. A lot of small shops wanted to be in both places.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure. To reach different kinds of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But after Rhodes left and then Fisher’s left and the Bon Marché was there and then it left. And then J.C. Penney left and then pretty soon the People’s Store gave up and left too and went totally under. They closed shop. It was United Mercantile owned by a British corporation. It went under. Sears was the last to leave. There was nothing left downtown except dilapidated buildings that absentee landlords refused to update. If you wanted to do anything to update you had to do it yourself. They wouldn’t pay for it. Roofs were leaking, they had to repair. Finally a lot of the renters just gave up because they couldn’t sustain themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was quite a downward spiral there. One thing led to another.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One thing led to another. It was like a domino effect. Then they put in the escalators from Pacific Avenue to Broadway and derelicts used them for bathrooms. It was awful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a proud Tacoma resident, you must have been upset.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Devastated. And then there was the stench from the pulp mill. I have seen bumper stickers on cars calling it “The aroma of Tacoma.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a little cruel.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And one said “Bypass Tacoma.” It was awful. It’s taken years to come back from that. We’ve had fairly strong mayors. Gordon Johnson was a very good mayor because he just did nice things all the time. He

never went out to do anything positive particularly. He helped things to happen. He was an architect. He let things happen, but he always glossed over and said what a great city it was to live in and how what a great view we had from Commencement Bay, the best harbor in the country. And so he was a good mayor in terms of that. He got along with the city manager fine. Things began to come back at that time.

Then Mike Parker let things begin to deteriorate again. It was awful. The owners of Tacoma would not permit a new hotel to be built. There were several offers from Canadian hotel groups that wanted to come into Tacoma and they would make an offer and they kept the price so high that they never came in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they would be competition or something? What would be the point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what it was because I advocated for the sale of some property downtown for hotels and we had the R/UDAT team come in (Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team), which is a national architectural conglomerate; we had them come in when I was running for mayor and talk about this. They did drawings and gave a whole week of their time and it just fell flat. Mike Parker came in as mayor and screwed everything up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't want to get ahead of ourselves, but I know that later you played a huge role in the revitalization of Tacoma, so I wanted to get it kind of on the record just how bad it had gotten in the early 1960s.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It got as bad as it could get. And the downtown is still not back totally. It's tough. And even the boutiques and restaurants down around the University of Washington are in danger of going under. They would like to renew their leases for less money. The construction downtown has really depleted the traffic coming to these stores. The New Renaissance Restaurant's gone in and he's hoping to make it. The Connoisseur Shop, which was on Tacoma Avenue – a beautiful shop – moved downtown but ended up moving



*Speaking up for saving Union Station*

back to the Stadium district. Futon Place moved out. There was an antique furniture store that's moved out because the leases got to be too expensive. This is current. Eventually it will be fine. One of the city council members had the Northwest Shop in the Washington State History Museum, but he also has another shop in the Proctor district. Bill Evans owns them. He had to move out of the History Museum because the shop wasn't profitable. The day-to-day traffic was not heavy enough for them to be successful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are so many pieces to turning a city around. At this point, things were still kind of going down. At this time did you have any vision that Tacoma could turn around? Did you have faith in your town?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Because we have more view property, really, than Seattle. The Hilltop is gorgeous view property overlooking the Bay. McKinley Hill overlooks the Puyallup Valley and we have a better deep water port than Seattle, with their inter-modal transportation system that Seattle doesn't have. We had

everything to work with, but we needed the impetus to get us started and the dream to make it happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been terribly galling to watch your city council act like “a pack of buffoons,” as someone called them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn’t want to get into it because I was working for the Labor Council and we were in it as deeply as we could get. But it would have meant my job if I’d gotten into that. When I was running for office, I didn’t want to get into it except to nudge them a little bit, and if they asked, always to give them my opinion. It was my opinion, not as an opinion of the labor movement or of the Legislature as a whole.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another group called SOAP [Save Our American Principles] that opposed the recall. Who were they? They included Mrs. Helen Anderson, Virginia Shackelford and Maria Glunt in their leadership.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew Virginia Shackelford. Virginia Shackelford was also very much interested in the arts, and I could always talk to her about the arts and what we needed to do when we were trying to get money for the Pantages later on. She was a friend of mine. And we got the money for the Pantages. It was mine: 1.5 million that I actually got – hard-headed – got. And I worked with her on that. So whenever she wanted to do something that was right I was there helping her, but I never agreed with everything she wanted or her right-wing philosophy.

I liked Fred Dean; I thought he was a neat guy, but he was all wrong. I told him that later, “You were all wrong. I didn’t dislike you, but you were wrong.” He sort of half agreed, but not really. These people were friends. He was a businessman trying to make a living, but he was going about it wrong. He didn’t want to change anything. And I think he feared he wouldn’t make it if he changed something. Well, that’s not true. The more you improve, the better your chances are of success. But you see, we had just come through a Depression. We weren’t really out of the Depression in the forties. Even in the

fifties we were still at the tail end of the Depression until the Korean War.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For some people, they never got over it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could never forget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They couldn’t look at big projects?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They couldn’t forget. I guess I was lucky because I never suffered as a result of the Depression.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think Tacoma suffered more from the Depression than some other places?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that was very true because it was a workingman’s town. There were no jobs. It was a timber town.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Psychologically then, this had a bigger impact?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I will always believe that that was the root of the conservatism that still exists today. They are getting older now, most of them are dying off now, but they’re afraid. They’re afraid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s really interesting. When I was looking at how Slim Rasmussen was being described, some articles likened him to George Wallace from the South. They said his appeal was to blue-collar labor, fixed-income elderly and the radical right. Those have all been described as fear-based groups. They’re insecure because they don’t have enough money or there is diminishing economy or a slipping of status in the community.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Slim Rasmussen was a railroad man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was considered a populist, but you can be a right-wing populist as well as a left-wing populist. He has been described as having “a timidity covered up by blustering.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were few entrepreneurs because everybody worked for a wage. No one had the money to venture out. They were afraid to venture out because their family would suffer. And then there was no money to start anything

anyway after that. People lost their jobs and it was hopeless. Tacoma was a very hopeless area. Centralia and Everett were other timber towns that were severely depressed. These towns, I believe, are the birthplace of the Wobblie movement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All timber towns. There was a trend reported in these same articles that said the Weyerhaeusers and that group of corporate leaders were moving their family homes to Lakewood at this time. That they were no longer living in Tacoma or supporting Tacoma interests.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The extremely wealthy. There is more wealth in Tacoma, I believe, or there was, than anywhere else in the state of Washington. Maybe not anymore. It never focused on Tacoma, but it was here. They didn't spend their money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's keep that all in mind as we look now at your first re-election campaign in 1970. Bob Satiacum of the Puyallups is listed as running against you. Can you tell me about that campaign?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He became a Republican, I think. Wasn't that the same time that Bob Corcoran ran, too? Corcoran was running as a Democrat against me, and Bob Satiacum was running as a Republican against me. Bob Satiacum was my chief opponent. Corcoran said all kinds of terrible things about me. He called me a communist on the air.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was amazed at the red-baiting that was going on in his literature and ads.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. It was awful. We had a time clock. I bought a time clock so I could time all the time he spent talking about the election and me on the air during his program. I'd start it and stop it so I could prove how much time he was taking talking politics on the air when he shouldn't have been.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was on Channel 13. He had his own program, didn't he? He had a free platform. The issue of equal time became quite a controversy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I should have had equal time. We fought. We couldn't get it into federal court. You have to get permission to go into federal court. I hired an attorney and he was really a good attorney and he petitioned to get in – we couldn't get in. We could have gotten in six months later but it would be too late then. We found out that Corcoran had filed for bankruptcy and threw a lot of personal debt into his bankruptcy. That he cheated. He was so upset when we challenged him when he filed. He talked about filing against me, but hadn't done it, and we challenged him on the equal time issue when he did file. He went on the air and said, "I was so upset that these people have challenged my right to run for office." We didn't challenge his right to run, we challenged him being on the air, but he said "the right to run." And he said, "I went down to the courthouse in Seattle and filed for Position One against Wojahn." He meant to say Tacoma, but he said "Seattle" on the air. Dumb! And he kept doing this.

I wrote this thing to get on the air. I talked about "the person who gets her name before the public wins elections." And I talked about the pig up in Bellingham and I talked about the donkey in Fife that won. But my attorney said, "You can't use this." So I had to redo it, because he said, "You can't do that. You called him a pig and a donkey."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not directly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, but, well anyway, he cracked up over it. He thought it was hilarious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You said, "Every time my opponent appears before this camera, every time his name appears in TV Guide or the newspapers, and every time radio KMQ announces his program, every time, ladies and gentlemen, his name is popularized and it becomes a campaign tool." And then you talk about name familiarity as a political forum. "I can remember a time some years back that a jackass was elected precinct committeeman in one of our Pierce County precincts." And then you say, "Last year a young female by the name of Grunelda was elected homecoming queen at

Western Washington State College. I'm reasonably certain that all students voting for Grunelda were not aware that she was a pig." So, you were just sort of throwing these things out, but I suppose it's getting pretty close to the line. You were having way too much fun here!

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got some time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was Virginia Shackelford who got you to talk on the radio. That surprised me because she was on the other side of the recall. That she showed up in that capacity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We never became bitter enemies. You can't. You don't take them on. I never did. I didn't have to and she helped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was Corcoran red-baiting you? I was so curious about that because it seemed so past the time when you would expect that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because he would do and say anything to win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But why would that appeal to people? I guess I'm naïve, but I would have thought that people were sick of that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Apparently he didn't have a very large audience, but we had no way of knowing. I don't know whether a market survey was ever done to find out what the audience was. He was on at eleven p.m. and then his wife came on instead of him, but her back would ache, so he'd take over for her so we would time that, the amount of time that he was back before the camera. I called Senator Magnuson and he wouldn't do anything about it. A lot of people had stock in Channel 13. And we challenged the ownership of the station and challenged the director of the station. Everything. Corcoran was so nervous he was ready to have a coronary, I think, over the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he wasn't curbed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were paid. There were advertisers using him. So we boycotted the advertisers. I still won't go to the restaurant up on the hill, up on Brown's Point hill, the Cliff House, I won't go there. Haven't been there

since that election because they advertised with Corcoran.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was appealing about him, other than the fact that he had a lot of name recognition? I can't see that he's for anything; he just seems to be against things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. He was kind of a right-winger and people are negative and they like to hear negative things being said about people. I think basically a lot of people are negative. They like to listen to gossip and they like this kind of talk. After the election was over, a physician friend of mine called and asked me to have dinner with him – he and his wife and my husband and me – and he said, "I want to tell you something." I guess it was before the general election. He said, "If you tell anybody, I'll deny it, but you need to know for your own information, that he is a sociopath."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he dangerous?

**Sen. Wojahn:** "And he could be dangerous," he said. He came to me and he said, "He is a sociopath." A sociopath is what he called him, which is an illness. And he said, "Just don't push him too far. He would just as soon shoot you as look at you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was your friend afraid that he would attack you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you afraid?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I didn't feel afraid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** His ads in the newspaper are quite erratic. They don't really make a lot of sense.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They're terrible. Any rational person wouldn't be listening to him except to get some laughs, but it wasn't even laughable to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you counter this? Did you just say positive things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Generally. I just told them the things I had done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you just kind of ignore him and talk about your own record, because by now you've got one?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It kind of turned me negative because when I was running for mayor, I was very negative. I'd been through all this and I couldn't forget it. So I think that it made me negative, although I never was fearful. Jack Pyle, who was covering politics for the Tacoma News Tribune, called me after Corcoran had called me a communist on the air, and Pyle said, "You're going to sue him, aren't you?" Pyle reminded me that the U.S. Supreme Court had determined that calling a person a communist was libelous per se. And I said, "Probably not, unless I can prove damages. If I win the election, I can't prove damages and I wouldn't win, and I can't afford a suit." But I told him that I had retained an attorney and it was coming out of my campaign funds – my attorney fees – and I was able to generate quite a few contributions to pay my attorney's fees, because they were substantial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jack Pyle supported you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to read from an article by him in the Tacoma News Tribune. This was at the end of your first term, I think, and you were about to run again. He went through all the districts and talked about who's who and what he thought of them and he said about you: "Mrs. Wojahn is a housewife with a wide field of knowledge." I don't think anyone is called that anymore in this context.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "She's considered one of the hardest workers in the Legislature." It seems to me that was an adjective that comes up again and again. "She knows schools. She once worked with the State Labor Council as a lobbyist but is far from a tool of big labor." I think you went to some pains to create that image. "She is an expert on consumer protection and specializes in this field, working to protect the housewife. She's a keen worker in the field of social legislation, too." I thought that was

very interesting what he pulled out of your record, and you'd only been there one term so far. I think that this is a pretty fair portrait of you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so, too. I think it was nice. The things that I liked to do. I'd forgotten about that; it's been so long ago.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd created this positive impression with him. We started to discuss Robert Satiacum, who was running against you as a Republican, but we got sidetracked. He was, of course, the Puyallup chief, I guess would be the word.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was chief at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering how you related to the Tribes within your district. If you went and spoke with them or just how that all worked.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were just really coming into their own at that time. They found out how to do it from the blacks, I'm sure. And I had a very good rapport with them. I didn't really know Bob Satiacum, but I knew other Indians who were rather influential and who later became more influential within the Tribe. Where we actually lived on McKinley Hill until after my husband died, it used to be part of the tribal land. Our house was on formerly tribal trust land.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of the area they were reclaiming?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't part that they reclaimed, but it was a part of the original tribal land. Most of the tribal land was on Roosevelt Heights. But there were some blocks on McKinley Hill, and whether our house was part of that, I don't know, but we were close. Some of them still live there. Ramona Bennett lives there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was a leader then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was a neighbor of mine. She lived about ten blocks away, but I knew Ramona. I've always been supportive and worked with them, but when they wanted to take Cascadia back a little later on, I was



adamantly opposed. It had been sold to the state for a juvenile corrections facility fair and square. The Indians had been paid off and they wanted it back and I fought that as a legislator. I said, "Let the courts make the decision. We can't do it. Don't give it away. It's not fair to the Tacoma taxpayers or the state of Washington. Let the courts decide." I held firm and said I would fight them unless it went back to the courts where it should be. The decision should be made in the courts, not by the Legislature. And so that was done and the courts found that it was tribal land, and that was the end of it. They decided to give it back. Okay. So that's the way it is. And you forget it. When you can't do anything more, when you get to the last resort, you do as they say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did get that. Yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They got it back and that was fine. I've always felt that if the court spoke, that I was willing to cease my objections.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was also the era of the "fish wars." Things are really heating up on the Puyallup and the Nisqually rivers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. They were getting there slowly. They had to develop an economic base. They're getting their way now and we're recognizing that they have some rights that were sold out from under them. I felt that the judge was right. I was with the Indians. The Boldt decision was maybe not appropriate, but he'd spoken. And that was that. I don't think I ever expressed that to them; however, they remained my friends and we didn't actually get into the throes of it at all. It was the same with the Cascadia decision. You adhere to what the courts say and there's nothing you can do if you didn't like it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the fish wars and all the things that were happening with the land claims come into the Legislature at all or was that more of a local issue? And then the courts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was more local. And then when the economic development issue came forward with the Port of Tacoma and parts of Tacoma, that was also a negotiated settlement

between the Tribe and the City of Tacoma and Pierce County. That was negotiated and it didn't get into the Legislature particularly. But I do remember when Senator Inouye came out. He was negotiating that settlement along with Norm Dicks, our congressman, and was very influential in the final settlement because he was a minority and much respected in Congress. He was a great help on the solution to that problem. This, again, was without a court decision. This was done by negotiation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering where the state was in all this. The Attorney General, Slade Gorton, was very involved, but I couldn't tell if the Legislature had any role in this at all.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was on the other side. I think that Gorton was always at issue with the Indians and remains so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1971, when the Bureau of Indian Affairs ruled that the Puyallups retained their rights to their tribal lands, Gorton took it to the Washington State Supreme Court and they denied that those reservations still existed, but then that was overturned.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That went to the Ninth Circuit Court and the Ninth Circuit Court reinstated the Indians as legitimate. There were only fifteen Puyallup Indians as I understand at that time; at least that's what Gorton said. But the Ninth Circuit said, "Yes, there is a tribe here."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean he denied the tribe even existed at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, yes, I believe that was the summation of this thing. That there was no longer a Puyallup Tribe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought that it was that the reservation didn't exist. I didn't know he was denying the people themselves.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I think he denied the existence of the territory.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose they're synonymous in a way. The people and the land come together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. Probably. Of course, the river bed of the Puyallup River was changed

too, which left a lot of people that inherited the old river bed. So that became a part of the economic development settlement that occurred later for the Puyallups.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't understand that part. The river itself was in a different place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The river was diverted. Part of the land that was under water is now farm land and people owned that. It really was a very difficult negotiation. And there was a lot of give and take. It still isn't settled. The shellfish issue was never settled – who owns the shellfish tidelands? If the California law were here, we wouldn't have that problem as much on this bay because in California all the ocean front is public land.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oregon too, I think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oregon also. And we permit the people to own first and second tidelands. That's where the shellfish come in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that issue about shellfish can be traced back to territorial days, when settlers could buy up the shellfish beds.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And they get the right to it. But scallops they can't own because they're so deep. They're out in the middle of the bay. So that is something that's going to be litigated forever, I'm sure, and they've never been able to come to a conclusion over it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered, as a public figure, the representative from this area, whether you had to come out and make a statement or just stay in the background on these issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I never did. I've never really. People trusted me. Believe it or not, they trusted me, and I was never challenged on any of these things. I don't think I ever actually spoke out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was such a hot issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. But then, I wasn't Slade Gorton, I wasn't the Attorney General. I was just one person.



## CHAPTER 7: WATERSHED YEAR: THE ERA AND OTHER REFORMS

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, let's turn to the election. You won your election, but the Republicans were the majority in the House in 1971. So again you were in the minority. Your party, the Democrats, had forty-eight and the Republicans had fifty-one members, so it was pretty close.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pretty close.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Speaker election went to Thomas Swayze, who was a Tacoma/Gig Harbor area person.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a Tacoma boy. There was a move to try to form a coalition to oust him, as I remember, in support of Tom Copeland.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was going to ask you. There was a very unusual event recorded in the House Journal where they nominated two Republicans for Speaker.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But it never came down to a coalition because they backed off, because those of us from Tacoma refused to back away from Tom Swayze.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't that a straight party-line vote, usually?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But they were so split because eastern Washington was supporting Copeland and the Tacoma people – there were no Republican legislators from Tacoma hardly except Tom. I think the rest of them were all Democrats, I don't remember. And I think the Seattle people probably supported Swayze. There was talk of a coalition forming.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would the eastern Washington Democrats side with the eastern Washington Republicans in that case? Something like that? Is that the coalition that would have formed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could have. The coalition would have been – if the Republicans didn't have enough votes to elect Copeland because even though some of the Republicans went with him, if a coalition formed with the Democrats

and Republicans together, we could have won for Swayze. Rather than let it get down to that, I think they just gave up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It looked that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We took a stand and I know that Doc Adams and Marzano and I refused to back away from Swayze even though we were friends of Tom Copeland.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought that might be a bit sticky.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We liked him, really liked him. When I lobbied, Tom Copeland was a really good friend. We didn't want it to be known and we took it up in our caucus and I just said, "I cannot not support Tom Swayze."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was strictly a geography issue for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Geographic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there big differences between the two men?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think there was that much difference between the two men, just the desire of both of them to hold the office. Tom had sort of inherited that from his mother, Frances Swayze, and Tom Copeland had been there a long time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And had been Speaker Pro Tem and then Speaker for a special session just before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And wanted it very badly, I think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I know. But he backed away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's fascinating. I don't know if it's ever happened on any other occasion. First Tom Swayze was nominated and then Bob Goldsworthy got up and said, "I'm going to do this unusual thing. I'm going to nominate a second Republican." Then he

nominated Tom Copeland and Stu Bledsoe got right behind Tom Copeland, another eastern Washington Republican. Then Tom Copeland got up and said, "It's okay. Let's not have this split. I'll give way."

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had been through a coalition before that and they knew the problems that occur. There would have been Democrats siding with Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would have been pretty messy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** On both sides. It would have been messy. And he was a gentleman and gave up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then he was elected hands-down to be Speaker Pro Tem. And he never was Speaker. I think that was hard for him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a real honorable man. We had honorable people at that time. We had gentlemen and ladies and the Legislature ran well. If we didn't win, the Democrats were real close, we had a three-vote split and we would just walk off the floor if we were to make our point. Then we would go and get the piano out and all sing until midnight. The next day then we'd go down to Rules and pull a bill. It was fun. It was fun and Margaret Hurley was a coalitionist. She was a Democrat but very conservative. That would have split us with the Copeland thing, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have been pretty tough.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would have been very tough. It would have been animosity and hard feelings; it would never have been resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did the Democrats just vow to stick together and not get into this issue with the Republicans?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that the leadership probably did; I wasn't privy to that. They just said, "Don't do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other part that I found very curious was that John O'Brien nominated Leonard Sawyer for Speaker. I know he was not

going to get it because you were not the majority, but Leonard Sawyer had challenged John O'Brien for the Speakership another time and here he was nominating him. It looked like a "passing of the baton" moment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That just shows courtesy and support. I remember when we were in the minority in the Senate and Ellen Craswell was nominated for Pro Tem and Senator Talmadge got up and nominated me. One-vote split, and she won by one vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She had the numbers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's just a political move. And I think in John O'Brien's case, it was just to show that his rift that he'd had with Sawyer before had been resolved, or with the Speaker when the coalition formed. That's when it was all sort of resolved and everybody forgave everybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the olive branch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. That was a nice gesture, even if that's all it was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a nice gesture. There was always the hope that you might win! You know damn well you won't, but you might! So there was no subterfuge there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The process for nominating the Speaker was not exactly routine that year.

Your committees: you got onto Appropriations that year. That was something that you had been wanting before, wasn't it? Was that because you were a little bit more senior?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I think so. I'd been asking for it and I always asked for Rules, number one, and never got that. I never got my first thing so I thought I should have this. I may have put that down as my first preference too, that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You stayed on Business and Professions, but you had a new one, Natural Resources and Ecology.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't want to go on that. I had to because they needed somebody. I hated that committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was curious because I don't think you were ever on it again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why were you not very interested in that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's where all these fishermen came in and talked about steelhead. They talked about the steelhead like it was God. I sat there and listened to this whole session, maybe four hours of them talking about the fun of fishing for a steelhead and they practically got on their knees and prayed. It was awful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, fishing is a kind of religion for some!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It really was, and I thought, "This is not for me." When they had tried to form a Department of Ecology, they were going out every night trying to rewrite the bill. Every night they went out and rewrote it and came back with a new bill and finally, everything was dropped off of it and it just said that "There shall be a Department of Ecology." Nothing was laid out. Just the bare bones.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was curious about that committee because I don't think that you were ever on it again, and I was wondering since Ecology was "the new kid on the block" whether that interested you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really. They hadn't gotten into the depth of what they're into right now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of your interests, car emissions and things like that, could be considered ecology issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember that. I sponsored a bill on noise control and that finally got it down to a study. Everything got stripped off my bill and it was just a study.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the wedge in the door, though, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We sent the bill over and it was intact when it went to the Senate, and it was the conservative senator, Senator Guess, who killed it and stripped it and made it a study. I'll never forget that. It was a

good bill and we suffered to get that bill through and then it didn't happen. This bill got out of the House. It was good. And then it just collapsed in the Senate. I think I voted against it I was so pissed. I don't remember. I may have voted for it in the end, but I thought it was wrong because it was a reasonable bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was so changed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we needed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think people understood the impact of noise yet. Maybe you were just ahead of your time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. I usually was ahead of my time, because people would complain to me. I was always close enough to my constituents that I knew what they were all complaining about. So we usually tried to do something. At least during the interim I would work on it and do some research on it and find out if it was possible to pass. And if we got a bill I usually sent it to the agency that was going to be responsible for it to see what their thought was before I ever introduced it. I did do those courteous things. They don't do that anymore. There's no courtesy. But if you did that, you had half a chance of getting it passed. Or you got ideas coming in to correct the bill so that it could be redrafted and not become a committee bill. You'd do it during the interim. And we had long interims at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if that's one of the differences. Are members too burnt out now? Although you had some long sessions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That may be true, I don't know. I don't think that people are sufficiently trained anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a very good background for this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My background was solid. And I was always sure of myself because of my background. And I had my philosophy which was intact. Most people don't have a philosophy. They sway with the lobbyists. Money means something, and that's too bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read that a woman legislator said that she considered 1972 a pivotal year for women in the Legislature, where you had really “arrived.” By ’72, she thought that your position was much more strengthened than previously. Also, that she noticed – and I was wondering if this was true for you – that women were no longer being stuck in what she called the “women’s committees” of education, libraries, social and health issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no. That’s true. We were able to pick and choose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here you are on Appropriations and, even though you don’t want to be, you were also on Natural Resources.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I took that as a courtesy. I didn’t want the committee. I wanted things that were connected with what I was doing at that time, Business and Professions, which became Commerce, and Appropriations dealt with funding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For context, this was also the Boeing bust period, as it’s called. I was wondering how that shadowed the work of the Legislature. How did it impact the revenues? Did it impact the need for social services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We, I think, were forced to consider giving tax credits, for one thing, to industries so they could survive. I think that was the year we gave Intalco the tax credit for the plant in Bellingham, if I remember correctly. That really spurred the thinking process of people to attempt to encourage business to settle and locate here. We realized that we could not be a one-industry state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of a shock to the system?

**Sen. Wojahn:** When Boeing went under, everything went under. So that was the beginning of growing up as far as the Legislature was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Working to diversify the economy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** To diversify the economy so that we were not beholden to one company to provide jobs. Because in one fell swoop, there

were about one-hundred thousand people laid off, which was a terrible disaster.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that filter down into Tacoma, or would that be more of a Seattle area problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of people commuted from Tacoma. It didn’t affect us as harshly as it did Seattle. Federal Way was really impacted because a lot of Boeing employees lived around the lakes in Federal Way. That’s where we had to do something with savings and loans because people were losing their homes. So all of that occurred at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** During the thirties there were protests; there were bread lines; there were all kinds of things. Was there a fear that the state would fall apart at this time? Or was this something that people thought, “Well, we’ll get through this?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the older people who remembered the Depression – we had just come out of it. The war was what brought us out of it. If there hadn’t been a war we’d still be in a depressed state. I’m sure that those who had lived through the Depression were concerned that it was another take, but the problem was that a lot of the Boeing people had come in from other states. Boeing was actively recruiting people from other states so they had a large labor force to choose from. They’d bring them here, hire them and then fire them if they didn’t work out. It was very bad. Between that and the fact that we had a glut of workers that were not capable, plus a lot of workers without jobs when the bankruptcy – it was an actual bankruptcy, it was not foreclosed upon by the Dupont Company, I’m told. Dupont was the controlling stockholder. They didn’t foreclose. All those people either had to find other work or leave the state. I presume that a lot of them left the state at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been very disruptive, though?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wondered how that played out in the Legislature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** All I know is that we were willing to listen to programs that gave tax exemptions or tax credits, anything to keep business here and to encourage new business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Dan Evans had a “Jobs Now” plan that was supposed to help people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there was a work incentive program generated and that was very good because we helped to provide people with the tools to get a job. I remember that my son was working in that. He’d just graduated from college and worked for the incentive program for Employment Security, and he would actually go and find jobs for people. One of them was a copper plating company in Tacoma and they were going under. They had work but they couldn’t get copper-platers who knew how to do it, so he was able to bring together unemployed workers to learn the copper plating business. There were other businesses involved. I remember him actually going with people to buy tools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Really helping them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Really helping them and also interviewing for job opportunities where the manufacturer or the business that would have an opportunity would let Employment Security know that they had these opportunities, and then he would help them to find someone to fill them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bringing things together. Facilitating?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can remember his even having to go to get somebody out of bed in the morning—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s really facilitating!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Because they hadn’t worked and they’d lost hope. So that was the beginning of making it better. But at the same time that this occurred, I was getting complaints from women who had families to support whose husbands had left them, and they couldn’t get into a work incentive program because they were giving it to the men first. That happened! So I had a bill in to take care of this. To provide

that women also were to participate in the program. It hit the federal courts and before the bill could pass the federal courts had spoken and said, “You can’t do this. You have to open the door for women, also.” So that was when the doors were opened for women to also be involved in the work incentive program. And it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just like after the war, when women lost their jobs because the men came back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not only that, for a while, if your husband had a job, you couldn’t get a job as a school teacher.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You weren’t supposed to be married and working.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. You weren’t supposed to be working if you were married. So that was what occurred with the men coming back from the war, that women were not given the opportunities even though they needed the help. These things happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another issue which had an impact on the Legislature that session was redistricting. In the 1971 session, you were supposed to redistrict and you just couldn’t, for one reason or another, do it. In July, after that session, a court case was filed, *Prince v. Kramer*, Kramer being Lud Kramer, the Secretary of State, in the U.S. District Court. There had been a redistricting in 1965 but the Court declared that not valid and that no more elections could be held under that particular configuration. You had a deadline of February, 1972 to redistrict or the Court would come back and do it for you. Most of the stories we have about redistricting cover the Senate with Senator Greive and all the conflicts that he was going through, but could you tell me what was happening in the House during those years?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We let Greive do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you kind of pushing it off and letting the Senate do it, so there wasn’t an active House presence?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was the one-man, one-vote ruling and the courts had spoken that there



had to be equal representation. And that's when equal representation occurred in our state. There couldn't be more than a fifteen percent split from any district. In other words, a district had to be geographically so big if the population was low, that it actually cut out districts in eastern Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one of the problems, because no area wanted to lose representation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And there were those who said you didn't need that because in the U.S. Senate you have two senators from every state regardless of population. It was just the House. So that argument occurred, but the Court said no, that you had to have equal representation. That's at the time when we had Position One and Position Two and then the senator represented the whole district, but you had two positions. Some of them were actually geographically split, but not all of them. Ours was not. Our Twenty-seventh was always intact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your district, to look ahead just a bit, does change its boundaries in 1974.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It merged with the Twenty-sixth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that impact you much?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, because there were three of us running for two seats. I was Position One, Frank Marzano was Position Two in the Twenty-seventh Legislative District and Doc Adams was in the Twenty-sixth. So the Twenty-sixth and the Twenty-seventh districts were merged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were even bigger then, your districts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They became bigger but the configuration also was changed. Frank Marzano, instead of staying in his own position, Position Two, where he might have won and let Adams file against one of us, he moved over into my position where I stayed. They were trying to find out what I was going to do, the two of them. I was accused of saying that I would move to Position Two by Adams, and I said, "I never said that. My position is Position

One. If Frank wants to move in against me, so be it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you lose any important areas from your district of support, or did you gain some?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I gained all of the north end at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a strong area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I retained McKinley Hill and Hilltop, but I lost Fife and Milton and Brown's Point and Dash Point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that actually make your district a little more rational? You represented everything from the inner city to farmland.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When it changed, it all became a district within—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little more urban?

**Sen. Wojahn:** More urban, yes. I lost the farms; I lost the berry growers and the dairy people. It's all industry out there now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They've changed, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Now Fife is back in the district. But when I lost that, I lost Fife Heights. I had Brown's Point and Dash Point and the Port-industrial. I gained all that when I lost Fife and Milton and the district became bigger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But more cohesive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. More cohesive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** During these years, there are certain issues that just seem to drag on and on. Redistricting is one of them; the tax reform efforts were another.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We kept trying. It never worked. We passed two state income tax in my days and neither one of them were accepted by the people. Dumped!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just seemed like hitting that wall again and again with tax reform.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it was both Republicans and Democrats working it. Moderates on both sides working it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's another thread that's running through this that seems futile in the end.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I've never not voted for a tax if I thought it was necessary. And I've never been hit by it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you like programs, it seems like you should foot the taxes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. All of our state money goes out in programs. Nobody is clutching money to their breast; it's all in programs for people and things that people wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Although plenty of people have no trouble separating out those two ideas and being for programs, but against taxes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Some legislators bragged about always voting for an appropriation but never voting for the tax package.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems a little irresponsible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That's right. I voted for both.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another very fascinating thing about this time period is that the Legislature, one way or another, was reforming itself and changing pretty drastically. Just as a precursor to some of the things that happened in '72, in 1971 there was a lawsuit brought by the liquor industry against the Legislature. This involved some new tax on hard liquor that was passed after the clock was stopped. It was the end of session and a whole slew of laws were passed after midnight, into the next day, basically.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. Because we stopped the clock.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They took that to court and I guess that was the end of that practice, of "stopping the clock" and going on with business. There was an amusing article about "reality everywhere else marches on, but in the Legislature they have their own." What did you think of that practice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were there till two, three, four o'clock in the morning when we were supposed to be out. I think I was pleased to see that rescinded because it was a terrible burden. We were passing laws by exhaustion rather than deliberation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the quality of legislation made at those hours a bit compromised?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or, on the other hand, you were in a time crunch and these were good bills that had gone through all the processes and needed to be passed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That happens with good legislation anyway. One of the things that we did at that time was make an issue a "special order of business" at four minutes to twelve. If we started it before then we could carry that one bill through. So we always had one bill that we held over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you did have some mechanisms for this time issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did. But it was less insane than before. This was one bill that was carried over – we voted finally. And usually we were through with it by twelve-thirty or fairly fast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that there had been sessions that went on—

**Sen. Wojahn:** On and on and on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not just hours, but even days. Before your day. I remember reading about that and thinking, "How on earth do they keep going?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was probably lobbying at that point where you could go home if you wanted to, but I never did. But I don't remember going into more than the next day. Four or five in the morning, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, pretty grueling. This was the beginning of looking at some of these processes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Opening the process up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1972, they also brought in open meetings, including Rules. Now that was a really big controversy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Let me tell you what happened there. It was really weird. I was on Rules at that time. They had a Rules meeting that was held across the street in one of the office buildings and they provided security to walk the Rules Committee members across the street to the Rules Room.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why? Did they think that you would get lost along the way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They just felt that it was a problem. I think they thought we would be lobbied for bills that people wanted. They didn't think that that was a good idea. So in order to discourage that—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it like throwing a corridor around you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They would be on the outside and we would walk in pairs or whatever. They would be there so that no one could buttonhole you and ask you to vote a certain way. Then we got into the Rules Room. It was held in one of the big hearing rooms and nobody came.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With all that hoopla?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody came! There were just a handful of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When they first did it, people did come? Partly to see, I guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** To see what was happening, but the interest dropped immediately.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a quip in the paper about now that you get to see this, "here's another study in boredom for you," or something like that. Because it wasn't that fascinating.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was crazy. And before that, in the Senate they had this round table, this little, tiny Rules Room, which was a room right off of the workroom. It was a little, tiny room. It was probably a closet. There was a round table and everybody sat around the table and they had this stack of tablets. It was about

two inches by two inches, and on the tablet it said 'yes' 'no', 'yes' 'no' in a circle. So however you wanted to vote you circled no or yes. Then they'd start the Rules meeting. The chair would be the Lieutenant Governor and they'd go around the table and everybody would have their chance to pull a bill. First we'd pull a bill and give a little speech on it and then they would use their tablet and write 'yes' or 'no' so no other person could see what they were doing. Then they'd fold them up and throw them in this little pot. And they'd say, "Pass the biscuits." They were called biscuits. Pass and everyone dropped their vote in there, it would get back to the Lieutenant Governor and he would open them up and say what had happened, 'yes' or 'no,' and whether the bill passed.

I remember one time Senator Gissberg had asked Senator Knoblauch from Puyallup to support a bill. Senator Knoblauch was a quiet, kind of milquetoast nice guy, and he said, sure, he would vote for the bill. So they all voted and there were no 'yes' votes. And Gissberg said, "You told me you would vote for my bill." And Senator Knoblauch said, "You didn't even vote for it yourself." That actually happened! Senator Knoblauch was a real nice guy and they always leaned on him to vote their way because he was usually more acquiescent than others. That's the way it was. It was very secretive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did Rules work in the House? The same way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was by show of hands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not quite so secretive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No one was there. It was closed so no one knew. If no one squealed on you, nobody knew how you'd voted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you keep a pretty tight hold?

**Sen. Wojahn:** What we did, that was in the Rules Committee in the House, we would require the committee chairs to come in and explain the bills that they had on the calendar. That was very good, because as a committee chair you had to know the pros and cons of bills and give it to you straight. And then we would

vote. It was open as far as raising your hand 'yes' or 'no,' but there were very few roll calls ever taken unless it was really close, but we always knew how we were voting. When it opened up, after the novelty wore off, hardly anybody ever came to the Rules Committee meetings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Speaker Swayze was not in favor of opening Rules, but how did you feel about it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't think we should. I didn't want to open the Rules Committee because I'd lobbied and I figured I wouldn't have gotten some of the bills I got through if they'd opened the Rules Committee because there'd be opposition, and usually it would be bad opposition. It would be the moneyed people who wouldn't give money if somebody voted for a bill that I wanted because of philosophy or because of finances. Also, I didn't want the executive committee meetings of the committees to be open either. But I found out it was alright after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a process of learning how to manage it? Would you have to do it differently if someone was watching you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's where people learn to speak out of both sides of their mouths.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which is not necessarily a good thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that's good. But some of us didn't. We did what we did anyway. We didn't try to hide what we were voting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking of all the pros and cons I've heard over time about opening the Rules Committee and times like when Sam Smith was trying to get open housing through and it failed again and again, but of course nobody knew who was killing it. Had that been more public, perhaps that would have not failed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think it would have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But on the other hand, it killed some bills that deserved to be killed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. Some bills are so bad and oriented in such a way that people are

hurt, but they pass because money was involved. So there are pros and cons. When I chaired the committee later on when meetings were open, we found it wasn't too bad. When you are in executive session, you don't take testimony but you have a chance to compare notes and to express your opinion. By expressing yourself publicly you didn't get the backlash you'd have gotten because the press was there. If you express yourself freely and give good reasons for your support or opposition to a particular bill, they respected that. If anybody came in with an ulterior motive it could be readily observed, and the press is bright enough to pick that up. People, however, did talk out of both sides of their mouths sometimes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This has to be coupled with good press coverage to really work, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And good public involvement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Public involvement. If the public's there witnessing and the press, you don't get away with as much. So it's better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's certainly a big change and a lot of people were very apprehensive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. And I was, but I became a supporter because it did work. When the lobbyists found out they couldn't really lean on people that hard, I think they discontinued the practice somewhat. Although it's hard now to get an honest answer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the other things that they brought on board in this session was the Hot Line where they created this mechanism where people could call in to the Legislature and give their point of view. I've read many times that a phone call goes a long way. A phone call to the Hot Line, does that have the same impact as calling up your personal legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure it does. Unless you get a wad of calls from a particular group that aren't even from your district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little bit too orchestrated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. If they're from your district, you always listen. We finally stopped them from being able to give every legislator a copy of their remarks for or against. They said you can only do it for your own members, your own representatives, otherwise it would become too much of a burden. Then you get these telephone groups that compare notes and all calling and saying, "Give every member my objection or my support for this bill." "No, you tell us who your representative is or tell us where you live and we'll tell you who they are, but you can't just *carte blanche* it to everybody." It works well. The last several years I was here we hardly got any telephone calls. We used to get a lot of calls from outside the district, but my staff just threw them away unless they were something I was particularly interested in. If it wasn't anything that I was focused on, they didn't bother me with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this new openness, this new accessibility, an attempt to keep people involved in politics, keep the citizenry active, or was this something else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I don't think it's to keep people active, it's to keep people informed if they want to be informed. It wasn't a conscious effort to solicit comments; it was there for people who had deep concerns over issues and they could call.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of the reform ideas didn't go through – annual sessions. I noticed that you were having a lot of special sessions through these years. Over and over. You adjourn and the very next day you were in a special session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We always had special sessions. The minute I came into the Legislature, we started having special sessions, the first year I was there. The only time we didn't was in 1978.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Dixy Lee Ray didn't call one that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She didn't call us that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was going on with government? Are things just getting more and

more complicated, people expecting more and more?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. People expect more, but are unwilling to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's always the catch, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And it's always "Don't abuse my issues." What's that little poem?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Don't tax you. Don't tax me. Tax the man behind the tree?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That's it. And it still goes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One idea that sounded quite sensible was that some members thought that the House and Senate should have matching committees. When bills are passed in one house and have to be sent to the next, if the committees have different structures, does that hold things up a bit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The problem with having the same committees – if the House would narrow it down to the number that were advisable for forty-nine members it would be different. But they have so many members that they really wanted more committees so that the majority party could have more options on chairs. And so it would be good if they did have the same number of committees and the same type of committees. But the independence would not be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, different logic?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The checks and balances of the system, it needs to be independent of one another. And so it wouldn't work, and shouldn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there were other considerations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If a person's a member of a committee and sponsors a bill, the leadership tries to get the bill into the committee that person serves on. And so you'd have jangling all the time between both houses. It's much more comfortable this way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Let's talk about some of the bills that you co-sponsored or sponsored.

One of the ones that really caught my eye was House Bill No. 77. It was to create a Department of Institutions separate from DSHS. It went into the committee of Social and Health Services chaired by a Republican, Dr. Caswell Farr, but it never came out of that committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It should have. It was separating the DSHS after it merged. I never wanted the merger; I didn't think it would work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** About a month later as you realized this wasn't going to go anywhere, you, along with seventeen other Democrats, issued a remonstrance. I guess several things had happened: a prisoner on furlough murdered someone and a five-year-old child was kidnapped. Your point seemed to be that DSHS was not tracking Corrections issues and things were falling through the cracks and not being properly administered, and that by creating the Institutions as a separate entity, that presumably things would be a little tighter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There wasn't enough detailing or enough staff members handling the problem and they were all competing with one another for the budget. The budget was not adequate. I'm sure that was one of the problems. Getting them to mesh was impossible. Eventually we got them separated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It took you until 1981.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Because it was proved that it wasn't working. I remember I was told – and the reason that I almost went along with it was – that they needed a cohesiveness so that when a person came out of prison he could be picked up by social services to be helped, to be rehabilitated with social services. Or, if a person was in a mental institution when they were ready to be released, there could be a policy of helping him with social services. That didn't happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds rational enough. The remonstrance said in part that “Whereas, the chairman and the Republican majority leadership of the Committee on Social and Health Services of this House have refused to allow floor consideration of House Bill No. 77”

–so it sounds like you were pretty frustrated – “which would establish an autonomous Department of Institutions,” and then Representative Sid Morrison amended your bill. It's difficult to follow, but it looked like he stripped it of its original meaning. And then everyone who had put in the original bill voted against it. He must have reversed it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. He stripped it. You can do that: everything after the enacting clause, and insert and you put a whole new subject matter in there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that infuriate the original authors of the bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We knew that if we were in the minority we weren't going to get it anyway, and so you sort of laugh at him. “For God's sake, what are you trying to do, Sid?” They changed it totally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that happen very often?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It happened all the time! You always have to watch out because anytime you put a bill in, if the title is too broad, they can hang anything on it. They can either hang anything on it or strip it and hang something else. But if the title isn't broad enough, they can't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somehow he was quite successful and his resolution passed and yours didn't.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course. So it was probably, “It isn't really happening buddy; let's just think about this for a while.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that you followed this for years and so we'll be coming up against the DSHS question again and again. But you eventually did make some headway.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We separated everything out of it. My big one was when the Department of Health came out. I always fought that. I didn't think that Health belonged in social science because health is a pure science and social science is not, and you can't mix them. What was happening with DSHS, everything was considered a social problem before it became a

health problem and we were wasting our money and our time and our effort. So I always wanted that out of there. We took out the Commission for the Blind; we took out Veterans Affairs; we took out Corrections; we took out Institutions; and we finally took out Health. So it's now a social agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legislation seems to come in waves then. All these entities were separate and then Governor Evans rolled them all together, and then you started picking them off again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. There was a big move to put them all together for more efficiency and to save money. Well, it didn't save money. The various agencies in DSHS were cannibalizing one another for funding, and the administrator was just a referee. Nothing was happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rather a thankless task?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that's the reason that Jerry Kopet and I sponsored the bill in which we said that the department was so big that the various agencies had to talk to one another and compare notes and get together, because they weren't paying attention. We got it through the House and it got dropped on its head in the Senate. They laughed.

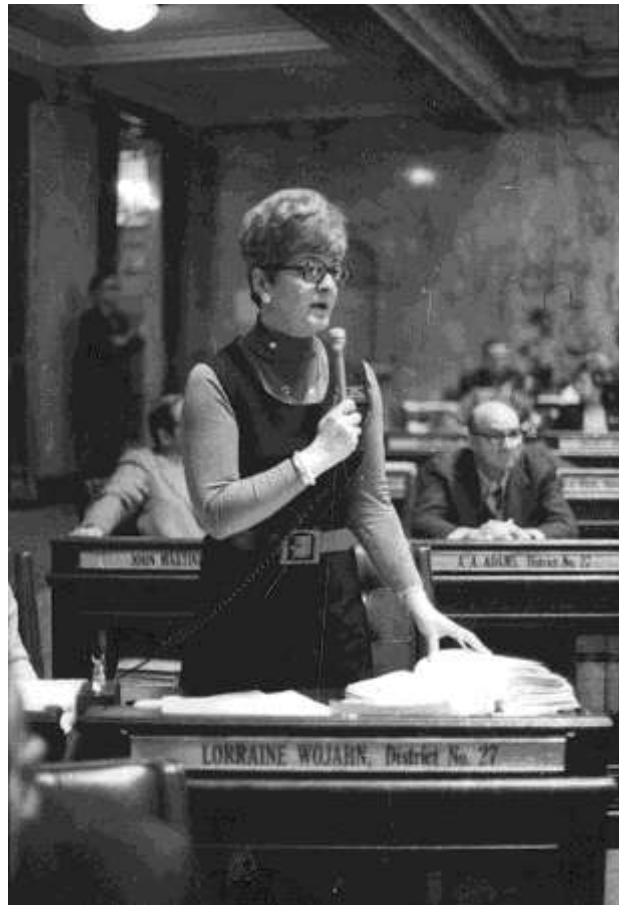
**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was worth a shot.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We knew, right. But that did happen. That was before the remonstrance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you just reach such a pitch of frustration? Is that what prompted you do to this? You just wanted it on the record?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Paul Conner wanted it on the record, and we thought it was a great idea, those of us who didn't like DSHS in the first place, and I think I was the only one who voted against the whole bill when it went through the House. When it came back, I may have supported it because it had something in there on nutrition that eventually got taken out. So, I didn't win anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing you did win. We can turn to another rather large cause during that session, which was the ERA [Equal Rights



*A strong voice in support of the Equal Rights Amendment*

Amendment] vote. There were two of course; there was voting for the ratification of the national amendment of which you were a sponsor, and then there was the state ERA. Did having the national and the state-level amendments come up for discussion at the same time help the discussion or complicate it? Did they build on each other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They just happened to come at the same time. They built on each other. We passed both of them, but we just barely passed the state ERA. You know the story of that? There was a Women's Council organized by Governor Evans of which I was a member, and we had a woman deputy attorney general writing the new laws if the ERA passed. While she was doing this, while the thing was being advocated for the election, she was really having a real difficult time going through all the codes and she was about ready to have a nervous breakdown. I know that this was happening

because she was complaining that she couldn't get through it all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just one person was doing this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. In the Attorney General's office. One person, and she was a member of the Women's Council. She was trying to get this done and we kept being told that she was really having a problem to get the whole thing done because it would have to be done if we passed it – or close to that. Anyway, the day after election, the bill had not passed, so she relaxed and sort of came unglued and relaxed, and then they started counting absentee votes. And the absentee ballots for the Fort Lawton area of Seattle, which was a regular Army post at that time provided the vote to finally pass the constitutional amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was that close?

**Sen. Wojahn:** By a very, very close margin. The thing that we thought was so great was that it was the armed forces who were the ones that finally passed it. It passed, and then I think she did have a nervous breakdown. And we changed one-hundred-and-thirty-five statutes in one fell swoop with that constitutional change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot of opposition, at least on the national level, worrying that women would be drafted and sent to the front lines; worrying that women would be forced to work when they wanted to stay home with their young children. That there would be unisex bathrooms.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was probably the biggest thing, with the unisex bathrooms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a huge list of misunderstandings, strongly held beliefs, that this is what the ERA would do. Did you play any role in trying to straighten out any of this? Did you go around talking to people about what is the ERA?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, sure. My position was that what's good for the goose is good for the gander and vice-versa. That you don't ask anybody. There are plenty of jobs in the armed services that can be handled by women that are not on

the frontline fighting. And even if our shores were being invaded, we would take up a gun, too. It happened in the siege of Leningrad. It happens.

And so, what was the problem? And as far as unisex bathrooms, what difference does it make? You have to wait your turn anyway. It was right-wing crap all over again. And so there were very logical reasons that it should pass. It was believed that when the initial Bill of Rights was written and the Constitution of the United States, that Abigail Adams kept saying to her husband, "Remember the ladies." And so when they stated "All men are created equal," they believed that it was an all-inclusive term. That "men" is used generically. But that's always been an argument, too. It's the same people, the gun people, the right-wingers, the Christian right, they're the ones who get hung up on this. The worst part is that a lot of them call themselves Democrats. The Twenty-ninth District in Tacoma, a Democrat district, the worst right-wing district in the whole state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why is that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. Slim Rasmussen, mostly. There are some things that they probably are right about, but not many. But there was no argument. In the state of Washington, thank God the people are rational, and they did accept the Equal Rights Amendment, but it was the irrational Army that did it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting, yes. The drafting of women was a really big issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I know. I thought that was very interesting. In Israel they've always drafted women, because they had such a limited population.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the strategy to pass the national ERA different from the state ERA? How did the process work there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All we had to do was ratify the federal amendment to the federal Constitution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that was just a legislative move?



**Sen. Wojahn:** A legislative action ratifying it. We were about number thirty-sixth or thirty-seventh state to ratify the amendment to the federal Constitution, and they needed thirty-eight. We didn't quite get them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For your purposes, was that House Joint Resolution 10, of which you were a sponsor? So once it passed the House and Senate—

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was ratified by the state of Washington. Adding our state to the thirty-six or thirty-seven to consent to amending the U.S. Constitution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you sent it back to Congress, was that it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. To be listed as a ratifying state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the state ERA was a different campaign?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The state was a separate issue, and we also passed our own constitutional amendment. Amending the Washington State Constitution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. House Joint Resolution 61.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of the things that the state of Washington has done have held, like the abortion bill, which is the most liberal in the whole country right now because of the right-wingers. It's held, and it's held firmly.

Do you know, the funny thing is that with the Equal Rights Amendment – this is an aside, but you need to hear this – I went back to Williamsburg, Virginia when they built a new building to house the Administration of the State Courts. Every state was invited to carry their state flag back to be presented. The Chief Justice of the State Supreme asked me to replace him – he didn't want to go – so I went back with Justice Hamilton and Justice Utter – he is the one who resigned because he didn't believe in capital punishment. I was on the Judicial Council at the time and so I was privileged to do that. It was really a fun trip. It was quite an elaborate ceremony. We marched to the new

building with our Washington State flag and placed it in the stanchion along with the flags of the other forty-nine states. The building was built on a knoll there and it was a very impressive sight with all the flags, marching in. I didn't carry the flag; I don't remember who did carry it, I think maybe Justice Hamilton. It was a wonderful time and we spent several days back there. We flew into Dulles Airport and then we rode the bus to Williamsburg, but Justice Utter had rented a car and one evening he asked me if I would like to use his car. So, I was able to do some touring around Williamsburg and it was quite a nice thing for him to do, very generous. He was a very generous man. I had a lovely evening touring the city, driving myself around. I had been there before and I'd found a neat store that had everything. You could buy things in Williamsburg in the colonial area but everything was so expensive, way over-priced. So I was able to avoid the tourist traps and shop in a store which I had been before when we were in Williamsburg. So that was kind of fun.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's fun to go to a new area and just explore.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The College of William and Mary is located there, which was lovely to see. That's one of the oldest colleges in the United States. I was able to tour that. And I was impressed: we ate all of our meals at the Williamsburg Inn; they had several kinds of interesting food that I remember from my childhood but which you can't get any more. I remember they had salsify one evening for dinner, along with the rest of the dinner, which was a vegetable much like a celery. We had gooseberry jam, which I remembered from my days when my mother raised gooseberries in Easton and my dad railroaded there. And, we usually had some type of fancy winter squashes that we don't see often. It was really a revelation and so the food was different, the atmosphere was historic and beautiful and the experience was wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a perfect little gem of a holiday.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. We were not in session so that was convenient. It was really a very, very pleasurable occasion. The night we flew into Dulles Airport, I stayed there in Chantilly. The Kennedy's home was not too far from there. And I called a friend of mine who had worked for me in the Legislature and who now lived in D.C. and they came and got me and we went to dinner that night. So I had a really nice evening with Irene Creed and her husband Gordon, who had come out from D.C. from Maryland, to enter law school. He had been invited by Judge Boldt, with whom he had become acquainted as a student at George Washington University, to come out to the law school. We'd just opened the University of Puget Sound Law School. He's now back in D.C. and is one of the principle attorneys with the Department of General Administration. I visit with them whenever I go to D.C.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you've got these little connections.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So I've got little connections there, too. It was fun. We went several days in advance because there were all these things going on, and, just by the chance of the draw, I always sat at the table with a group of legislators from Kentucky. The Kentucky legislature was in session at that time, but they were close to Williamsburg and they could drive up in the evening for the dinner. One evening they came in and they were just cracking up laughing and we sat down to eat dinner and they were still laughing. And I said, "What's so funny?" And they said, "Well, we have had quite an experience today. Our Governor is out of state and a bill just passed to rescind the Equal Rights Amendment that Kentucky had passed. So our Lieutenant Governor, a woman who used to be a bartender, vetoed the bill!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good for her!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They were supportive, and they cracked up over it. It actually happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What a chancy thing. So would the Governor have not vetoed it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. There were some who were saying that maybe he went out of state on purpose, with the bill laying there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of ducked that one?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody knows, but it happened. Of course, it was vetoed but there was some question whether that could be done anyway, so I don't know whether that was ever resolved. The Equal Rights Amendment did not pass because of the lack of one or two states which did not ratify the U.S. constitutional change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some states did rescind, I believe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't have enough anyway, so I think it's a moot point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1972, when Congress passed the ERA very handily – I don't remember the numbers, but it was overwhelming – could anyone have guessed that it wouldn't be ratified?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No one thought it would be – it became so...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It became totally bogged down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of them tried to rescind, but I don't think that the rescissions were ever adopted because it never went to the courts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read that at least three states took back their votes. There were some Washington legislators trying to start a movement to rescind the Washington vote.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure that's true. Eastern Washington conservatives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you passed it in the House, three Spokane Republicans, Gladder, Kuehnle and Richardson voted against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, of course. Kuehnle was the most conservative person that ever walked. He's the one who sponsored the gambling bill. He loved gambling. He's a dreadful person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Thirteen senators voted against it as well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. But the Tom Copelands of the world and the Tom Swayzes voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But Senator August Mardesich voted against it. I think even Senator Gissberg voted against it. And Senator Greive. So it was both Democrats and Republicans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. I'm sure they did. I know that Senator Mardesich and Senator Greive and Senator Gissberg were all very conservative. Their districts were not conservative particularly. That's the thing that's so unusual because Senator Greive came out of the same district as Senator Talmadge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was a strong Catholic. I wonder if that had any bearing on his views about women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Gissberg, I don't know what he was. He was from Marysville. Mardesich and Gissberg came from the same area, not the same district. Everett and above Lake Stevens. They were very conservative. But that didn't affect the good guys. One of the good guys who was there was the future Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court who just retired about six years ago, Senator Jim Andersen. Really good guy. Senator Marshall Neill – later a State Supreme Court Justice – I think was still there, from eastern Washington. And Joel Pritchard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it would be just a very personal issue, not a party-line thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I don't think that the diocese took a position on the ERA. I don't remember them taking a position, so it was just personal. Augie Mardesich never did anything for anybody. I had to challenge him. Everything I wanted I challenged him on and got. But you had to stand up to him. He wouldn't listen otherwise. He'd be running; you'd stop him and he'd be ready to start running again until you got his attention and then he'd listen. But he was always in a hurry. Lieutenant Governor Cherberg probably didn't support it, either. Of course, he wouldn't be voting unless it was a tie.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I came across a news article from that session that just made me chuckle. There were a lot of pictures of different people,

mostly staff, discussing whether or not women could wear pantsuits. They had all these women wearing rather demure pantsuits, and across each picture they said, "Not allowed" and then they showed one woman staffer with a very short mini-skirt with her legs crossed, and they said, "Well, this is all right." Anyway, there's a lively quote from you in this article. It begins, "House women members apparently aren't wearing pants either," and then you said, "Our Speaker Swayze is violently opposed to pantsuits on women and he thinks it will weaken the decorum. So in deference to him, we don't wear them." What did you really think of this issue? Did you think this was silly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Baloney! There was no point in challenging it. He was the Speaker of the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he actually tell women to leave the floor of the chamber?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember his ever doing that. I don't think he would do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you know that this was a no-no?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we got a memorandum from him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What he said – and he was a supporter of the ERA because someone challenged him – he said, "I don't let the men wear skirts either," which was sort of facetious.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ralph Munro couldn't come in his kilts, then! That's one of the things that he said. Rasmussen said the same thing, something similar. But with Tom Swayze it was probably said with tongue-in-cheek, but with Rasmussen, it was serious. He was a nice guy. Rasmussen was real erratic, but Tom was not. I think that in deference to him we didn't argue. And I know that in the Senate the decorum there was always contained. And I think that the decorum in the House was a lot better than it is now. People didn't run around and chat. It was quieter. Now, you turn on TVW you can hardly hear the people talking, there's so much noise. That was just at the time when we were beginning to wear pantsuits, and I guess it wasn't too long before I had them. I had my picture taken with one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering how long this lasted before this became passé.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When I went to the Senate as a freshman senator, I bought the picture and I have a dressy pantsuit on then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So by '76, '77?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seventy-seven we were all doing it. But they were nice and they were tailored. And nothing more was said. Then the Speaker became a Democrat, Len Sawyer, and then we did start wearing them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Tom Swayze a more formal person?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. He sort of inherited the district from his mother. And then he'd gone through the brush with Copeland over the Speakership, and I think he was trying to adhere to the more conservative elements, and maybe that was the reason he came to that conclusion. I don't really know. But he was a very nice guy, a very accommodating person. They both were, and I think that was probably the reason, because I'm sure that Copeland would agree that you could wear anything you wanted to wear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just found it very ironic that these two things – the ban on pantsuits and the ERA – came together in the same year. That year you had two special sessions, and it just went on and on. Then there was an election, the 1972 election after this long session and Governor Evans ran for his third term. What do you think of three-term Governors? Is that a good thing to get more done, or is it too long to have one person in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess if you agree with what the Governor's doing, you agree that it's okay. I guess I agreed that it was okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was alright? He still had some things to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. I wouldn't take a position on that. It would depend upon the person and the accomplishments that were available and the closeness of those accomplishments being done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** According to the press, he seemed to agonize a lot before making that decision. There was also the re-election of President Richard Nixon that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** McGovern – you knew it wasn't going to happen. We all did what we could but it wasn't going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wasn't in the cards? Your own primary election was a very crowded field. You ran against Frank Marzano, and beat him quite handily. You had over 8,000 and he had 6,469.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Two thousand votes, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you did pretty well considering, I think there were three or four other people in that race?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were a lot of people and I know it was a very painful election because I would call people with whom I'd had support from before, and often they would say they couldn't, and had made their decision. They had a right to do that, and I said, "I know it's painful and I understand, and do what you have to do, and I still hope to win." That's all I would say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By now you were a known quantity. You had a record; you've been there. Did that make it easier to campaign or more complicated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't have any problem campaigning. I didn't have trouble getting door-bellers. I really never had any problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you certainly won. And then in the general election, your Republican opponent was Alvin Carlson.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You won 19,059 votes to his 6,305. That's a landslide.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a janitor at a church here. Even his wife called and supported me. She couldn't stand him. He divorced her and he didn't pay her alimony, I guess, and she called to tell me she supported me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the Republicans putting up non-entities because it was such a strong district for Democrats?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he was a self-starter. I don't think they put him up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. The Democrats become the majority in the House with that election, so you were part of a larger victory. Another interesting thing about that election was Initiative 276, sponsored by Michael Hildt, which created of the Public Disclosure Commission and other reforms.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had passed a Public Disclosure bill in the Legislature that we had thought had gone far enough. Knowledgeable legislators drafted a disclosure bill which, I believe, was appropriate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But apparently the people thought differently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We passed ours and the initiative superseded it, I guess. The people picked this over ours which was much more severe, but part of that was thrown out by the courts. Because the Legislature had a maximum dollar amount which could be accepted, and the court said, "You can't do that. It's hobbling free speech. It's anti-free speech." So they nullified portions of the initiative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people consider the passage of this measure a watershed for the Legislature, one that eliminated several members who refused to run again because they thought it was wrong.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We lost most of our attorney legislators as a result of that. There are hardly any attorneys in the Legislature anymore because they have to reveal all their client lists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, some veteran legislators quit over that provision.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt that was wrong. Veteran legislators quit. It seemed like there would be a better way of getting at the problem. Attorneys now come and go, but we don't have enough to make up a Judiciary Committee in either House. In the Senate, we only have three attorneys now.

Dow Constantine is there and Johnson, a Republican, and in the Thirty-seventh District in Seattle an attorney, Adam Kline. We lost Clarke, the two Clarks. "Clarke, Clark and Wojahn" sponsored bills together all the time, and we decided we should form a law firm, except I wasn't an attorney: "Clark, Clarke, and Wojahn." We had about ten or twelve bills. I was in the minority anyway, but it was really Newman Clark and George Clarke.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very catchy! And the following year there saw Initiative 282 that passed which, from what I read, was also very demoralizing to legislators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was. First, they knock us out as far as people running – qualified people running. We've lost qualified people running for the Legislature as a result of the Disclosure Commission. And then the next thing was to take us on our wage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that was really interesting is that they called it an unprecedented signature drive and that it passed overwhelmingly. In fact, of all the initiatives until recently, it had the highest 'yes' rate. It was incredible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Over 700,000 signatures. Oh yes. We figured they had them in gas stations and people from out of state were even signing them. They had people having your dog sign it. I think a lot of those signatures were fake, but it didn't matter because they did a sampling and found out that it was the number of signatures was so significant that it must surely have enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It passed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the negative part. That's when we decided to not meet on Saturdays and Sundays and one, two, three o'clock in the morning. Because we weren't able to increase our wage from about \$3800 a year to \$7000, and we were devoting hours to our work. And then between sessions, we were swamped and always busy, and we thought that it was a fair wage. So after that, we no longer met on Saturdays and Sundays except when we were down to the wire

on occasion. Nor holidays. We actually did work on holidays. We worked on President's Day or Washington and Lincoln's birthday, but that's it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this just sort of kicking back at legislators? How did you feel as a legislator when the public appeared to be saying that your time wasn't worth much?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was demoralizing, but as far as I was concerned my husband had said to me when I gave up my good job to run, that it didn't matter. He didn't want me to work anyway. It was fine. Whatever I wanted to do was fine with him. So he didn't demoralize me. I thought the person who filed the initiative was very negative, but I didn't like him anyway and I figured that people who signed it were also negative thinkers. And it's confirmed my opinion, that people are negative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been kind of hard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And yet, a lot of people wrote and said, "I don't think it's enough. I think it's wrong." Maybe they're ones that voted for it, I don't know. So the supporters out there were building you up at the same time others were taking you down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a legislator, do you just try to clear your mind of this? And keep your focus straight?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to. You have to forget it and go on. If you don't like it, you quit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounded like some members quit over it. It was like the last straw.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did. If I hadn't liked what I was doing, I'd have quit. But I just pulled back on the things I was doing. I didn't research that hard anymore during the summer. I took my vacations, but I still listened to people and responded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The press pieces on Initiative 282 thought that part of their success was that it came during the period of Watergate. That people were disgusted with government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never thought about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And disgusted with the legislators in a kind of disorganized, unreflective way, but that this was a protest vote. Certainly Watergate must have shadowed more than the national government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was just disgusting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just put people off. I was wondering if that feeling had an impact at the state level for legislators?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it played right into our hands, really, because we Democrats, for years then, had the majority in the House and the Senate. And it was so contemptible, the whole thing. The lies. I think that was the worst part was the lies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that people became disenchanted with their governments?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think people became disenchanted with politicians. They were no longer considered statesmen; they were considered politicians and "anything goes." "You can tell anybody anything and they'll believe anything if you tell it to them enough times and are positive enough about it." I think that's where women came into their own. I really believe that that was the beginning of the making of women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they weren't tied to this 'old boy' system?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were not tied to the 'old boy' thing. They were more direct in their approach. And I think that most of the women with whom I served always told their constituents how they voted. There were no secrets. There were no secrets among the women. We liked each other. I can't say that that's true anymore, but we did. Even in my own colleagues in the Senate, there are some people I don't like very much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a different style?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Different style. Different era. Different values.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So women brought a kind of freshness to the process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. A freshness and an honesty. I think women basically are honest. We are accused of being conniving, but I don't think we are. Some may be, but no, I think we're very forthright about things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's an interesting analysis.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And certainly I don't think that women are as emotional at making decisions as men, either. I think they're more objective. They have to be. Women who have raised a family and handled the family budget and financing, if they've been part of a partnership, then they've earned respect. I think that many marriages are partnerships and should be.

We were in the Azores when Nixon was impeached. That was in '74. We were there. We only had ship-to-shore coverage so our television was not too good. One of the things we were able to get was C-Span. We didn't have a television. There was nothing there. We had just a little apartment in the visiting officer's club, and I had to go down in the basement of the club to the one television set and nobody was ever there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you watch the hearings, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I watched the hearings. Gil was busy all day and I would go down and watch the hearings. I heard all these dreadful things that were going on. Of course, it continued after we got back, but that was the beginning of it, really.

The way I got to the Azores is interesting, too. My husband was on temporary duty over there. He worked for the Air Force. He was one of six architects in the U.S. Air Force. He was sent to the Azores on temporary duty because they were doing some building over there, and he flew over on a U.S. Air Force plane, a Starlifter 141 – but I couldn't fly that. So I had to get there on my own if I wanted to go. We had to get permission from Senator Magnuson to go because they didn't encourage wives to go there, temporary duty wives anyway. So I talked to the Boeing lobbyist and I said, "Do you ever

let civilians ride on delivery flights to Europe?" I figured there were delivery flights.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If they're building an airport.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was Bob Johnson and Bud Coffey and they said they didn't know. The next day on my desk was a list of delivery flights and they said, "Which one do you want to go on?" They recommended the one going to Spain. The Spanish government had had thirteen planes built by the Boeing Company and this was their last plane to be delivered. The thirteenth plane was being delivered and all of their test pilots were over here going back with the plane and some of their wives and then all the officials from the Spanish government who had come over to ride the plane back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you just got tucked in there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got to ride with them. They didn't do the configuration of the plane; they only had four rows of seats, just so everybody had a seat. They didn't have a galley because they added that on in Spain to save money and taxes. So we took off about ten a.m., flew into Minneapolis and went down there for lunch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got off the plane to get lunch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They brought it on the plane. They didn't have a galley. They had to bring on cold food. Then we flew to St. John, Newfoundland and that was about nine p.m. and we got dinner which also was cold. Then we started out again and they invited me up to the cockpit because it was dark in Newfoundland, but darkness would immediately turn into daylight; you go from darkness into daylight just like that. Then they said, "Stay here, because pretty soon we'll be able to see the coast of Spain on the radar." We landed in Madrid and they helped me through customs and then the Boeing Company had arranged for a hotel – I had to pay for it, of course – and I stayed in a hotel owned by the Swedish government that had offices on the first four floors. On the three upper floors were hotel rooms and they were all secured at night so that

you couldn't go out once you got in, but they were secured so that no one could get in. I felt very safe. It was in the old part of Madrid. Two days later I had to fly to Portugal and I had to get a commercial flight with TAP, Air Portugal. We got on a plane, and they don't attach the building to the plane like they do here; you have to ride on the tarmac out to the plane. I was flying into Lisbon. We got below the two-hundred foot level and they told us that our seat belts had to be fastened and no smoking, and all of a sudden the plane turned around and went straight back up. They said, "We're not being allowed to land." The war was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A war?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A civil war in Portugal. "We're not going to be able to land; we're going to have to go back to Spain." So we went back, not to Madrid, but we went back to Seville and they took us off the plane and we sat in the terminal for hours. I couldn't understand what they were saying because they were only speaking Spanish. I finally got up and said to one of the attendants, "I want to get off because I'm going to take a bus."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have felt so stranded.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt awful. I couldn't understand a word they were saying and hours had gone by. They were telling us to go to our plane and I said, "I'm not going to get back in the plane; I'm going to take a bus from here because they're expecting me and my reservation was being held in Lisbon." The flight attendant said, "You get back on that plane right now," so I got back on the plane and they flew us back to Madrid. We got into Madrid at midnight that night. We hadn't had anything to eat, and we'd left in mid-morning. They fed us and then they awakened us at six a.m. the next morning to go back down. We went down and got on a bus and the bus didn't leave; they were waiting for somebody, and pretty soon somebody stuck his head in and said in English, "Is this the bus to Lisbon?" Kiddingly. He was about fifteen minutes late and he was an American. He could speak

English. There were quite a few people, but I didn't know them. So I got acquainted with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have been happy to hear a language you could understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He sold airplane parts for the Boeing Company from Seattle, believe it or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Small world.

**Sen. Wojahn:** As we approached the airport, on all the bridges and all along the way there were machine guns aimed at the freeway. It was awful, and then we got to the airport and there was a band there playing martial music. They took us to the bus to go to the airplane and someone said that it was King Hussein who was visiting Spain and that was his plane, and the band was there honoring him, and that was the reason for all the guns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure you were feeling a little nervous!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was feeling really nervous. Then when we got out to the plane, they wouldn't let us off the bus. Pretty soon some officials with guns came out and took somebody off the bus. Apparently that was the person who wasn't being allowed to fly into Portugal. I don't know, but they took him in handcuffs off the bus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, your nice little adventure of going to see your husband turns into this thing!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. We finally got on the plane and flew to the Azores and there were very few people on the plane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the Boeing guy with you still?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but I didn't see him. We flew to Lisbon and he was still on the plane at Lisbon. We got off the plane in Lisbon, and he was with me, and they had machine guns trained on all of us, and everything had sandbags and everything up against the terminal. There was a civil war going on. And so he escorted me through the terminal and said, "Don't say anything. Just keep your eyes straight ahead. Just walk, don't say anything." You didn't know



whether they were going to shoot you or not with the machine guns trained on people getting off. He got us a cab, and all the cabs were Mercedes. He was staying at the same hotel as I was, so we had dinner together and he took me to a dinner with one of the Portuguese government people who had been ousted. He was with the other side, and he had been ousted from his job. They had confiscated his car but he was a friend of the airplane parts guy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This wasn't a bit dangerous or risky?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He was free. They had commandeered his car, but he rented a cab and took us to dinner in the "Al Fama" area which is the old part of Lisbon. I remember the fellow ordered olive oil and garlic soup. I had chicken, I think. After dinner he took us all around to show us the various sights. It was interesting. He showed us the palace of the person who had been overthrown and he showed us the government buildings and various sights which I can hardly remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'll bet you were a little exhausted.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was. So then the next day I had a day in Lisbon before I left because I couldn't get a plane. TAP Airline only flew to Boston twice a week, but it stopped in the Azores. So the next day I went down in the lobby of the hotel where they had a watercolor exhibit, so I bought us each a watercolor. I have one that I got there of the Al Fama area, and I gave one to the American from Seattle. I can't remember his name. And then I had him give one to the Portuguese fellow. They were beautiful watercolors. I walked around the city that day, and the next morning I took the plane to the Azores. We got there and they had the machine guns posted all around the perimeter. People who were going on to Boston were not permitted off the plane. I could get off because that was my destination. They took off my luggage and they had a machine gun trained on the passengers. There were about four of us getting off. They said, "Just walk straight ahead and walk right by them and don't pay any

attention to them. They won't shoot you." I didn't know if anyone was there to meet me or not because my husband couldn't get into the terminal because of the civil war.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you beginning to wonder if this was a good idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was hardly anybody on the plane, but there were people there who were apparently revolutionaries talking about the war. I was sitting in one seat and I decided I wanted to move, and I started to move, and they said, "You can't do that." And I said, "I'm just not comfortable here." So they said, "You'll have to go to this other place because we have to balance the plane." The weight of the plane. It was crazy. It was a little, tiny plane. Then we landed, and it was going on to Boston, but all these revolutionaries got off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You and the revolutionaries?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Then there were a couple of people who stayed, couldn't get off. They were going to be stuck there for a couple of hours and they had to stay on the plane. When I got into the terminal they wouldn't let me get my luggage. I waited and waited and waited and I thought, God! If Gil's coming after me, he's got to get back to work. We got in there about noon. I finally said to them, "I have to have my luggage," and I walked in. The guys had their guns on me, and I said, "I'm taking my luggage and I'm leaving." I grabbed my luggage and walked out. They didn't bother me. My husband was waiting for me outside the terminal. It was awful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a good time, finally? I mean after you got there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes. It was fine. We stayed in the BOQ. Gil had a BX card but I couldn't get one. We were going to be there a month and I could do some cooking but I didn't have any pots and pans. They had a little exchange store where I could buy some things. I could walk to the BX but I wasn't allowed in the door without a BX card, so I finally decided I was going to go and talk to the commander. I went into his office and his German secretary wouldn't let me in.

She was awful! I gave her my card, and I said, "I want to speak to Colonel whoever-it-was," and she said, "He's not here." And I said, "When will he be back?" "He won't be back." "I'll come back tomorrow." And so I left. I went back the next morning and I again gave her my card and I demanded to see him. She pouted, but she let me in, and the people were going like "this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Clapping. You had finally won.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I introduced myself, told him that I was there at the courtesy of Senator Warren Magnuson, who had permitted me to come. I was there on a TDY with my husband and I said, "He's working all day in the engineering office and I really need to get into the BX to get some things and I don't have a card. I wonder if you'd be courteous enough to permit me to have a card?" He said, "Sure." No problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just had to get through the dragon lady first?

**Sen. Wojahn:** "No problem." Then I said to him, "I have observed that people here are very poor and they raise corn and take the corn off of the cob and make bread out of it, then they use the cobs for their heat, because they have no wood here. I did notice a stand of pines and I'm wondering if I would be permitted to have some Douglas firs flown over from Washington State? We're famous for Douglas firs and with your permission I will see if I can do that." He thought that was a great idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you just got this idea out of the blue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I'd observed this, that they needed trees. It's like Ireland, the Azores. They have little stone fences all around that separate the farm areas. And the people live downtown but they go up to the hills to take care of their sheep or whatever they have, and to raise their corn.

So he introduced me to the fellow who did the ship-to-shore telephone and I was able to call Sharon Case who was my secretary at that

time and she arranged for some trees. I found out later that the Weyerhaeuser Company contributed them and some of them also came from St. Regis. We had them flown over on a civil defense plane through the National Guard. It wasn't the Washington National Guard; they took them to California or some other state and flew them over. I found out later that the trees had to come from a certain latitude/longitude or they wouldn't grow. I found out that the Douglas fir from the Coquille area of Oregon were the trees that would grow there. So the seedlings came from that area. The Air Force didn't have an agronomist; they just had a veterinarian so he was in charge of the trees. I met him and I said, "I'm going to send more seedlings back when I get home because they only sent a few." So when I came home I sent over another huge batch. The housing officer from the Azores was in Tacoma at that time on "R&R." He lived in Tacoma and was attached at McChord, and he was going back so he arranged to take the trees back with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they grow? Did you hear what happened to them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They grew! But I've never been back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm not surprised that you wouldn't want to go back.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd like to know. I never did hear, and then Harry died so I never found out. But they were planted, I know. I told him when I went back I wanted a red carpet off the plane, but I never went back.



*Speaking in the House Democratic Caucus Room, with Representatives Richard King, Bill Perry, Jim McDermott, Doris Johnson*

## CHAPTER 8: ON SPEAKER SAWYER'S TEAM

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1973, after the '72 election, for the first time since 1965, the Democrats were back in the majority in the House, so things were going to be different for you. You'd never yet been in the majority, your whole time in office?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I'd never been. I did get some bills through, though, as a minority person – the bacon bill, and the bill putting the absentee ballot in the voters' pamphlet. That was the first session we were back in the majority. It was different, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel, "Now's our chance; we're really going to see some action?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes: "I'm going to chair a committee. I'm going to be able to see things. I'm going to help to make things happen."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not just work around on the sides.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not just tread water.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The first thing on the agenda is the election of a Speaker. I understand that you had caucus meetings previous to the session coming in, and you decided that position then? You had a shift in power from John O'Brien to Leonard Sawyer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That happens before session with a major caucus meeting. And Leonard Sawyer was elected. It was friendly. It was no problem. John O'Brien had lost his majority with the coalition. You see, he was Speaker, and then the coalition occurred and that's when he lost out. There were still a few hard feelings from the coalition, but it was far enough away from it, because that was '63 and this is 1973.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ten years!

**Sen. Wojahn:** And John was getting older and he was ready to be Pro Tem. There was no question he would be Pro Tem. And he presided a lot of the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Leonard Sawyer had been the minority leader for the previous session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had been minority leader and really relied a lot on John O'Brien, too. John was very, very much a part of our caucus, even in the minority. We always needed to look to senior members for advice on legislation which we couldn't figure out, because you can't know what's in every bill, even though your caucus attorneys do explain things and put red flags on some items.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, there are hundreds of bills.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. When push came to shove on the final vote, you needed to have someone whom you trusted to follow.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what was it about Leonard Sawyer that caused him to rise above the pack, so to speak? What were his abilities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very capable – he was a great parliamentarian along with John O'Brien, who was a master of parliamentary law. Leonard was capable. He was very bright and was a practicing attorney. He also came from Pierce County – a strong Democratic district. Even when we were in the minority in the Legislature, Pierce was strongly Democratic. He and Buster Brouillet – who was also very powerful – were friendly and close, and they maintained a positive rapport between themselves. And then all the Pierce County legislators automatically followed Leonard. We had decided before – we had a little caucus of Pierce County legislators – and we had decided, come hell or high water, we were going to support Leonard Sawyer for Speaker. And so he was able to lay that out as tactfully as possible, probably prior even to meeting with the caucus, to John O'Brien that he was going to be running and expected to win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there someone else beyond John O'Brien who was a logical person to look to for leadership?



*Conferring with Speaker Leonard Sawyer on the floor of the House. Representative Charles Savage in foreground whose absence at a crucial time lost the Speaker his majority support*

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, there wasn't. Len was clearly the leader. There were other leaders, but he was clearly the leader. And the other leaders wanted committees, anyway. They didn't want to be Speaker. Like Bob Charette, for instance, he was clearly a leader. We had really good leaders in those days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He became the floor leader. He was in the leadership group. There were some articles, one by Richard Larsen, that had this interesting little quote: "They [being the Sawyer group] flicked aside a hasty challenge," but he doesn't say who the challenger was "who wanted a new look." There was some idea that there were freshmen coming in, and they were not as happy with the old guard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That always occurs. I don't remember who that was because we had blinders on. We weren't listening or paying attention to anyone else. They may have felt they had some chance, but – always the freshmen rise up, you know. When I was a

freshman legislator we met with a joint freshmen legislative caucus of both parties. We had parties together, and met together, and there was always a move to overthrow the leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was coming into the era when there seems to be a shift in the culture where the freshmen wanted to be heard. Previously, it was "freshmen are to be seen and not heard." That seemed to be changing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Senate was still a "freshmen are seen and not heard" body, but not in the House. The House is more independent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little more volatile?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The House cannibalized one another! It didn't matter what party you were from, we cannibalized our own. It wasn't good. Oh, it was friendly, but it was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've heard people say that when one party has a huge majority it starts to factionalize, that it's only being a slim majority or being a minority that holds things together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's tough to hold things together when there's a strong majority, that's true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had fifty-seven members to forty-one Republicans. That's a pretty good number.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's pretty Democratic – that's the reason we had the problem we had. You see, after one session with Leonard – it's not easy to pass a bill; what we had was all these incoming freshmen who thought they could walk in and pass a bill their first term there, and they were beginning to smolder during that session. By the next session, you might say the scum had risen to the top!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear! We'll hold that thought.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Someone said that; that's a quote in the paper. One of the newspapers said, "They've been here two weeks, and already the scum has risen to the top." It was in the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So long as we don't have you saying that! Let's look at the leadership group. William Chatalas was the caucus chair, but he was challenged by Charles Moon. What was going on within your caucus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Charlie Moon was very, very liberal. Chatalas was not. I guess that I probably would have been with Moon on that, except that I think that Leonard had sort of figured out his slate before that and we were following that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Robert Charette was floor leader, Paul Conner was whip, and then Alan Thompson seemed to be coming into the picture – he was the Assistant Floor Leader. And then you became the caucus secretary, which was a contested election also? There were three of you who wanted that position. First Margaret Hurley, who had at one time been the caucus secretary, but she was apparently quickly eliminated. But then you had a run-in with Doris Johnson that you won.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doris had been there before me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, she had been the previous one. Did you go around and lobby for this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn't do anything. I just won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just were ready? So you were moving into a leadership role now. As the caucus secretary what did you do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was helped with that, with Leonard, because I'd been with him for Speaker, and so anything that you asked for you got. I got the chairmanship of the Commerce Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ask for this? Did you want to be caucus secretary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I wanted to be that. I also wanted to be chair of Commerce. But then, you know in the Senate, you can't have two jobs. If you have one, you can't get the other.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've got to spread it around a bit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, spread around, but Leonard did it. That may have created bad feelings. But Doris Johnson was – it's the same as we see today: people become short-sighted, and attempt to become expert in one area, but don't see the overall picture. And because I'd lobbied before, and had an expansive view of the Legislature because of the positions of the labor movement, I realized you can't do that. You have to accommodate many interests and get as proficient in as many areas as you can. So that was the part that I always strove to do, so that I could not only understand issues, but also support them in debate if necessary, and also support them in my vote. And so I was interested in many, many areas, not just one or two. I went in as the consumer advocate, but actually I was a lot more than that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes, certainly. So what are the duties of a caucus secretary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, mostly just keeping peace in the caucus, and speaking up when there is a problem – taking a position and speaking up. There was nothing as far as taking minutes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's a misnomer in a way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's a misnomer. Women could be secretaries, but it was hard to be anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed you were the only woman in this line-up, and also the only other people wanting to be secretary were women. Was that a sort of "women's ghetto" in the leadership?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was, except for as far as I know, they didn't always have a woman secretary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but women never seemed to be anything else, either.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You couldn't get anywhere else. You couldn't do it. You didn't even try.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was the way to get in the door?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I got in the door there but I really didn't – I wanted a chairmanship. I wanted a chairmanship more than I wanted to be caucus secretary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. But does this mean you got to attend the leadership meetings? Being the secretary, you get to be in the inner circle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. There really weren't very many meetings. They just would send a message to your office that they needed some help on a vote, or that they needed a strong position to be taken. And that was what leadership meant in the House during those days. It wasn't until there was a challenge to leadership that we became close, and then those who had followed Leonard Sawyer met all the time during the weekends and all the time. And we didn't realize that there was danger there. We began to meet because we sensed that there was a problem, but we didn't realize how serious it was. And a lot of people that we trusted went the other way. And I think that Leonard had made some enemies by appointing and helping people to become chairman of committees. Like Doris Johnson who didn't get anything because she didn't support him for Speaker, I'm sure. Those that "didn't get" were not always with him when he became Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that create any problems for you later? Were you tainted by this in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Well, if I was, it didn't rub off on me. We had abolished the Legislative Council and started the continuing sessions, because we were at that time meeting every year anyway, being called back. And Leonard figured that there were so many changes going on that we needed to be in touch, and so that was the beginning of committee weekends. And so we established the committee weekends, which were very good because later on when we ran into trouble with a slow-down in the economy, and we had to rearrange some of the taxation areas, it was good idea that we had established that policy. But I think that it wasn't because of a particular problem, it was the fact that the state was growing so fast that we needed to be present more than we were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More responsive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** More responsive to the needs, and also the budget – the Legislative Council wasn't handling it. All they were doing was taking bills or subject matter and reviewing them during the interim, but they weren't necessarily key things that we needed to talk about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've got a copy of a speech to the Democratic caucus by Leonard Sawyer where he says, "When one branch has too much power the people suffer. Without reform of the Legislature it cannot perform its constitutional duties. With reform we can, but it takes hard work and much time. The danger of an executive – " He was saying that the problem is that the Legislature was just not around and the executive branch filled in the gap.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doing everything. See, it's the Governor – Dan Evans – the Governor doing executive orders instead of laws.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "...with too much power, there's a great danger, and we can all thank one man," he doesn't say who, but we all know it's Dan Evans, "for making this issue perfectly clear." So this is Dan Evans. He's coming into

his third term as Governor. He's pretty entrenched, and it looks like the Legislature is saying, "We've got to step up to this and get our own structure."

**Sen. Wojahn:** He also inherited the name "Danny Veto," if you remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. You actually had quite a few changes in the Legislature. You had the continuing session idea, which involved coming back into session without needing to be called by the Governor. Now, that was somehow tied to a court opinion that said that the Supreme Court ruled that a sixty-day constitutional amendment on the length of regular sessions did not apply to special sessions, so that seemed to open the door. You could have your regular sessions for sixty days but then after that you could meet as often as you wanted to?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If the Governor called us back. But then at the same time, we could call ourselves back with a two-thirds vote of each house.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** During some special sessions, you just recessed and then you reconvened, and it's the same session. Was that something that you could do for yourselves, rather than have the Governor call you? The legislative record shows what dates you were meeting; it would say: "Extraordinary Session number twenty – or whatever – then some date, and then it would say, "recessed," and then it would say "reconvened," for the next set of dates, a month later or so. Instead of the session coming to an end. I'd never seen that before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's like the committee weekend. But they had to finally drop the reconvening bit, and just met in mini-sessions. But it didn't survive. We couldn't take any action on a committee weekend, but we could build an agenda, and that's what we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you put in quite a few reforms besides continuing sessions. Leonard Sawyer wanted to reform the committees: have fewer committees, and rename them and restructure the whole committee set-up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Commerce Committee was called the Business and Professions Committee prior to that. He changed it to Commerce Committee, or we changed it to Commerce Committee. And we had a Revenue and Taxation Committee, and we still had that; we didn't merge that in with the Appropriations Committee. We talked about merging the two, but didn't. We kept an Appropriations Committee. We always had a Natural Resources Committee. I can't think of any other committee that we established, because I wanted the Commerce Committee, and I didn't want it tied up with labor; I wanted it separate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's different, isn't it? And then there was that big move of getting rid of the Legislative Council and having staff for the first time – non-partisan staff.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Non-partisan staff director and committee staff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know what it was called then, but it became the Office of Program Research, which is a major institution now. And that's when it began.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We also established the outside committee, the policy committee, within Evergreen College.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that, too? You also had what are now called performance audits, for more accountability and a tighter structure, it looks like.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was in the Legislative Budget Committee. We also formed the LEAP Committee. That came later. [Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program]

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some criticism of some of these reforms, especially of continuing sessions, chiefly from Senator Frank Atwood – and I want you to tell me if this played out or not. He said that every time you came into town there were new pressures from state agencies, that they would want more money. The result, he contended, would be greatly increased state spending. Was there something in that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's when the LEAP Committee came into effect, to control



spending. Public education was costing so much. But the LEAP Committee worked. It was well-thought out, and it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So yes, you were the chair of Commerce. Tell me about being chair. What are your duties, as opposed to just being a member?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you're responsible for reviewing all of the bills that were assigned to your committee and to having staff available to review them. With the Commerce Committee, we had a clerk, a staff attorney, and one intern.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you orchestrate what comes out of your committee and decide the agenda?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. You make up the agenda. The staff attorney was Bob O'Brien, who is now deceased. He wasn't an attorney, but he had studied the law and worked for Congressman Floyd Hicks. He was very good. And Sharon Case was my clerk. They made up the agenda, did the research on the bills assigned to us, determined if there was a need for such a bill, and what the ripple effects would be if passed. Generally, those are the things I ask: what are the ripple effects of this bill? I told the staff that I wanted them to work with both sides – with both parties on anything they wanted to work on. "I just need to know what you are working on, I don't need to know the details, but I need to know the general picture, so work with both sides." It was a large committee – with nineteen members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how often would you meet, as a committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We met about every other – about every third day, I think. Two or three times a week for two hours.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then the hearings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had to hold public hearings on any bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how many bills do you think would come through? Lots? Fifty?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. I would say forty or fifty bills each session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So people who – legislators, or lobbyists, whomever – would have an idea for a bill and then they'd bring it to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they generally would find a legislator to sponsor the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if it had something to do with Commerce would they connect with you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, often they wanted the chair to sponsor their bills, and the rule of thumb on bill sponsorship is two of the majority party and one of the minority, and you want either the committee chair, or vice chair – the best you can get on the committee – to be on that bill. You want someone from Rules Committee on the bill – the member of Rules could be the minority member – and then another member. So usually every bill can have only one sponsor, but you want three so that you have back-up support. Usually, if you signed on a bill, it was because you approved of it. It later got to be that if you didn't like a bill, you signed on to try to kill it. That happened. You had to know the people who did that. These are the things you need to know: those who did that and those who didn't. I usually tried to get a Republican member of the Rules Committee to sign on bills with me. Generally, the minority party does not sponsor many bills. But if you have a red-hot idea, you have to do it. And I did. When I had a red-hot idea, I sponsored the bill, whether I was in the majority or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And sometimes you made it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. And I usually got a bill a session, I got something. But that was generally the way we operated. And then too, you could be given an assignment by the Speaker to develop a program, like we developed the gambling laws. The gambling laws for the state of Washington were written by the Commerce Committee at the time I chaired the committee. Also, some members would take it upon themselves to do an in-depth study on a particular issue. And they wanted to be the prime sponsor of the bill, of course, but they'd want the chair of the committee on the bill if possible. And so those were the considerations that you were privy to, or needed to know about.

And if a bill was going to be very controversial, often – unless it was the beginning of the session where we had a lot of time or a lot of support from our caucus – we didn't take it up. Unless there was a lot support, and a desperate need for the legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Otherwise then, I suppose it was a futile effort?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unless – is there the idea of introducing a bill one year, realizing you're not going to get it, but planting a seed and hoping that over time people will get used to an idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every time you introduce a bill you want to get it that session, but you can take the laid-back look, and when it doesn't happen—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or the long road?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or the long road, and decide if it is still worth doing, yes. But in the interim period you often will rewrite the bill, or change various areas, especially if you've had good committee meetings on it. You note the areas that are supported – they're rather sacred – and you maintain those, and then drop the other areas. So actually, the coming out of a bill into the Rules Committee is after it goes through these various versions. And one thing I always wanted to know as chair was, "What were the ripple effects? Would it do more damage than good? Does the damage offset the good?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the unintended consequences?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. That's the reason you need good staff. Because you could change a law already on the books, and do more damage than good. When that happened, Bob O'Brien would always mark the bill for me and say, "This is actually changing existing law and not for the better."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you'd better be aware that your points—

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you better be aware of what you're doing. And the reason it was passed in the first place. It's very subtle, and it's very

wearing. And if you feel responsible, then it's deadly. You really have to be very careful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You sounded very eager to take this on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, yes, I was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Earlier you were telling me one of the bills that came to you this session, which sounds innocuous but turns out to be quite complicated, was House Bill 1061, which is headed, "Amending unemployment compensation law, and relating to pension benefits and pregnancy exclusions." But you were indicating to me that it was a much more complex topic.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was another complex issue involved here. I sponsored a little bill that amended that portion out to strengthen the law, because it was very loose. College kids were getting summer jobs and then were leaving the area to go away to college, to another part of the state where there were no similar jobs, and were able to collect unemployment compensation. I wanted to plug the holes because the fund was being drained unnecessarily. I think that these areas emerged as important issues, and consequently there was a total rewrite of unemployment comp laws.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would these issues have come up at hearings? How would you know about all these other issues when you'd start out to take care of one thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We'd get bits and pieces of bills. There was my little bill that would deny unemployment benefits to someone who quit voluntarily to go back to school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what about this pregnancy part?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That must have been a bill that would have permitted women to collect unemployment comp when they took pregnancy leave. But if the person said they still wanted to work, they could get unemployment comp if there wasn't a job available in that same area that they'd worked before. You could get unemployment compensation for almost any reason including a voluntary quit without a good

reason. The unemployment compensation law was very loosely written and often without substantive rules and regulations.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like a hodgepodge of things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was. And then pensions. A person could take a pension, and still collect his unemployment compensation after he automatically went on pension. After he got a pension, he could still apply for unemployment compensation, and if there was no job available out there that he was qualified for, he could get unemployment comp.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though he's retired, ostensibly not looking for work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That right. That's when they mandated that you have to be "ready, willing, and able to take a job, and willing to work."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems self-evident now, but I guess it wasn't then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, apparently. Now, unemployment compensation was a relatively new law, and it's a federal law. We only tie into that with our own program, but it has to follow federal mandates, and the federal mandates were not severe enough. We could do anything we felt was appropriate, but some of these things were not appropriate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you said some of the people in your caucus took a more – as you call it – liberal view of this, and didn't want to tighten this up quite as much.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't want anything – they didn't want the unemployment compensation bill tampered with, because once you tamper with it—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like opening a can of worms?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's exactly right. And then you lose parts that some people believed were important. So there was a need for a total rewrite of the bill. I was not on the committee that rewrote the bill. Bob Charette was, as I remember. It was a capable committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it came through your committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not really. It was in the Labor Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess your bill was not part of your committee, then? It was just a bill that you sponsored?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Often, if you sponsor a bill, as a courtesy they give it to the committee in which you serve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. That's how it tied in. But there is that big bill that you do weigh in on – the gambling bill – which doesn't get at all the gambling issues. There was a massive amount of scrutiny of that bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, first we had to identify gambling – that it was a lottery. And bingo, which was outlawed in the state of Washington, was a lottery.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's start with what the law was – that there was no gambling allowed – is that where you were?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was no gambling allowed. Gambling is a game of skill – but bingo is not – there is no skill to bingo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or raffles, either.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or raffles, no, that's right. Or lotteries. They are not games of skill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just luck?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's just luck. And so there were laws on the books on that and gambling, but there were no laws on the books that you couldn't play bingo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was sort of a grey area? You weren't too sure what that was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And that was a big Republican move.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's also this idea of "okay" gambling, which was church-sponsored gambling, like bingo halls, and then "not okay" gambling.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bingo was considered an okay gambling game, but it really wasn't because it

was unconstitutional. We simply looked the other way. Many suggested it was a game of skill, like family games with friends. And there was no law against that. No one knew it was going on, really.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, how could you police that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But that's a game of skill; that's like playing poker and blackjack, a game of skill. And there's a certain amount of skill to any of these, but not a lottery, or a raffle or bingo. So the Attorney General decided to outlaw bingo – that bingo needed to be outlawed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because it was gambling and it was not a game of skill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would they be up in arms about bingo, because it's mostly a church-run groups, or schools, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It became an issue and we had to get a constitutional change. Senator Gordon Walgren sponsored a constitutional change that would permit bingo, and it passed, and that's when the gambling bill was redone and reinforced, and things were permitted, and things were not permitted. And the way we did it was to license it, but we didn't tax it at a state level. We licensed it at state level, but the taxation was left to the local authorities. And the local authorities, anything they wanted to permit, they taxed. If they didn't want to permit it, they didn't tax it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If they couldn't make money off it, then it wasn't going to happen at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, if they disapproved of the idea. And the City of Seattle did not want card rooms, so they did not tax them; there could be no card rooms in the city of Seattle. But King County could. They had card rooms in King County, but not in the city of Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just outside the city. Interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so if you wanted to play cards, you had to go outside the city where it

was taxed, but within the city you could not. Everyone's different. In Eastern Washington one would be able to gamble. It was really Eastern Washington against Western Washington. Eastern Washington wanted to be able to gamble and didn't see anything wrong with it. And they wanted to be able to play bingo in their churches.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's fascinating, because you think of Eastern Washington as being more socially conservative.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not in gambling. The biggest supporter of gambling was a legislator by the name of Jim Kuehnle! And he was just awful, he was just awful. He was from Spokane. As a matter of fact, he fought everything. He was so conservative. He's the one that fought tooth and toenail against equal rights in education; he hated the bill. Hated anything that gave women any kind of rights at all. We were freshman together. And he tried to butter up to me, because he thought he knew everything; he was really something!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not your favorite?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And so – and he was so eager to have gambling; he wanted that bill, and so I made a bargain with him. If we could negotiate the bill and sort of incorporate my ideas of what we should do and not do, and if we could come to an agreement that – he put in a bill, Number 711, and it was a title-only, relating to gambling – that I would attach the bill that we developed on his number, and he'd get credit for it. Because I didn't want credit for it, I agreed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your attitude toward gambling?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't like it; I hated gambling. The first thing we did was to get through a rule that it would take a sixty-percent vote for any gambling change to be made and we had that sixty-percent vote, yes. And that was the first thing we did to prevent gambling abuse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In an article by Richard Larsen in The Seattle Times, he says about you: "Representative Lorraine Wojahn is the

chair...she said there were reasons the bill would be snagged in her committee. ‘Every person on that committee has some reservations about gambling in some areas.’” Were you speaking for yourself, as well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Her committee, for example, considered a bill that would allow the test run of slot machines on the ferries. Some members of the committee were unalterably opposed to slots, even on a trial basis.” Where were you on that score?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was supporting it. Remember, Margaret Hurley and I sponsored the bill to do it. The reason I did – we did it – was because they always talked about gambling and prostitution. We figured there wouldn’t be any prostitution on the ferries, so we could have slot machines on the ferries. But we couldn’t get the bill out of the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you said some people are even opposed to bingo, and the article goes on to say, “Despite the fact that voters readily change the Constitution to work the law to re-ban” – and that’s that referendum in the previous year, isn’t it? – “we don’t have a clear reading on what the people expect.” I imagine – would you be getting a lot of letters and phone calls, people coming to hearings? It was one of those hot-button issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I didn’t have a lot. Kuehnle had millions of them because everybody in Eastern Washington – according to him – wanted to have one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you say you’re worried about controlling card rooms, that prosecutors are against that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was my position on card rooms – private clubs wanted to be able to have card rooms – and I decided and felt that if we permitted private clubs to have them, we had to permit some access for the general public, because it wasn’t fair that they had card rooms and that taverns and others could not. So we wrote very specific rules and regulations for both so that if you wanted to play cards, and

couldn’t afford to join a private club, you could play – go there and play.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You do form the Gambling Commission in 1973.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You tried to push a bill through that year, HB 678 to create a state commission to regulate bingo and raffles. But it died. Were you trying to separate them out as different from gambling per se?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because bingos and raffles are kind of non-profit groups, and they did not seem to be as poisonous, and I would have liked to just regulate those and permit those.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe have some gradation here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But then, it didn’t seem fair either, if we’re going to accommodate private clubs with their card rooms. So that was a reason that I did not go on the bill to regulate just bingo and raffles, because it didn’t seem to me to be fair to permit these other things, and not permit access for everyone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are these county regulations kind of like a slippery slope, an opening wedge?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. There’s always a wedge and that was a danger, and we were told about that, and that’s the reason we were so careful in writing the bill, so that the state had no right to tax, and the only way a local government could control it – and they had to police it – was that they could tax if they wanted to do it, and then the money that they raised from taxing it should be used for enforcement of the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That makes sense. It is expensive to keep track of those things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that’s why we did it. We worked a whole year on that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it’s really complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And someone from the Spokesman Review who was there – because Representative Kuehnle was from Spokane, they listened – we had interim meetings on gambling – and listened and listened and listened. Finally

we did the bill, and this young lady – it was a woman reporter as I remember – came up to me afterwards and said, “This has been a real experience for me.” She said, “It’s the best legislative committee I have every listened to, as you considered this bill,” and she said, “It has been totally and thoroughly discussed, and written, and you’ve done a wonderful job.” She complimented us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there you go!

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then the Gambling Commission chair, after it was formed, was a former chief of police in Eastern Washington. And he was lecturing all over the United States about our gambling bill. He was called to comment because we had one of the first comprehensive gambling laws in the country. He came back and told us that as far as he was concerned, “the gambling laws of Washington were the envy of every state in the Union.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well! That’s an achievement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was really a compliment, and we did a great job, and everybody worked on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It goes on for years, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they kept trying to go in and get more, and anything that was not listed there could not be done. It had to be listed if you were going to do it. Otherwise it wasn’t permitted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a fear of organized crime? Was that one of the issues? That organized crime would come in and start corrupting the whole thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. We had good staff attorneys on that. And that’s when John Bagnariol and Gordon Walgren got in trouble. And that was caused by the former Governor – Dixy Lee Ray. She had spies. Our offices were bugged. Believe it! And they came to me and wanted me to go on a bill to expand card rooms. But I was so busy I was never in my office and they could never see me in my office. And when the bill was sponsored by Bagnariol, they wanted a bill in the Senate, and I remember Pat Gallagher saying to me that “Bagnariol wants it,” and I said, “Well, I don’t. I don’t want to

open up card rooms.” And that was that. Otherwise, if they’d gotten me in my office, in order to get rid of them, I would have probably said, “It sounds like a good idea. Let me think about it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you would have been implicated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were lucky, then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. Thank God I was never in my office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To get your words twisted against you like that. . .

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because they’d have twisted it around, and she’d – I believe now she bugged them because of something else that occurred.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But at this point, the state commission to regulate bingo and raffles – you do go on that with John Bagnariol.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was when the press asked me a question about bingo, and I said, “I can’t answer that question because I never played bingo. As a matter of fact, I can’t stand bingo.” And they quoted me in the Vancouver paper. It was just a riot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But people should be allowed to play bingo, I suppose, and just because you don’t like to play bingo. . .

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was the whole question of how one thinks about gambling: is it just the little old ladies going to the church hall, or is it this a sinister activity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it can be sinister. If you have it under control – we had card rooms – as long as they could only place a dollar bet; there would be no dealer – they would all be amateurs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a risk?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a danger that would involve players leaving and going to a hotel room after-hours; the true gamblers could do that, and that was something that we needed to

try to stop from happening. And that was a worry that I had. It wasn't playing cards, because we could control what they did. And there was no house take. The only thing that they could do would be to sell pop and beer and incidentals to the game, but they really couldn't charge for the use of the table, and the bet – there was a maximum bet they could give.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what about the lottery? The question of a state lottery pops up again and again until finally—

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the lottery – you know, bingo is a lottery, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it is. I suppose.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so we passed the bingo bill, and that opened the door for lotteries. And then we wrote a lottery bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was really confused on this. Previously – the year before – there had been a statewide referendum on the lottery, and it removed the prohibition on lotteries. But then nothing happened. There was no lottery.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't have a lottery at the time. Then we had to write a lottery bill, and we wrote a lottery bill in my committee, which I voted against.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what was your attitude toward that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't like lotteries. I don't think the state should be in the business of gambling. And it was as simple as that. And I said so. And I didn't even sign it out of committee, but it had plenty of votes. It got on the floor of the Senate and it had to have a sixty percent vote to pass, and so I had to vote for it in order to let it pass to go to the people. It had a referendum on it. I voted no, but it lacked the sixty percent, and so I had my arm twisted to vote yes, and then it passed and went to the people, and the people voted it down. The first lottery bill was voted down by the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your record on gambling is difficult to follow because if someone is just looking, "Well, here she votes for it, there she

votes against it. . ." It's a much more complicated situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it's not easy to follow. I vote for it when it's totally controlled, controlled by the state and the local government, controlled by a referendum to the people, and so that was fine. I voted against the lottery the second time around – I didn't vote 'yes' that time. That was when Phil Talmadge was for it and I was against it, and then it passed. And I have fought the Gambling Commission on the things that they want to do – assiduously. I hate gambling; I don't gamble and I don't believe people should gamble, unless they can afford to, and very few people can afford to. And I don't go to Las Vegas, or I go there for pleasure. I've been there three times, just for fun. Just to wander around and look and enjoy food and the plays.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's more to do there than gambling.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's always been pushed and always been resisted. We'll be picking up this thread every once in awhile because gambling is an issue that never goes away.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they're pushing and pushing and pushing, and now they want to do electronic card games. I don't like that, and I think it's wrong. And they're all set up to get them if it ever goes in. The Indians out here, they're all set up in that floating menagerie out there. They've got the machines out there, but they can't use them. It's terrible. Vito Chiechi is the one that's pushing it. He's had a stroke, he's in a wheelchair, but he's very much around there, and he makes people feel sorry for him, so they vote for him – oh, God! And it's bad, it's bad. And I don't ever want to see us a little Las Vegas, or Atlantic City, and it's getting there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems to be, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the Indians are going broke. We should not rely on gambling to provide jobs for people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or for education dollars, or whatever?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That often seems to be what happens, though, isn't it? There's a shortfall and they look to that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, tell me about it. Well, look at what we do. We build two super-stadiums using tax payer money, or bonding authority. Oh, I tell you. No, I'm very much opposed to that. But I want to keep my foot in the door. I don't want to lose totally; I want to be able to talk with these people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it cause hard feelings? This issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The gambling issue? I don't think it caused hard feelings, it just – there are those who are adamantly opposed, and those that – no, I don't think so. In my opinion, no one has a right to get out of shape over anything that's talked about legislatively. You need to debate issues, and if you lose, you lose, and you come back and fight another day, but not fight in the terms of anger-fight. You just – you have to prove that something's wrong before it can ever be righted. And we're getting to the point with gambling that we're going to prove that it's wrong.

It's a freedom of everything. People should be free to do what they want to do, and that's okay, but if their freedom extends to the part where they lose all their money, and they go on public assistance, then it becomes our problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like the motorcycle helmet law in that way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. That's the reason I went for that. When they exhaust their benefits, then we become the payer of first choice, and we can't afford it. It's the responsibility along with the freedom – that you have to be responsible along with that. And a little bit of gambling is probably okay if it's tightly controlled. But it's no longer – every year they try to ease it out and loosen it up a little bit. And we kept it from being loosened up for a long, long time. But then we got a ruling

from the chair. John Cherberg always ruled with me, but we've had someone else in the chair when he was gone who didn't rule.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's in the Senate; what about the House? What was Leonard Sawyer's approach on gambling?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. He was totally supportive of the bill that we passed. He liked it. So I suspect that. . . he was an easy-going kind of guy, but I don't think that he particularly liked gambling, and I don't think that he would have been participating in gambling, and I figure he'd hope that other people wouldn't. But more than that, I don't know what you'd do to stop it. I tried to stop it as much as I could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it just was fascinating trying to figure it out, and there was a lot of press on it, so it was obviously a very big issue. To shift gears a bit, you were on two other committees: Higher Education and Social and Health Services that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The big push in Higher Education was to provide a Fifth Pathway for medical students. I had constituents who could not get into medical school, because there were so few slots. And then we joined WWAMI [Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho region Center for Health Workforce Studies at the University of Washington], which coordinated with five other states through the compact of education. Fewer and fewer of our kids were going to the University of Washington for medical training. So we started a program called the Fifth Pathway, which we barely got through the Legislature, which provided that the kids who had to go out of the country to go to school – they were going to Grenada and Mexico, to Guadalajara – were going to medical school and they had to take their class in Spanish. These were very bright people. So we provided a way that when they came back, they could take their fifth and clinical year at the University of Washington and get their degree from the University of Washington. Which was good, because if they stayed in the country in which they had got their education for their last year, they had to give



four years back to the country. But by bringing them back before they graduated, they could overcome that. We got the bill through just barely. It was a knock-down drag-out. And I had chaired the subcommittee of that bill. It got up through the Legislature, and the Governor vetoed it. Governor Ray.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that happens. In a progress report for the Higher Education Committee, I saw several bills that dealt with providing educational benefits for children of prisoners of war or veterans. The Vietnam war was just ending and people were trying to deal with it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We provided education benefits for Vietnam veterans. They eventually extended that to members of their family.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then also to the children of law enforcement officers or firefighters killed in the line of duty. What was the discussion like on who should get these benefits?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It kept loosening it up and loosening it up, because everybody saw a loophole and they tried to get in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And “what about this group” and “they’re deserving?” The chair of that committee was Peggy Maxie, a Seattle Democrat, one of the few black members. What was she like?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A Seattle liberal. I didn’t have too much to do with her. We were on a friendly basis but she joined the coalition against Leonard Sawyer. And she was the one surprise that I was shocked by. I had nothing but contempt for these people because they did it in February of a short session; there was a new election the following fall. They didn’t need to do it. It just created all this bad feeling and Leonard finally resigned. But before that, we had a little coalition of our own group of Democrats that hung with Leonard and it was about split, even-stein almost down the middle. But the Republicans came over and offered to coalesce with us – join us – to keep Leonard as Speaker. And he said no, that there had been one coalition, that it almost destroyed

the Legislature, and that he would not be a part of that. So he resigned and John O’Brien became the Speaker until the end.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The interim Speaker.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were out within a couple of weeks; it was a short session. Helen Sommers joined; you see, these are the people about whom I have reservations. And nearly all of them lost the next time around; we helped them out. Except Helen didn’t, but most of them did; they lost the next election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Hard times. This was the last year of the Legislative Council; by their request you sponsored a bill as a member of the Judicial Committee that I’d like to discuss.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The marriage and divorce bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, HB 392. It started out with new procedures for marriage and the dissolution of marriage. But then I want you to tell me what happened after that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The marriage part got separated out. In a European marriage, you apply for your marriage license and wait three days; you get your blood test and wait three days. When you come back to pick it up you’re considered married; that’s the European method – the French and Italian. You can have a religious ceremony but you don’t have to. I worked with a group of judges to write the bill. There were five of them. Judge Windsor was one, Judge Walterskirchen was another, I can’t think of the other. But anyway, they were really neat people to work with and we developed this very good bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was this attractive to you, that people should be able to get married much more easily?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because it’s a contract – both sides have rights. And under the conditions of our bill, when you filled out this paper, your marriage license application paper, you had to sign it and tell if you were divorced, give the number of your divorces, where they occurred and any dependants that still relied on you for income, etc.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that new? Previous to that you never had to do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Disclosure: that was a hold so you couldn't commit bigamy. It was a lot easier to prove. If there was a divorce, you had to give the state in which the divorce was issued and the county, it had to all be revealed so that your spouse-to-be knew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. I didn't know what the law was before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what the law was, but it was a mandate that we included. I don't remember; it was very simple when I was married. All it is, is a contract; this is a legal way of making a contract so you were considered married and for the purposes of the law and for support of any family that you produced. And you could have a religious ceremony or get married by a judge if you wanted to, but you didn't have to. Since it was presently established already in Europe it seemed appropriate, that was a good way to control people and to keep them from breaking a contract.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, now tell me about the meltdown part.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we got this letter – the legislators got this letter – this threatening letter said that, “If you permit this bill to pass, we will see that you're not re-elected.” It was a rotten letter that came from the state floral group.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they believe somehow that people would stop having weddings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just because they could?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know, but I'll never forget it. And then I remember one day a fellow came to my office and he had a clerical collar and Sharon Case, who was my secretary at that time, let him in. I looked at her and sort of raised my eyebrows to say, “Why'd you let this guy in for?” But anyway he came in and I said, “Well, I know what you're here for; you're here to oppose the marriage and divorce bill.” And he said, “No, as a matter of fact, I like it.” He

said, “I'm a member of the Church of the Brotherhood,” which is a Christian Church. And he said, “I like it because I marry people that I have never seen before, and will never see again, and about ten percent of them are pregnant, obviously pregnant,” and he said, “I think it's a good bill, so I came in to tell you that.” It was kind of neat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You shouldn't jump to conclusions!

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I had jumped to conclusions. I was very nice. I just said, “I know what you're here for!” Because a Catholic priest in my district had taken exception to the bill and he railed against me just awful. Later on, I found out he had a nervous breakdown.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some other issue going on there. So did you all back down? Because that part of the bill disappears.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It got stripped out in the Senate; I was in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just couldn't take the heat?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They gave no reason, they just stripped it off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But do you think it was the lobbyists for the florist industry?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the Catholic Church, probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wouldn't stop people from having weddings, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course it doesn't; it's ridiculous. I don't remember any church opposition coming directly to me but sometimes these things are subtle, and sometimes it's not the church itself but it's the members of the church who take exception, so I don't know. But I know it got stripped off in the Senate and I didn't have the push to push it any further. It was a Judicial Council bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you were thinking of doing this, did it occur to you that there would be this interpretation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I thought it would be fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That wasn't your intention at all.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought the divorce/dissolution might be contested but I didn't think the marriage portion would be; that was the other way around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The dissolution of marriage part, did this bring in no-fault divorce?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and because of the rancor that occurs in a divorce – we didn't want the children to know all of the rancor that went on, because how could they respect their parents after they went through this – and we thought it would stop that. Because anything other than sealing the court document – which is not very often done; they can get at any public record – we thought we would abolish this public record, and to a great degree it has. And a lot of divorces now, they don't remain exactly friendly but eventually they're able to accept it and to become friendly again, and for the children's sake, it's much better. There's a rancor that occurred in divorces before that, and it was awful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to charge your spouse with something, and it had to be cruelty, or adultery, or some pretty nasty stuff?

**Sen. Wojahn:** So this eliminated that, and I liked that idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also a proviso that included authorizing the appointment of attorneys to represent minor children. So the whole intent of that law was to take care of the children?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, to take care of the children so that they would not be traumatized by it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is quite a breakthrough, and that part did pass?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were probably the most interesting bills of the 1973 session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Gambling, and the marriage and divorce bill. I still like the idea of the marriage

bill; I think that should be passed. That was started by the Family Law Committee of the Washington State Bar. They're the ones who started it and they formed the task force in which I served and followed it through. And they helped, but they couldn't stop it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, well, for one thing, it seemed like you were a bit blind-sided. Not even thinking that this was going to be an issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** First the Judicial Council took it up. The Family Law Committee gave it to the Judicial Council, the Judicial Council formed a subcommittee, of which I was a member, and that's when we developed the bill. We had monthly meetings; we had a huge meeting at Providence Heights which was then a Catholic retirement place, I think, for nuns and priests, but they had to give it up, they couldn't afford it and that became a retirement place. But we met up there and there were probably eight or nine hundred people who came together to discuss the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a big conference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a big conference, yes. And they accepted the bill and then gave it to the Council after that, and they accepted that as written – and then it got shredded, shredded!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All that work! Another big thing that happened during that session – and I have no idea whether you had any role in it either way – was the defeat of the State Labor Relations Act in 1974. That is a big plank in the Democratic platform. There were several articles written about it, all saying that this was the biggest coup of the Republican Party in those years, that they killed this. How does a minority party do that when it's supposed to be a major plank of the other party's platform?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doesn't matter, legislators generally don't follow the party planks to a tee. Let me tell you something: the two big items that have occurred in the labor movement: one is the right to industrial insurance – that is a big one. Each time the Republican Party tries to include private insurance – three-way – in industrial insurance coverage for injured

working men and women, the labor movement goes to the mat against it each time, and they win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It comes up again and again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every time it comes up, labor goes to the mat and they win, and the Republican Party loses the next election. And the other big issue – that’s the biggest one – the other big issue is the little Labor Relations Act, which is paying the prevailing wage on public contracts. Those are the two sacred cows that the labor movement will go to the mat for every time. This bill, whatever it was – and I can’t remember because it wasn’t that important. No one lost their vote over it; no one lost their seat over it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet the Republicans saw that as their biggest triumph of the session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The only thing that I can think of that had anything to do with a sacred cow was the fact that we permitted self-insurers to self-insure for industrial insurance; not private insurance companies, but self-insurers like the huge companies, Boeing Company and Weyerhaeuser.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, they have their own programs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because we figured that they, because they were part of this family, that they wouldn’t abuse them. Well, they have, it was bad. I went along with that because I figured that it was appropriate, that they should be able to self-insure, and that they would not abuse it. But it’s been abused and that might be the big coup they’re talking about, because they got two-way but not three-way, and I doubt they’ll ever get three-way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The State Labor Relations Act was modeled on the federal one as far as I can make out. I thought it was broader than what you are describing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, that’s the former Wagner Act, oh yes, that’s the right to organize.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s a lot of things, isn’t it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, yes. The only break would be – well, we’ve never outlawed the right to strike, the only thing we do have is binding arbitration. The Wagner Act gives people the right to organize, and the right to strike for wages and benefits, and then came the fair wage and hour bill. I can’t remember; I’ve been separated from the labor movement for too long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed very important to the Republicans; it came up several times in their remarks that “this is the thing they killed” but I didn’t get much from the other side.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they have to broadcast something. I don’t think it was that big of a deal. In the first place we could not do anything without it being controlled by the Feds; in other words, everything that the Feds have passed has never been disturbed in our state. Everything that we have here that is a federal act has never been changed, so I don’t know what they’re talking about. I know that they fought the little Labor Relations Act, but they lost on that. And they fought for private insurance to be able to cover industrial insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other piece I wanted to ask you about, what with the continuing sessions and with the growth in government, you were meeting a lot more than usual. What was the impact on the legislators themselves? Were members having a harder time being legislators? I mean, how do you hold a job when you’re coming back again and again and again like this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was always tough. A lot of people in the Legislature either have their own businesses, or they are professionals who have back-up persons covering them when they are gone. Or they’re working twenty-four hours a day like Phil Talmadge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this development narrow the field of who could be a legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, it narrows the field. Also, when disclosure was adopted, most of the attorneys left; we had very few attorneys in the Legislature because they couldn’t disclose their clients, or wouldn’t, and I don’t blame them.

And so it placed a burden. The initiative has discouraged good people from serving in the Legislature, and we've lost a lot of good people because of it, and we'll never get them back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was interesting is that Leonard Sawyer, when he first brought in the continuing session concept, vetted it as a way to keep the citizen legislator, because he said the only alternative was a year-round legislature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was an attorney, and as Speaker of the House, he had a staff that was adequate so they could do the work for him except when he had to preside, where he could run his practice. It was easy for him, and it would be easy for a person in leadership. But if they weren't in leadership it would be tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because you've got more support?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have financial support there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just seemed a bit paradoxical.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But actually, when we were meeting in committee on weekends, that hasn't been that often that we met; we were meeting about every three months, I think. And we try to do that now but we haven't been; we only meet about twice during the interim except for committee meetings. And committee meetings can be as comprehensive or as often as the chairman chooses. That's controlled by the chair. So if a person had a lot of free time, they could have a lot of committee meetings. They might not have anybody there, but you don't need everybody there; you need yourself and the staff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to be getting something done? Well then, you get through all this work and there was an election, and of course, you were handily re-elected.

## CHAPTER 9: A SEAT ON RULES COMMITTEE, 1975

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democrats got an even greater majority in the 1974 election. You now had sixty-two to thirty-six members, so the Democratic trend was even greater for the Forty-fourth Session of 1975. But I'm not sure what's happening for you; you were no longer the chair of Commence. Did you choose to give that up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I gave it up because I wanted to go on Rules Committee, and you can't be on Rules and have a chairmanship.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Now, you're sometimes reputed to be one of the first women ever to be on Rules, is that so?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think so. I think Kathryn Malstrom, who was there for years, years ago, was on Rules. And I don't know if Gladys Kirk was on Rules or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are certainly the first in a long time; I haven't noticed any other women on Rules during this time. Is the position of women changing at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it's slow. It became more prevalent in the House because they were liberal – because there were a lot more Democrats and they were liberal Democrats. As far as the Senate, no, it was still bad and that's when we get into the sex and education issue. We were the first state in the nation to adopt Title IX of the Social Security Act to provide for equal opportunities for women in education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The big issue during the Forty-fourth Session was education. Apparently there had been several levy failures, especially in Seattle, and the schools were getting in a bad way; things were getting pretty dicey.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We passed income taxes and had them fail at the polls.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the whole tax issue just gets completely murky at this point. With the failure of the income tax, there was, it seems, an inability to even look at the issue and the state got into a real jam with this. They were just not

able to pay; and schools were getting less and less support. In fact, teachers were holding big rallies on the Capitol Campus and things were getting kind of hot. And it seemed that the House, from what I could tell in the press, was quite willing to pass education bills and fund education but the bills would die in the Senate. Senator Mardesich is always singled out as the one who was killing these measures. Can you tell me what's going on there, what's happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, number one, the Senate has always been more independent as far as the WEA [Washington Education Association] is concerned. And the WEA has been the major pusher on funding of schools, as it rightly should be, but the AFT [American Federation of Teachers] was very weak. And the House was a lot more supportive of the WEA and therefore supportive of education. And you have to remember that many members of the Senate were Roman Catholic and their kids were not being educated in public schools, anyway. And so they didn't pay as much attention, except there were those who were very supportive of public education. But because of the make-up of the Senate, and the go-along-to-get-along approach, they didn't raise the hackles as much if things didn't happen. There was no push to do it. And then, look at the leadership in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides Augie Mardesich, who would that be in this case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Bob Greive, who was Roman Catholic, whether his kids went to parochial school or not I don't know. He was very supportive of labor but I'm not so sure of education particularly, of WEA.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been deposed from leadership by Augie Mardesich at this point, but he was still there, I believe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The labor movement didn't care much for Augie Mardesich, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was quite a lot of tension in the Senate. Right about this time was

when Senator Mardesich was getting into some hot water with various charges and indictments.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The garbage issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it's all mixed up in there, together, at the very same time that they were trying to negotiate taxes, or no taxes, and these education bills that are not going anywhere. Things just seem to get hotter and hotter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, with the ho-hum attitude of the Senate on lots of issues, not just education, and with the supportive agenda in the House... But there was competition between the American Federation of Teachers and the WEA also that was going on all this time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the education people were not speaking with one voice either?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they're not, there just wasn't one strong voice coming in and assisting. If something went through the House, there was no guarantee it was going to get through the Senate anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it certainly didn't.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it was kind of a ho-hum attitude, I would have to assume. The only things that made a difference were the big labor groups that had their foot on many of the members through their agendas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember how you felt about these issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was always supportive of schools and always voted for the income tax to provide money for schools. I challenged the budgets that were presented because we were falling farther and farther behind in our payments. After doing the research on comparable pay for public and private people, we found that the state employees and public employees are falling farther and farther behind and we had never met the needs as we identified them, with raises. We're still way behind. We did fully fund the state employee wages once in 1973; I think they actually were at a par, but since then they've fallen behind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, I wonder if that's part of the tension, is that people feel like they're

falling farther behind and they're just not going to keep up with inflation or whatever?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we were not keeping up with inflation, we were not funding programs as we should have funded them, and we didn't have the money. Part of that time we were in trouble financially and had gone to the twenty-fifth month, to use the money from the twenty-fifth month to pay for the remains of the twenty-fourth month which was later challenged by a lawsuit. So that was a problem, the money was not there and there was resistance to more taxes. But I do remember that we always sent a tax package down to the Code Reviser with the appropriations bill; they went down together. Now we have a bill, but there's no tax package with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you can get into trouble doing that.



*"I was always supportive of schools and always voted for the income tax to provide money for schools."*

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We were always doing bits and pieces of taxes, but for the last twenty years there has been no tax package. The last big tax increase we had was in 1982, I believe, and McDermott was responsible for getting that through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was an idea floated that the increase for schools should be passed as a referendum. Buster Brouillet, who was the Superintendent of Public Instruction at that time, just blasted everybody and said, "You know, that's a way to look like you're voting for schools, but without voting for taxes. You want to have it both ways." He really had a fit over that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What we did was, we redid the Education Act at that point, because the money was not there for schools and we were mandated to fund education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The court ruling comes the next year that leads to the Basic Education Act, I believe. But you were building up to it. It seemed like it really had to fall apart and then the court stepped in and said to the state, "You're not doing your job."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That you have to do it, so at that point we allocated so many teachers per number of students, and so many staff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And rearranged the whole state budget around schools?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And rather than doing it dollar-wise, we established the policy in which we had to have so many certificated teachers for so many students. We identified classroom teachers, nurses and all degreed personnel as certificated; even some vice principals and librarians were all identified as certificated employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were just counting adults, not actual teachers? I mean, the janitor is not teaching.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So we had to then identify and pay them. But janitors, office personnel and others not degreed were identified as classified employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that happened was that this went along, back and forth between Houses, and then the Senate up and left. They recessed and you House members were left holding the bag! That seemed to be unprecedented.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Didn't they adjourn?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They adjourned, yes; they just left.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They adjourned, we couldn't do anything. I remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you ended up having to adjourn because you couldn't do anything. What was going on there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We couldn't do anything! We were supposed to Sine Die together, but we didn't. Some of the senators just walked out. I remember someone rushing over to the House to tell me that the senator from Lake Goodwin, Bill Gissberg, had left. So the Judiciary Committee collapsed at that point because he was chair and everybody just left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's quite an admission of failure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You know that is so foggy; apparently it didn't disturb me, because I don't have any recollection except I remember someone coming over to tell me that somebody just walked away, walked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe you were just so sick of it you were happy enough to go home?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know, I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the press went wild with it – big headlines: "Legislature Fails to Aid Schools," a lot of stuff like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, very typical of the press. Was that in the News Tribune?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. You gave a speech to a group of bankers in 1975 that was about education for the most part and I thought we could look at that. That would be a good way to discuss some of these issues. You raised some big points. I'll read them and you can tell me what you were thinking about. You were saying



that things are not good with school funding and it had been going on for years and there are some issues behind that. You say, “How do you guarantee equal education for all students?” This is something the Legislature, I guess, hadn’t grappled with yet. Sounds like you do that later when you start to talk about teachers per student.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, that’s where we resolved the issue. That was McDermott’s proposal, which made sense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, “How do you produce accountability in a system made up of three hundred and twenty-one school districts?” The state divvies out the money but at that point, I’m gathering, you had very little control over what happened then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What we had done too, instead of consolidating some of the districts we could have helped – this is before but Buster Brouillet did it – he said because some districts said they couldn’t consolidate, so he identified them as “remote and necessary school districts,” and by doing that, then they got their funding the same as every other school district. What we needed to do is to consolidate in order to cut down on the administrative costs. And instead of doing that, he identified them as “remote and necessary” where they had a principal and administrative staff which we had to pay for, also. Eventually, what happened is that they didn’t consolidate but they made one person a chief to take care of all the things and that chief had to also teach, but he had to do administrative work, so we didn’t have to pay them that much more and it was accommodated that way. But before that, with the “remote and necessary” they were getting the same money that every other school district was getting and it was very expensive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like a tension of values, where the local people want local control; they want their own familiar people, but it’s not very efficient. So the state’s looking at the big picture and the local people are looking at their neighborhood school and they don’t

mesh very well, those two values, and what’s going to happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that’s the reason we permitted them to go over the forty-mill tax limit to provide additional items for them and then we still permitted them do that for extra issues after we did the basic education, but they could not use that money for standard teachers; they had to use it for something special. But I still ask the question, how do you mandate equal education for all kids without a state-wide salary schedule? Which we didn’t want to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or the fact that education is supported by property taxes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. And equalize property taxes, because they were not equal payment; they were not passing special levies to provide the things that were needed. And we are not even doing it, even today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, richer school districts were clearly richer and poorer districts were left in the dust.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had an equalization bill; that was when we started collecting a portion of the property taxes at the state level in order to give it to the school districts that didn’t pass their levies, but we put that away eventually and that was no longer done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you asked, “What are the fairest taxes to support public education?” and this next question must be just about as hot as it gets, “Is the neighborhood school a viable concept?” That’s pretty sacred ground there!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, well, it’s true. As long as you have local control, there’s not much you can do. And I remember we talked about “so many students per teacher.” That was the forerunner of a state-wide salary schedule, and they didn’t like that. They went crazy over that! Because that was the establishment of just that. But we did mandate that they could subsidize that by passing a special levy to add extra things, but they had to spend the money from the state for teachers. But then some of them didn’t get any extra, but at least it was equalized.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it brought them up to a level. And then again, you were brave. You asked the hard question: “What is the proper line between state funding and local neighborhood funding?” These are the things that touch people’s lives in the closest possible way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. Tacoma was always willing to support its schools. We never failed; we failed a levy but we always got it back. So it was one of the better districts. The fact is our property tax assessment ratio is higher here than any other place in the state because of schools – we’ve always supported our schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here’s another hot button one: “If the state funds common schools, what should the state’s role be in education policy?” These are the central issues. You don’t have very many answers in your speech, but you do raise the issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. What we struggled with was to provide for smaller class loads for the elementary, primary grades to give them a good start. But then, what do you do with a kid who has dyslexia that has never been caught? Now the University of Washington is finally picking up on it. I wish they’d let me in on that because I’ve been screaming about that forever, about dyslexic kids; they can’t read! Have you ever seen a script of what they see?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it’s different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody should see that; it’s incredible. And no wonder! And these kids are not stupid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, nor lazy. So you raised these issues in your speech.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn’t answer them, though.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it’s impossible; you could spend your lifetime answering all these questions. Was there a lot of this philosophical discussion – this raising of the big questions, or was this an unusual opportunity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think there was much philosophical discussion anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you can’t answer these very basic questions, how do you move on? How do you make up your mind how to tackle these things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You find a solution, a partial solution to every one which will never resolve the main question. We got a partial solution through the LEAP committee, and that worked pretty well, and it’s still working.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was comforting to know that somebody was at least asking the questions and not doing one band-aid solution after another without looking at the basic structure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we don’t do that anymore; I didn’t have much debate with anybody anymore. The person who was really great to talk to was McDermott. He was very bright, and he was always pushing the limits, and so was Phil Talmadge. They’re really good friends of mine; we always pushed it to the outer limits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would you go for coffee with them and have this sort of discussion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we’d have coffee or I’d just go and sit in their office and say, “What do we do now?” I can remember sitting in McDermott’s office and wringing my hands. And he still has the answers but nobody listens. He was right: “one-party pay, health insurance for all.” Wasn’t it Winston Churchill who said that, “Americans always do the right thing after every other source has failed?” So if you are thinking ahead, it’s real tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d have to be looking at these questions to know what pieces to start plugging in, otherwise, how would you approach this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And which one do you pick; which is going to be the most popular one to use?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How do you frame it? You’d have to have a big picture in mind, wouldn’t you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In order to get it done. I know there’s always a big picture. It’s all there, it’s all there; it’s always because of the big push and

when you're going to get enough people to push with you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, legislators can't be too far out ahead. So, would you come back to your district – I mean, here you were speaking to bankers – but would you raise these kinds of questions with a lot of different people or was this kind of difficult?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Any chance I got – most people were not interested – and a lot of the problem is probably that people are only interested in what they are going to be asked to pay for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the beginning of this speech you say, "Well, the person that you really wanted, George Hurley couldn't come, so here I am. And you really wanted to hear about banking, but I'm going to talk about this." And you just seized the moment, and you gave your speech. And goodness knows what the bankers were sitting there thinking! You talked a little bit about banking, but basically you just jumped right into what you wanted to talk about.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to, you change the subject subtly. But George Hurley was always an initiator. He was a real flaming liberal. I remember he got so mad! He was giving this long speech on the floor and he just yelled, "Senator Newhouse, pay attention!" And Newhouse did a double-take, and then I got up once to make a speech and I was annoyed with Newhouse over something – he was on the other side, and I couldn't think of his name! And everybody cracked up and they said, "That was a real put-down." I couldn't think of his name!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was the minority leader! It wasn't that he wasn't important.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But those were the fun days! He wasn't easy, but he really was a good guy. He was very bright, but had an agenda. And it wasn't an agenda that I particularly liked. I remember a battle we had over the watershed; they wanted to get into the Tacoma watershed to hunt and fish, and that was closed, and we kept it closed. And he had a bill that opened it up and I was so aggravated! I pointed to him and said to him on the floor of the House that, "One-third of

the land in the state of Washington is opened, and not owned, open for the public, and now you want to take away a little portion that we need to protect against pollution?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Opening would lead to road building and one thing after another? So, there were groups of people who wanted to open the watershed, for what? For hiking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted it for hiking, recreation purposes and for hunting. Because there are herds of moose or deer that go in there and they occasionally do open it up for them to go in and thin out the herd, but only on rare occasions and every so many years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they want to go in with vehicles?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably and it had always been closed. I can remember – and I brought this up – that when I was tiny we lived in Easton, Washington where they put on the helper engines to get the train over the hump and they look them off in Lester and then in Lester they put them on to go to the other side of the mountains. When we went into Seattle on the train, they locked the johns. I know that my brother and I when we were tiny, we always had to go to the john before we left the house, because they locked the potties and you couldn't 'go' over the watershed. There were no roads over the watershed, except for around Lester, Washington, and in the Cascades. And I always think about that when I think about trains, locking the johns. And that is as a very small child, at three years old. I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To protect the water?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, and I brought that up. I never forgot it, never forgot it. And they wanted to open it up and anything would have gone then. Tacoma would have had to build a purification plant at a tremendous cost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this a really big area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a big area. It's around Lester in eastern Washington and that's in the middle of the Cascade range.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the water is piped to Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, from the watershed, it's piped into Tacoma, into Pierce County. And I think we were selling part of it to Federal Way, even at that time, as I remember. And the Seattle watershed has never been opened. And yet the Seattle legislators were all for opening up the Tacoma watershed. A lot of them were recreation addicts – they weren't environmentalists, obviously. And environmentalists weren't very popular back in the mid or early seventies; nobody talked about environmental issues, particularly. But anyway, there was a strong move and later Kent Pullen was in support of opening the watershed, simply, I think, because the Democrats didn't want it open. I don't know. But he had his intern even do a study on the watershed and the reasons it should be opened. I know he presented that to us. Because the watershed issue has never died and it kept coming back every year.

Finally, they claimed that there was a school in Lester, an elementary school, and there were people living there. Well, the people living there leased the land from the Northern Pacific Railroad; they did not own the land. And they leased at a very minimal amount of money and all the people attending the elementary school were employees of the school district. They were the only outside employees; the rest were Northern Pacific employees. There were four students, I think. The janitor had two kids and one of the teachers, or the principal – it was crazy. My brother started in that school, as a matter of fact, in Easton, Washington, where there was a row for every grade. And there were only about twenty kids. And so I was very familiar with the whole area and I knew it. And I knew about the school and I knew about the fact that the school employees' kids were the only ones going to school there, and yet it was a public school and it was funded by King County schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So because they were claiming that, "People live there, and there's a

school there," that it already is "open" in a sense?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And that it should be open. And that was one of the rationales, to open it up. Well, what we did was to move the school out of there, close the school down. And let them go into Enumclaw to school. And that created a fuss. No one lived up there and yet Representative Polk, as an architect, had designed the school up there. But that was Polk, minority leader in the House. He got a job designing the school, which I reminded him of; he was on the other side. He was tough!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this before he was a legislator or during the same time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, maybe he got the job before, I don't know, but I think he was in the Legislature. And he was saying he knew all about Lester because he had done a school up there. And I said, "Well, I know all about Lester because I lived there."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a bit different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Quite a bit different. When I was little because I was born and raised in this state; he wasn't. I don't know, don't get me started, but you know I'm real opinionated! But the bomb that went off during the Ways and Means Committee, when they were talking about closing it down, was that the people came from Lester and talked about living there and how they needed to have the watershed open so that they could travel in and out with cars, because cars couldn't get in. There were no roads; people had to go in on the railroad. I think there was a gate for the watershed clean-up people that some of the residents used. But anyway, I spoke up and said, "I was raised in that area. I lived in Easton, Washington." And I told them about the train going across the watershed and I said, "There's no earthly need for a school in that area because the only children going to school now are the school employees' kids." And so we got the school closed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So besides knocking down some of the arguments, how did you defeat this?

How did you make sure that people understood that this was not an area that should be opened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think there was fairly reasonable publicity on it and there had been during the advent about seven years before that. No, it was ten years before that we fought the issue. And the fact it was going to cost us a tremendous amount of money that the City of Tacoma did not have. The City of Tacoma was opposed to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That usually gets people's attention. "Your bills will go up if you get this."

**Sen. Wojahn:** You get the attention of enough people who have some clout or experience and knowledge. Because Tacoma knew that they really could not afford to put a purification plant up there. It was very expensive and it didn't need to be. And, of course, the opponents implied that the animals were polluting the water, well...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, there was a remark about somebody saying that "they'd have to put diapers on the animals."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that was crazy. It always occurred. There was always a "silly season" during the Legislature and this happened to be it and it was ridiculous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Shinpoch wanted to somehow protect the right of access guaranteed by Indian treaties. What was that piece about? Do you remember?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I haven't any idea. I don't think there was any Indian treaty that was involved in that. I think it was brought up to...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it had something to do with the hunting?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was the fact that they permitted Indians as first choice to go in to hunt for elk when there was an abundance of herd and they needed to thin it out. But they were not the only ones that got in, but I think it was done in some way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see, Senator Shinpoch would have required DNR not to let one group

of hunters into the watershed unless all other groups were allowed access. He said the purpose of the amendment was to prevent Tacoma from showing favoritism or authorizing VIP hunting expeditions. Well, that seems fair.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think Tacoma got into that. I think the state Wildlife Commission probably were more involved than the City of Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Senator Guess said that it should have multiple uses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And yet they did not want people walking through their watersheds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He thought it was special interest legislation for one particular area. It looked like a move to broaden the legislation to cover all watersheds.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that hit the nail on the head, too. If you're going to open one, you might as well open them all. One of the things that had occurred when they built the freeway around SeaTac Airport, they had to go around the Seattle watershed in order to avoid going over it. And I remember that from 1972 when I fought it before. That the plans had to all be changed so that the freeway would not go through the Seattle watershed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that kind of argument at least silence the Seattle people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it killed the bill. When we moved the school out – which was the strongest argument – that there was an elementary school. As though kids from all the surrounding area went there; well, there was no surrounding area from which to come.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And not a lot of little kids.

**Sen. Wojahn:** By then, no. I told them that when I was a little girl, my aunt and uncle had the only hotel in Lester, because it was a railroad hotel. And railroaders stayed there because they put helper engines on in Lester. And then traded steam engines for diesel engines – the big steam engines had to be fed with coal and took a lot of power – when we got the diesel engines, they didn't need helper

engines anymore, because the diesel engines could whip over the mountains in nothing flat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the whole point of the town was taken away?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they had closed it down by that time. The fact is, we moved out then when I was four years old; we moved into Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had an intimate knowledge of this area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very definitely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And a long memory.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A long memory and that shocked them all out of the water.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They probably didn't know about that part of your life. A different kind of authority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't know about it. And it was like a shock... I said, "Look, I know about the watershed. I know about what's been left there; there are no kids left there because there are no railroad employees left there. There hadn't been any there for ten, twelve, fifteen years."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it sort of takes the steam out of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always thought it was a little bit of history that is quite important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were well placed, having grown up there, and I'm sure nobody expected that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We used to picnic in the Teanaway and at Lake Kachess and Lake Keechelus. Lake Keechelus was full of water and now it's been drained for the irrigation. You can see the stumps. You couldn't see stumps when we lived there. But that's been since 1923 or '24.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it's safe now? The watershed area is still intact?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I presume so. Eventually, as the population grows, we may have to build a purification plant up there. But until we do, I don't see any point in fighting the issue or

bringing it up. About one-third or one-fourth of all the land in the state of Washington is open for recreation. And I was able to prove that in 1972 and I don't think it's changed that much. Why do we need to open a very protected area that protects people's pure water, you know?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Water is becoming a bigger and bigger issue for everyone. World wide.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course it is. That's right, they are even talking about recycling water. Now, they are trying to recapture rain water. There's a facility in Seattle that actually is capturing rainwater, and reusing it. Not for drinking. We're going to have to learn how to desalinate the ocean. They do it now, but it's very expensive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, perhaps the first place to start is to take care of what we already have.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Save what we have, protect what we have, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rather than setting up complicated systems after the fact.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And another issue came to my attention. Throughout Pierce County there were a number of massage parlors – or they were called sauna parlors – owned by Korean women. They had bought them in order to support their families. They had married GIs and had come to this country and their GI husband had divorced them. They no longer had a lifeline, because he was not in the service. They couldn't garnish his wage and he left them with the children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would there be very many of these women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were a handful of them. I knew of it because some of them were located in my district. I was very concerned for them, because they were trying to support their children. They were not houses of prostitution. They were true massage parlors. And this bill we were discussing would have hit them. If they couldn't pass the exam, which the bill called for, they would be out of business and then they could not support their children. The bill was really supported by a group called the French Massage Group and they were all women. And

they were prostitutes! It was obvious! They appeared in committee, in the Social and Health Service Committee. They had long fingernails, lacquered fingernails, and at one point, the question was asked, “How could you possibly give a massage without scratching your patient to death?” And there was no stipulation made to protect the Korean women, who obviously could not pass a written exam – but they could pass a manual, because in Korea, little girls learn massage from the time they can walk. It was a thing that women had to do – it is part of oriental culture – massage. And so they were expert at it and, therefore, I felt they should be able to do a manual exam. Well, a bill was sponsored, which did not contain the stipulations that I wished. The bill was sent to Rules over my objection and I wrote a long letter to the Speaker of the House explaining the position that the Korean women would be in if this bill were to pass in its present condition. I suggested the bill needed to be sent back to committee for review, which was done. At that time then, we added the areas that needed to be covered, the fact that the manual exam could be given and also that a Korean woman taking the exam could have an interpreter if she chose. The bill went back into Rules, and eventually passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Previous to this, was massage regulated? Was this a new thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think it was regulated, because massage had been generally recognized as a prostitution area. It had never been licensed before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, why all the attention all of a sudden?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because they wanted it to be legitimate. And I am sure that it would have legitimized prostitution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are all kinds of therapeutic massage places now that are perfectly legitimate. Were they just coming in as a business then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. We revisited the whole thing and it has become a health care

issue. And it is. Deep tissue massage can help to correct physical problems and it is very relaxing. So, it is a good thing and there was a need to provide for it, but to provide for it in a true way. Without permitting or legitimizing prostitution. Actually, Swedish massage has always been known to be therapeutic in that it is relaxing and if you are relaxed, your body can recover from minor ills. And that was always recognized, but it was never licensed, prior to that. We were just getting into the area of licensing lots of other areas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots of different issues here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was there. I prevented a bad thing from happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn’t show up in the record very much. Preventing bad legislation is almost as important as passing good legislation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, to prevent bad legislation from passing, you usually try – if you are not on the committee – you attempt to amend it on the floor, so it can become good legislation. Because I served on the committee and witnessed what wasn’t taking place, I was able to send a letter to the Speaker suggesting the problems that this bill would face if it was ever pulled from Rules again – that it needed to come back to the committee to be adjusted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Korean women come in and testify or just these other women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don’t believe they ever came in. As a matter of fact, after the fact, there was an attorney representing the Korean women, and he must have written me a letter about what the problem was. I don’t remember how it came about that I knew, but I knew from Tacoma that there was a problem. And then I got a letter from a former senator, Neil Hoff, who used to represent this district, who wrote me a letter and said that it would damage their ability to raise their families. And so that is when I amended the bill in committee. And then I got a letter from him afterwards congratulating me and saying it was refreshing to see someone interested in helping people who could not vote.

You see, because they could not vote! They were not citizens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they still needed help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They needed help and you have to provide it whatever it is. A lot of the things that I did in the Legislature were probably stopping bad legislation or improving it so that the ripple effects would not injure people. Because I was always – in all my legislative career – and also lobbying – conscious of what the ripple effects of bad legislation could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You don't want to inadvertently destroy livelihoods.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that's right, or to introduce something that doesn't work – that the cure is worse than the disease.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Another very important bill that you've alluded to, that helped a lot of people at that time was HB 413, to implement a law to eliminate sex discrimination in public schools. Often called the sports bill, because that is one of the more obvious areas where it applied. Although this is bigger than sports.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. This we had to pass in order to get federal funding for women's athletics, because of Title IX. It passed in the Congress. In order to tie into that to provide for some help from Congress or from the Federals, we needed to pass legislation. It started out to be legislation totally on education – legislation that would correct text books and academic standards and sports, but everything seemed to center on sports.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the sexy issue, you might say?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. In committee, the things that we heard from teachers who testified in support of the bill – as far as academics were concerned – they talked about the fact in the lab experiments in high school, the physics labs and chemistry labs, that textbooks would show the boys as doing the experiments and the girls looking on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just watching?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Watching. And also, in English class, it identified boys as consonants and girls as vowels. In other words, the boys were the stronger sex. Also, one of the things that came up was the fact that Eli Whitney did not invent the cotton gin. That was actually invented by his landlady. He boarded at this boarding house – Mrs. Green's boarding house – and she supported him, because he didn't have any money and he was working on an experiment and she helped him with the experiment. Actually, it should have been dual, but women were not permitted to get patents, so he got the patent on his own. This is another fact that came out during the committee discussion of the bill. But, when we got it on the floor of the Senate, all of that went down the tube, and it all became athletics and the women's and men's jocks. It centered around that. And a lot of the jocks in the House did not want the bill and it really was the jocks in the Senate who helped to pass it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain that? What were they worried about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. They were worried about money being siphoned off from boy's athletics, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Football, for sure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Football, mostly. Basketball and baseball to a lesser degree. And I believe that was the whole context of their opposition to it. It was because of it draining money from boy's athletics. As a matter of fact, after the bill was passed, Washington State University did not honor it and they were sued.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the Blair versus Washington State University case? In the eighties?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. Yes, because I know that they came to me and asked me to support legislation to help them and I refused, because of the fact that they threw themselves in the way of this bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered why they came to you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they needed a vote. They were in arrears, because of the suit and they



needed a bill passed to provide them with funding, so that they could overcome the problem that they had initiated themselves, as I understand it. And they didn't get it or they didn't get my vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine the transition would take money away from boy's programs to balance with girl's programs, but after awhile it might balance out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did not promote women's programs at Washington State, as I understand it. They didn't even promote it even after the bill was passed. Sometime later, they were sued.

During the time that we were debating this bill, and one of the reasons that we got the bill, there was a small football team in Wishkah, Washington. I think that is down by Aberdeen.

There were two sisters, the Darren sisters. They used to play football. The school didn't have enough boys to make up a football team and they put a girl on the team and the athletic department of the school said they couldn't play and it went to the State Supreme Court. The Supreme Court said, "Yes, you can."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But by then, hadn't that girl graduated? Didn't it take several years to resolve?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It didn't work, but she could have played.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was a spearhead to raise the issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It raised the issue and as I remember, I think that the Supreme Court decision came down then. I think I used that as one of the arguments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it is here in a speech that you gave about these two sisters from the school who challenged the rule on the grounds that the ERA gave them the right to play. They lost in Superior Court in 1973, but two years later, the State Supreme Court used the State's Equal Rights Amendment to strike down the no-contact sports rule. By then, one sister had graduated, but the other one played, apparently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And she was a big gal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She must have been. Certainly, when the ERA was passed, it brought into question a lot of bills and practices.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. We changed a hundred and thirty-five codes. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is a lot. So, this would be one piece of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that is one piece of it. That is just a part of it. Under the section in education, that would have encouraged that – that was just a step further that they were able to go. That was the first bill after the ERA was adopted by state voters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In some ways, had the Equal Rights Amendment taken care of this, but to get people's attention and kind of push it along...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And to get the federal funding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The various senators and representatives – the ones who had daughters – I was wondering if that helped them think this through a little better, whether they realized that their daughters would benefit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Maybe it did. One of the persons who was most helpful was Joe Stortini, a state senator who was a coach – a football coach. He was very helpful. And Senator Newschwander; he was a dentist and he was very helpful. He put some good amendments on the bill. Some bad ones ended on the bill, too; that got stripped off. They weren't bad amendments to the bill, but they were beyond the scope and object, which killed the bill when it got back to the House for concurrence. The bill went back to the committee of origin. It went through the whole process. Well, what happened – we finally got the bill through the House, using all of our arguments and it went to the Senate. The Senate amended it, with some good amendments, but they also added the Senate bill that was a total bill onto 413. When it came back, I would have been willing to let it go, because it didn't hurt the bill, but Representative Polk, who had opposed the bill all along, scoped it. The Speaker said it was out of "scope and object" and he couldn't rule any other way. So, it went back to the committee of origin. That is the way

you kill a bill, especially two weeks before the session is over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, but it came back.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I went to Speaker Sawyer – and I was in leadership – and I said to him, “What is going to happen to this bill? We need it for funding; we need it to implement the Equal Rights Amendment.” And he said, “Don’t you worry, it is coming out.” They stripped the Senate amendment – the Senate bill – off the bill and sent it back. Then, they tried to kill it again with their usual talk, but they weren’t able to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why do you think they were so against it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Again, money for athletics for boys. It was the athletics; it wasn’t on academics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it clear that was their issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Never. But, we had enough Republicans on the bill with me. Senator Pardini was wonderful. He held out very well. I had my caucus behind me, but not all of them. You see, they flaked off. So, we had to pick up Republicans. And Representative Blair was wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is a very interesting mixture of people that are for this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. Some of the things that I found out later – during the Equal Rights Amendment – this did happen. I got a letter from an attorney in Tacoma, who later became an Appellate Court Justice. He said that he didn’t approve of the Equal Rights Amendment until his daughter, who had graduated from law school, couldn’t get a job in a law office as an attorney.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then, finally, it dawned on him, that there was discrimination?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That there was discrimination. And that happened along the way. So, some men did recognize it, but not all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could probably get through great a deal of life without really noticing things like that if you wanted to.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that is true, that we are so caught up in our own experiences and in our own world that we are not sensitized.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is why I was curious to know if any of the men members, especially, had daughters because that is the kind of thing that helps bring it home.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No one ever came to me to tell me that except I had this letter from the attorney, whose name I can’t remember, and I know that Senator Stortini was one of the very supportive persons in the Senate and I think he had a daughter and he had two sons. I don’t remember. So, the men who were sensitized to it were the more moderate Republicans. The Kuehnles of this world were never there. He fought that bill. He fought everything I did, because I was a flaming liberal according to him – which I wasn’t – and Polk was very, very narrow and was one that attempted to kill it. He thought he had killed the bill when he sent it back to the committee of origin. And it was after the cut-off, as I remember, because it was two weeks before the session was over. Senator Bauer held a committee meeting and the committee met and stripped the amendment off and sent it back into Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there was a different pathway that it took?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a different pathway that the Speaker made available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is not over until it is over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right and the Speaker has ultimate power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if you are in the right camp and speak to the right people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. And know what you are doing. You can overcome. But, it is tough. And every time you overcome something, you make – maybe not an enemy – but you raise waves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, you also—

**Sen. Wojahn:** Get respect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Get respect as a person who knows the ropes, I would think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They might be a little more reluctant the next time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't try that afterwards. I mean, you sort of establish that, so that it does protect you somewhat. Not always. It depends how vehement the people are who oppose your philosophy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the House becoming a little more conservative in these days?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and a lot of people blame it on the closeness of the parties as far as support – as far as the Legislature is concerned, whether there is only a few votes different or equal – a tie vote. But I don't think that that is entirely true. I think that a lot of it is the way the conditioning of the person and the type of person they are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking ahead. This is the late seventies. The next election is going to bring in a lot more conservative people. I was wondering if there was evidence that there was already a bit of turning in that direction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Well, there was a turning somewhat, but it was gradual, because the total, really red-neck conservatives did not make up a bulk of the members, or a large portion. We had a few of them, but the moderates were able to overcome any inroads that they attempted to make. It is getting to the point right now where it is almost even-steven. And we have a lot of ultra conservatives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** William Polk was certainly considered very conservative. And he seems to be a rising power. I was wondering if he was part of a larger movement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. He became Speaker after that. He tried to kill the Displaced Homemaker Bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at that in a bit. One of the other things that you tried to do just then

is initiate or create a Department of Consumer Affairs and Product Safety. It didn't go anywhere, but what was your thinking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we needed to establish that whole agency, because it shouldn't have been in the Office of the Attorney General. It should have never been there. We had Product Safety legislation going through Congress, a lot of it. And there was too much of it to be reviewed. We needed contact to a 1-800 number for people with consumer complaints and we needed a lot more visibility. And I was told by one of the lobbyists who had worked as an assistant attorney general that when he was there, there was an attempt made, also, to do that, because they figured that they could not handle the problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a big era in consumer relations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A very big era, and I had good sponsorship, but I couldn't get it. And I couldn't get John O'Connell to help me. He apologized later. If he had helped, I think I would have gotten it. I had worked that issue for the Labor Council. We had done a lot of good things through legislation, but it was all uphill. Nothing was easy. Not that the Office of Consumer Affairs made it easy, but then, with the Product Safety Commission from the federal government coming along, we would have had a clear shot at handling consumer complaints without having to go through the throes of litigation. We never got it. Still haven't got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I couldn't find any trace of one, that is for sure. But, there was this other quite interesting development from a different direction. A Veteran's Affairs department was proposed in a bill; you were a cosponsor of that bill: HB 30. It went through the House; it went through the Senate. It was passed, but then it was vetoed by Governor Evans. He said he didn't like the proliferation of all these little agencies.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I recall that you said that the veterans were upset about being a part of DSHS and they wanted their own agency.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had merged them. We did establish that within the Department of Social and Health Services, but the veterans felt that they were – well, the whole agency was not working right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was part of a bigger problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. All it did was to create more problems. When the bill for DSHS went through the House I voted against it because I didn't think it would work. Then I got some amendments on the Senate that I wanted and when it came back, I think I did vote for it, when it returned. But then, it wasn't working.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this is part of your scrutiny of DSHS? What was also interesting is that you certainly weren't alone, because I don't know how often this happened, after it was vetoed, the bill came back in – I think it was the special session – the veto was overridden and this passed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Veterans Affairs. We also overrode five or six vetoes on the gambling bill, too, which I had to handle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How often does that happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never, hardly. We overcame one on the Veterans Affairs; we overcame several amendments to the gambling bill, which he vetoed – sections of it. We also overcame the veto on the vanity license plates to provide for Fish and Wildlife or Game, or whatever it was called then. For that department, we established a vanity license plate that people could buy in order to support that agency. The Governor vetoed that, also – the vanity license plates. We did all those vetoes in one year. In one session. John Martinis did one, the wildlife one. I did the gambling and Paul Conner did the Veterans Affairs, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Representative Pardini played a role. During the debate he said to the Speaker, "Will you inform the members of the House of the status and how many votes it will take in

order to override the veto?" The Speaker says, "Two-thirds," and that number, in this case is fifty-seven, and then you get fifty-eight votes and it is done. It seems rather calculated to get exactly what you needed here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was Veterans Affairs. We counted our votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you certainly did. It seemed like you were all set and ready to go.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes and every one of them we got – every one of those we got.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is a real mixture of people helping out. Veterans Affairs was one of those kinds of issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the Republicans and Democrats, you see. Pardini – he was from Spokane, but he was an ultra-moderate, I guess you would say. He was very level-headed on everything. He was a good legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people are not ideological; they are just pragmatic.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And that was a way that I was conditioned in the Legislature, to be pragmatic and to do your own thinking and not to be influenced by what someone else said or even some caucus leadership. You had to have a certain amount of leadership...but, of course, with Leonard Sawyer, he was far-seeing and very capable and you could almost follow him. Sometimes, I didn't, but usually, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These were the bills that seemed pretty interesting. Obviously, you were involved in many other different maneuvers and bills. One of the things that I don't think we have talked about very much is what it was like to be on the Rules Committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It meant something then, because it was very selective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were the only woman. Did that make any difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. I think they considered everything before – they would look at me lots of times – especially if I had spoken on a particular subject. One thing that had

prepared me for that, too, was the fact that, under Leonard Sawyer's leadership, any bill that went to the Rules Committee, the chairman of the committee had to come in and explain the bill and explain the pros and cons of the bill and any ripple effects it would have. And I had been doing that for the Commerce Committee, so that you knew every bill that came out of your committee, what was in it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were really prepared?

**Sen. Wojahn:** What it did and what the potential dangers were, if any. Instead of relying upon the caucus attorneys, we would do it because it seemed more fair. He was a very fair Speaker and friendly to both sides.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, being in Rules, you would really be in the thick of things? You would know all the important legislation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You would hear both sides of it. And then after it was explained, there would be debate in the Rules Committee over some particular points.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's sounds very stimulating.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Really, the Legislature was made up of a lot of well informed people. It was exciting and bills didn't get taken out of the Rules Committee if there was a strong opposition to them. And we always knew when there was going to be a division, because of the chat that went on in Rules. And we knew when there was going to be a problem. So when those bills got on the calendar, we had to be sure that our people were all there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is somewhat of a gatekeeper's committee, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It is a gatekeeper's committee. The committees are supposed to do that, but they get lazy or irresponsible and don't want to kill a bill, so they send them to Rules to die and that is a mistake.

I remember chairing a committee during that time, too, where everything was open and we worried about what would happen because when we had executive committees and no one was

there we discussed bills before we moved them out and lobbyists could get word. They would have to get word from a member and then that member and whoever let it loose – there was always a suspicion of someone on the committee letting the information out. So, when we opened it up, it was kind of tentative. Everybody wondered, but people didn't talk. We finally got over that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a big change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but people became very careful of what they said. That is where the double talk started. Speaking with a forked tongue, you bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There is always that shadow side to everything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there wasn't as much discussion sometimes. The only time that it happened, if there was no discussion and the vote was taken and you had to speak out if you didn't like a bill. Some of the committee chairs developed a system where they did an oral roll call on every vote, but I didn't do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would be kind of time consuming.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Later, when I was doing the ophthalmology bill, I didn't want an oral roll call. I wanted a voice vote. One of the members was missing and it was a tie vote and the bill went down the tube. And I refused to accept a motion that was out, subject to signatures. It was subject to a vote at that meeting and I made that stick, because otherwise you could always get someone to sign it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you would have to go through the whole thing all over again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, you definitely sign it out. That was another thing I developed: I wouldn't sign bills, usually, unless I had been at the committee meeting to hear what went on, even through my last session there. Occasionally, on Ways and Means, if I had to leave early, and I knew what was in the bill, I would. Generally, I refused to sign on the side. If I didn't sign it in committee, it meant I wasn't going to sign it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well then, your signature meant something. Otherwise it is just a form.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It doesn't mean anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did many people take that position?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of them still do. And on larger committees like Ways and Means, it is tough to get all the committee members there at once or even to get a majority, often. And even on a controversial vote if you don't have your members there, you have to get enough members' signatures or the bill dies. Although we generally called and had everybody there when we were going to sign bills out and both sides knew that. So, they were going to be there, but occasionally it happened. And occasionally toward the end, where there were not controversial bills, it didn't matter. They were going to go anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, something very difficult, of course, happened in that session. There was a revolt among Democratic House members against the Speaker. Eventually, about thirty-three representatives were involved in that. Some of the leaders of the group that show up in press releases are Al Williams, King Lysen, Bud Shinpoch, but there were many others.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Helen Sommers. She was there with both feet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was going on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had too great of a majority, number one. There were so many bills and I blame it on strong egos of people that felt they were getting discriminated against or weren't getting the attention that they thought they deserved – either their bills were not getting out of committee or they weren't getting out of the Rules Committee. So, they blamed the Speaker. The leadership was meeting all the time, because we knew there was dissatisfaction, but we didn't know how close it was except that I sensed that there was something wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There must have been a lot of talk?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not with those who were committee chairs, because we were the Speaker's supporters and the committee chairs were all in leadership, also. And I complained one day. I said, "There is something going on," and it was about three weeks before the session was over. It was a short session anyway. I said, "I don't like what I am not hearing; I am not hearing things. We need to try and figure out what is going on." So, Leonard asked several of us to take a few members who were sort of dissatisfied and talk with them. I was given about four people, which I was going to take care of – this was in the evening – and I was going to talk to them the next day. The next morning it happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They were so secretive. They met in secret.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did they keep it to themselves? That is a huge group of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. But Shinpoch was a leader. Helen Sommers was a leader. Jim Boldt was a leader. Al Bauer was a leader. He was only one of the few that survived. Al Williams was not that much of a leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had this ever happened before? Was Leonard Sawyer trying to do something so new or different that somehow he got people's backs up? This seems so unprecedented.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt that it was too many new people who didn't realize how tough it was to get a bill passed. Even for those of us who were not such freshman members, I could remember being in the minority and getting two bills and feeling lucky in getting those, because some of the people didn't get anything. And it was too easy to get bills. It was easier to get a bill – but it was still tough. And they were revolting against the leadership, because they felt they were not being listened to and not being given opportunities that they should be offered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think there was any grain of truth in what they were saying?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, if you remember, there was something during the election with John O'Brien—but John O'Brien was not a part of this. Who was the other person who wanted to be Speaker? Al Bauer wanted to be the Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was partly ambition, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was ambition and the fact that some of them lined up, apparently with John O'Brien and felt that he should be Speaker. The Pierce County group had lined up with Len and we were the strongest small group there and we were able to get him elected and so that may have been part of it. Part of it was brought about because Leonard was sort of independent. He was neither pro- nor negative-labor. He was middle of the road.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people have suggested that this has something to do with private power, that he was a proponent of that and other Democrats supported public power. I don't know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was a proponent at one time, but we, by that time, had resolved the public-private power problem. But there was some residual left from that, probably. Well, that was the thing which caused the breakup of the Speakership under the coalition of 1963, the public-private power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the labor movement was not happy with Leonard Sawyer. He was not their favorite and consequently, there was some residual from that. They may have had their oar in there talking to people on the Speakership before it happened. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people, because of their personality or whatever, seem to be lightning rods in certain ways.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are trapped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A similar thing was going on in the Senate with Senator Mardesich. His leadership was under a cloud at this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And labor finally brought him down. You see, it was the same

thing. Leonard was a friend of Augie's and these are really bright people – these are the bright people. But you see, Ted Bottiger was also bright and he was on Leonard's side when he was in the House. Ted and Bob Charette, who was really bright, Leonard and Tub Hansen and Frances North, Bob Perry, who was a coalitionist, Gerry McCormick, whose husband was a coalitionist, we were on Leonard's side. So, there was a rudiment there of public power battles – left over from Bob Perry, Leonard Sawyer and Gerry McCormick's husband. Now, whether that had something to do with it, I don't know, because they were all on Leonard's side and helped vote for him to be Speaker, led by the Pierce County delegation. So what I am saying, we had so many bright people there, and so many people vying for leadership positions and for recognition, that something was bound to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it did happen. They actually got him to resign. On January 22, 1976, Speaker Sawyer came before the House on a point of personal privilege and resigned.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were out of there in mid-February.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He said, "I've become a center of a controversy I don't believe is justified, but nonetheless, the fact is that there it is. Some have turned to criticism instead of constructively working on the issues before us. In the last ten days in my caucus, there have been no discussions on education, pensions, taxes or budgets." That must have been when you started to wonder what was going on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "The work we were sent here to do has taken second place to political infighting." and this is why he said he was going to throw in the towel. "It is harming the institution."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "It is harming the caucus." And so, he resigned. He doesn't actually resign his seat though, does he?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he just resigned as Speaker and John O'Brien became the Interim Speaker. But, there had been venomous meetings in caucus. I remember Shinpoch getting up and making these rotten remarks and I got up and said, "How dare you! How dare you say these things?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did the caucus recover from this? What did you do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We went home. We adjourned not too long after that. Nothing. And it was over.

But while this happened behind the scenes, Duane Berentson and some of the Republican leaders offered to coalesce with us to elect Leonard Speaker and Leonard refused. He and Duane Berentson were very good friends. And Tom Swayze would have formed a coalition to help Leonard and he refused. He said there had been one coalition and coalitions did not work and so he resigned. We agreed that we did not want a coalition. We discussed it. But, that was what happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty interesting – that they were willing to do that. But afterwards, were members of your caucus able to come back together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there was an election that fall and we unloaded some of these people. Fischer, a guy by the name of Fischer. I think

Doris Johnson went down the tube. I don't remember – I don't remember who all – but we lost a lot of dissidents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, things shifted around a bit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did Sawyer run again after that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He did not. He retired.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Buster was gone by that time but Marc Gaspard was there. He was with us. With the Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then both of you ran for the Senate the next election. Did this event have something to do with you moving to the Senate? I just wondered if you got disillusioned.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no. Stortini, who had been the senator, was running for a local office and the seat was open and I was offered the seat by the Democrats in the district. They suggested I run and I did. The same with Marc, because Senator Knoblauch retired. There were just about three new senators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Del Bausch and you two were the new "inductees."





## CHAPTER 10: NEW FOCUS: THE SENATE OR MAYOR?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't like it very much in the Senate. I hated it at first. It was too stuffy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is smaller. Were members more senior?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there are senior members. We didn't have too many freshmen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, I mean senior in the sense of older?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Older and also in seniority. It was dullsville!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had a very easy election. You ran against someone called "Blindman Thorp." A colorful name!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, he didn't even run. He sent me flowers when I won. We didn't have any discussions. We didn't spar...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you beat him three-to-one or so. Was he actually blind?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he had a Venetian blind store.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh! Venetian blinds – different from what you would think! That is interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** His son was gay and you know, I think he appreciated my position on these things and I don't know why he even ran.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe he thought the other party should have a candidate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Be represented. I don't think he was even Republican. I don't know. He must have been.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at any rate, you just wiped him out. You were giving some speeches during this time and you made some remarks that seemed to speak to the long reign of Dan Evans – that agency heads had been Republican appointees for a long time. And that they didn't always follow Democratic legislative intent. When legislation went over to agencies—

**Sen. Wojahn:** The code was changed by the rules and 'regs.' Yes, that is true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have this interesting quote. You say, "Democratic programs became Republican atrocities." Now, was this a sort of weariness of the long twelve-year reign of Dan Evans?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, part of it. Things were going on and there were lots of boards and commissions formed. They were election devices and people were appointed to commissions which did nothing. I felt that they were almost irresponsible. And that we needed to review them and to find out what they were doing. If, after a sunset review, if it was found that they were satisfactorily solving people's problems, then they should be retained. Otherwise, they should go. We finally got the Sunset bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans finished his third term and he left state government to go on and do something else. He had been the Governor for so long that this represented quite a huge watershed, it seems, in state government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and he formed commissions and boards along the way that supported him for re-election. You know, he was smart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though your own election was pretty pro forma, this was an interesting year for Democrats. This just feels like a time of such a big change. Dixy Lee Ray came in as the Democratic candidate for the Governorship. Governor Evans was retiring, the presidency went Democratic, the state had a new Democratic Governor, and for the first time, all three bodies – the first time in awhile, anyway – were all of the same party.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought Dixy was great until I saw her perform. I became her apologist. I was always excusing what she did, but pretty soon it got to be apparent that I could no longer do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of press comments and interviews with legislators – the leadership – when she was first coming in as Governor, everybody sounded rather tentative. Was that because she was new or that she was the first woman Governor or what? Or that she was so different?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A woman. I think she set women back. She set women back in politics twenty years. I lost my mayor's race after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is almost as soon as she is in there that things began to get rough.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the first thing she did, she had all these pigs on her farm on Fox Island that she named for the members of the Capital Press Corps. Then she slaughtered them and gave the sausage to their namesakes. Evie White worked for me and her husband, John, got a package of "John White sausage." You know, she did these things which were almost childish. Then she put on a "choo-choo" hat and rode the super tankers around the Bay. You know, these things – apparently she had not had much attention to her life, I figured, and she was getting it in spades. She was preparing her own demise the whole time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Previous to that, before she was elected, did people consider her an exciting candidate? This was the era, after Watergate, when non-politicians were supposed to be better than politicians.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right and she had been in D.C. Of course, there was a news blackout. We never heard anything bad about her in the news and she was an exciting woman, a new person. And not a politician, which should bring some light to the politics to the state of Washington. Instead it brought darkness. She actually made the State Patrol a police agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain a little bit more what you mean about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, spying on John Bagnariol and Gordon Walgren, with innuendos and I am sure that we had our offices bugged. I will always believe that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She did seem to have some difficulty understanding the relationship between the executive and legislative branches.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The role of the executive as opposed to the legislative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People say she didn't seem to think legislators had any role really at all, other than rubber-stamping her bills. Did you experience that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In my opinion, I believe she believed the Legislature was stupid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn't make it very easy to work with her.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I remember – you know the Governors all get a portrait of themselves to hang in the reception room and she had her dog's picture painted and hung. And I remember Sid Snyder coming back to our caucus, laughing, but still upset, because he said he had been over to the mansion for lunch with the Governor and he was busy talking to her and he sat down and he sat down on one of her dogs when he sat in his chair!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then she said, "Poor baby, what did that man do to you?" Sid thought it was funny as hell.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was Secretary of the Senate at this point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. See, he had no stature as a senator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We will certainly have more chances to talk about Governor Ray as we discuss this period. What about President Carter? He was coming in now. Did you have any thoughts about the new president?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had been back to a national health meeting in Florida in Orlando. We were invited to a breakfast and at the breakfast, Jimmy Carter was the speaker and he was introduced as the next President of the United States. We all – our mouths dropped open!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because you had never heard of him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never heard of him, never heard of him! Hamilton Jordan, his aide, was there introducing him and Doc Adams was there and we both thought, “What the hell is going on here?” because Scoop Jackson was going to run for President, if you remember. So he was a big question mark. Governor of Georgia. We didn’t know anything about him. He was really charming. He didn’t say much that made any difference to us. There were about three of us who attended that health meeting – the other member was Kemper Freeman, Jr. who is now a Bellevue shopping center developer. I knew Kemper, Sr., his dad, because he was with the firm that authorized the original Bellevue shopping center. So, when Kemper was in the Legislature and was on several committees with me, we became pretty good friends. He was there and he heard it. So, here was a Republican and two Democrats and we couldn’t believe it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Little did you know that you were getting the inside scoop.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did. So, I really never thought too much about it. You know, he was a Democrat running.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you start to hear about him shortly after that, though?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don’t know. After he was here, I thought he did some pretty remarkable things with the Peace Corps. I don’t even remember who he was running against.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gerald Ford. So, this is very much post-Watergate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think I gave him very much thought. I was busy doing my own thing and I don’t remember even thinking very much about it. We had always been able to get things done as far as the Feds were concerned, because we had Senator Jackson and Magnuson back there. Magnuson was always getting, you know, eleven dollars back for every ten dollars we sent. We always did very well for the state of Washington because he was chairman of Appropriations. Whenever we went back to

D.C. – I went back a few times during those years – we always met with him, and with Scoop Jackson. It was like old-home week – and Brock Adams – he always had me for breakfast whenever I went back. They were my friends and I helped them all win election when I worked for the Labor Council. So, we didn’t really have too much to worry about or even think about with Carter. I don’t think he ever made any waves as far as the state of Washington was concerned. We were shocked when he capitulated; you know, he bucked the system. He bucked the big boys and he went down the tube.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a difficult time. I don’t know if anybody could have won another term under those circumstances. When you left your House seat, did you play any role in choosing who would take it or was that outside your realm?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I let the chips fall where they wanted to and I don’t remember who replaced me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was James Salatino. I was curious to know how those things work, whether a person who has had a seat for awhile has any kind of prerogative or anything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We worked together pretty closely and he was a very good representative. I don’t remember having any words with him. I don’t remember who his seatmate would have been. I guess Representative “Doc” Adams was still there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. He was still there at this time, 1976-77.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they got along really well. And I was always worked well with Representative Adams when I was his seatmate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you have to send a bill over to the other house, does your district mate help you in any way? Or is there no relationship?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn’t serve on the same committees, so we didn’t do anything. I always pulled my House seatmates’ bills out of Rules when I was in the Rules Committee. I went on

the Rules Committee right away when I was elected to the Senate, as I remember, or maybe it was the second year. We supported each other when we were in a group speaking together. It was just a very loose relationship.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rules came a bit later, I believe. When you came over to the Senate, Gordon Walgren was the Majority Leader. I believe Augie Mardesich was still present, but he was not in leadership anymore.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was not the leader, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was defeated in the 1978 election, but he was still there in 1977. How did it feel? There was a big change in the Senate. Of course, you weren't there before Senator Mardesich was replaced, but what kind of culture, I guess you would call it, were you coming into?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was pretty refreshing, because I think that Bob Greive lost that year, didn't he? I think he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lost his election? Yes. He was replaced by Nancy Buffington.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had lost the leadership before that. I had always worked with the senators before and I usually got the bills I wanted by going over and talking to them. I really didn't talk to Stortini because he didn't serve on any committees that I served on. And we didn't always agree. But Ted Bottiger was over there at that time and I would talk with Ted and Augie. So, it was a friendly relationship. But I felt strange, because it was so different and formal. You really had to be well informed. If you got up to speak on the floor, you better know what you were talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the profiles are a little higher there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Much higher.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it in the Senate or the House where the maiden speech is more of a ritual?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was 1977 when I was elected to the Senate, my first year. I don't remember what my maiden speech was. It may have been over the merger – the Senate was trying to

merge the Women's Council with the Asian-American and Indian and Mexican-American Commissions. I was highly opposed to that. I didn't want to speak on the floor, but I had to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That one just couldn't just go by you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, we had lost the Women's Council statute bill every year, thanks to Senator Rasmussen. And now I was in the Senate with him then and I figured I was going to get it that year. And I dropped the Women's Council bill in again. The bill went to Ways and Means and the committee put the commissions all together into one bill and sent it back to Rules. It came out of Rules Committee onto the floor and I spoke against it and I moved that it be sent back to Ways and Means and I won! Can you believe it? I won!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, even though you were a freshman senator! You had been working your way up in leadership in the House, now when you went to the Senate, were you right back at the bottom of the pecking order again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I didn't want to be in leadership there. It was too tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the climb steeper in the Senate? To get back into leadership?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. There weren't that many slots and they were all held by men. There were three women in our caucus, Margaret Hurley, Ruthe Ridder and me, and we weren't listened to.

Jeannette Hayner and Lois North and Sue Gould, I think was there, and Nancy Buffington for the Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the women still work across party lines to help each other on occasion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the women in the Senate were too afraid to say anything. They wouldn't support anything. That was what bothered me, and I witnessed that in other areas, that they were not too vocal. I don't remember anyone on the Women's Council bill with me, but I put it in. They were friendly enough. They just didn't

want to get in bad with the men, because they were out-numbered so badly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least, you had some colleagues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Margaret Hurley was always here, but we were on opposite sides on a lot of issues. She was against sex education in the House, I remember. Did Margaret go with me to the Senate?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was there before you. If not the women members then, did you make alliances with any particular members of the male leadership?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I made alliances with Gordon Walgren. He was always a good friend of mine. And Ted Bottiger was always there. And, of course, Marc Gaspard had served in the House with me. And I got along with Augie. You know, I just talked back to him and it was fine. I had known a lot of them when I lobbied. I knew the Higher Ed. Chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gordon Sandison?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew Gordon. So there I was. I had some support there as long as I kept my mouth shut. That's what I felt. I didn't talk for a long time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that is the tradition that you were not supposed to talk at first.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You don't do it unless you have something to say – and I had something to say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There an unusual amount of turnover in the leadership and I was wondering how that influenced your caucus. From Greive to Mardesich, and now Walgren. And Robert Bailey, who had been the longtime caucus chair, was given the position of chairing the Utilities and Transportation Commission then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So, he left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he left and Gordon Sandison came in and then by June, he resigned and then his position was taken by Gary Odegaard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Gary was the Caucus Secretary, always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been the Secretary and then he moved up to this caucus chair position. There seemed to be a fair amount of turmoil with all this change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was turmoil, but that was just because there was movement and people were getting appointed to things. What did Gordon do? Did he just resign?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the directory, it just said that he resigned in June and that Gary Odegaard took his place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember why. I don't know anything about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other leaders were Dan Marsh and George Fleming and then Bruce Wilson came in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I didn't know Bruce very well, but I learned to respect him. He was a very good legislator, very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was your caucus leadership group. Would it have been the caucus chair who assigned the committees?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know who did that. Later, it was the Committee on Committees who assigned committees. I did get the committees I wanted, however.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see: Commerce, Constitutions and Elections, and Social and Health Services, and then in the special session, you got assigned to the Judiciary Committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That is when we got the garnishment bill passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were the vice-chair of Commerce. Was that due to your former experience?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I don't remember doing much in Commerce. Senator Van Hollebeke was the chair at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. In Constitutions and Elections, it seemed like there was a fair amount of action there, because Governor Ray wanted

to reorganize state government. She seems to have sent in a lot of requests to that committee, which didn't actually go anywhere. Was she asking for things that were just not possible?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. Nothing happened of significance. That is all I can say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is interesting: certain years, you get a long list of issues – everything is happening. But this year, it seemed like everything just slowed to a crawl. Partly, it seems to be Governor Ray, but there is a lid on things. It is just different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we were trying to get comparable worth through and she was fighting that.

And I went on-point on that and didn't get anywhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that was a really big issue. Governor Evans had included a seven-million dollar appropriation in the budget to address comparable worth after several studies had been conducted since the early seventies.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bruce Hedrick was the one who started that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Evans supported it – more than lip-service. The studies documented that women employees were lagging behind men in several areas.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was always very supportive of women's issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We should probably define comparable worth. In your mind, what was it about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is a job which is comparable in knowledge, experience, and skill, which is held, basically by women, who should be paid equal to a job which is comparable to a man's. And I am thinking now of a nutritionist with four or five years of higher education who is paid less than a truck driver. And what were some of the other areas? An administrative assistant – the gal who worked with machines – office machines – where she had to be skilled in office machines, is paid less than a truck driver.

So, there were comparable jobs held by women who were not paid what they deserved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Women's 'ghettos' of employment? The 'pink ghettos' as they are sometimes called?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right and we always identified teaching as one that was never paid according to a professional skill, or nursing. Because they were typical women's jobs and they were always paid at a lesser rate than others who were less skilled and had less knowledge. So, the whole thing – there is a whole scale of things, of comparable things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is very complicated, really.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right and we felt there needed to be legislation to correct the inequities. And Dan Evans had made inroads and then Dixy Lee Ray just flattened them all out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She stripped it out of the budget? Because, of course, this takes money – you were probably not going to lower male workers' salaries...but bring women up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And yet, when she was running for office, I remember a speech that she made that made so much sense to me and I thought that she would be supportive of comparable worth, because she said that women always adopt the attitude that "they will do this after this," or when they "get through with this." In other words, "I can't go back to work until my children are in school" or "I can't go back to college, which I abandoned to be married and until my children are in school" or at a certain point. So, she had presented these ideas that women were holding back because they didn't have the time to do it at this point. And I thought she would be very supportive of comparable worth. She wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When she did this, did she justify her actions or just do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, she and Gummie Johnson made some kind of a statement. I don't remember what it was. I remember that. Montgomery Johnson, who apparently, was a friend of hers, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who had been Republican state chair under Dan Evans?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. Well, I came up against him when I was working for the Labor Council and we took a couple of seats that he thought he was going to get. But anyway, she didn't justify it, as I remember, except saying that it was unnecessary and there wasn't money in the budget, enough money to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She certainly kept a tight rein on the budget.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She didn't understand budgets.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She basically wanted to stop doing all kinds of things just to hold money back, according to her statements.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She didn't realize all of the areas that state government was involved in that we needed to support. Consequently, she went whacking at the budget, removing items that should have remained. Evans was a progressive Governor and she was not. She wasn't a Democrat; she was a conservative Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes those labels are less than descriptive. She claimed that Evans had called for a one-percent increase in the sales tax and a twenty-five percent increase in the B&O tax and her response to that in her first speech to the Legislature when she laid out her program was to say, "We must learn to say no." So she was basically shutting down whole areas and saying, "No, no, no, no." But the press afterwards quoted different legislators, saying, "We know what she doesn't want, but we don't know what she does want to do." It seemed to go like that for quite a while – that she didn't have a program, but she was certainly willing to cut...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whacking. Negative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By most accounts, she was certainly willing to shut down quite a few things and that seemed to be her program. She did want everyone to get on the ball to define "basic education" though, because of the court ruling that was in effect.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And she seemed to want to study every state program: put it under the magnifying glass and see if it was worth doing. Is that what slowed down an awful lot of things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, she liked the sunset law, I know that. Although she vetoed the first one and she didn't give a good reason, but it was because she didn't have any control over it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was no role for the Governor in it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. No role for the Governor and we added that and then she signed it. That was my big bill. I didn't get it. It became Bruce Wilson's bill, but it was my idea and I had sponsored it when I was in the House. When I moved to the Senate, members of the House sponsored the same bill. The House bill passed and Governor Ray vetoed it. Then the Senate bill sponsored by Bruce Wilson was amended to add the office of the Governor and Governor Ray signed it. Bruce always credited me with the bill although he was the prime sponsor of the Senate version.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legislation has so many different routes. Fingerprints are sometimes visible and sometimes not.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and you back off when you can't do it. It is more important that the legislation passes than who sponsors it. But, sometimes the sponsor makes a difference and you have to be there in order to get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then, tracking someone's influence or work becomes impossible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, you can't track it and most of us bowed out anyway when we lost. We bow out to the next person. Especially if they are of our party. If they are not, we don't like it very much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, no. That would be too much.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But even so, it is better to get the law passed if it is good than to let it linger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, you were interested in a lot of different bills in this session. Let's look at the main ones.



**Sen. Wojahn:** I never concentrated on any area. I went in as a consumer specialist, but I actually branched way out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you did have a rather important consumer protection bill this session: Senate Bill 2445. That is the automotive repair bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, that was a good one. It almost got vetoed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was sponsored with Mardesich and Donohue. First of all, what made you think of doing it? Did you have a bad run-in with a car repair?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I loved the bill. Because, you go in and they give you an estimate of the bill and then you go to pick up the car and it is five hundred dollars more, or twice as much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Surprise!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Surprise, surprise! The bill said that if it was going to be more than the original estimate, which had to be written and given to you, they had to contact you and get your approval to do the work. We didn't like surprises.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did someone come to you with this or did you have this experience yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember whether someone came to me with that or whether – I think I had been playing with that bill for some years. I didn't like what I was seeing and I thought it was wrong. And then they had to save the items they took out and give them back to you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To see if they really were defective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or if you wanted to get a second opinion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They had to prove it. And I understood the Governor was going to veto the bill and so I called one of her aides, Orin Smith. He wasn't there, but his wife was –

her name was Janet – and she worked with the Governor, with her press team. And I explained to her that I understood that the Governor was going to veto the bill and I needed to get to her husband, because he was the advisor to the Governor. It was a very important bill and I had been able to get the support of Senator Mardesich, who didn't like much of anything. I said he was always very suspicious and not a typical person to cosponsor such a bill, but he liked the bill and I believed it was important legislation. And she got it and she told her husband and her husband went to the Governor and she didn't veto it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would she veto it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Unnecessary, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, once you see a bill like this, you think, 'Why yes, of course.'

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had sponsored the odometer bill, too – that turned back the odometer reading. I did that when I was a freshman legislator and I was involved with consumer protection areas and I knew that these are some of the areas that people – I must have heard from the Attorney General that one of the biggest complaints that they had were about auto repair people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There had been a flood of complaints to the Attorney General.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That is probably where I got the idea, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if there was something particular going on or there was just a new consciousness or what.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, people were getting ripped off, I think, and it was getting to be expensive and there was no regulation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to be quite sensible. An honest auto repair place couldn't be against this; it would give them protection from unscrupulous competitors.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, there are always exceptions to the rule that make it difficult. There are those out there who prey on people and they are the exception to the rule and they are the reason that

we have to have these things. The same thing with any kind of regulation. Most of the regulations that we have passed have been at the request of some industry that wanted to be protected against unfair competition. They wanted regulation to control it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dishonest competition in this case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. All of federal legislation, you know – like tariffs on cotton goods and automobiles to protect the U.S. auto makers and to protect the U.S. textile people. They are protection.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This session you co-sponsored a bill to exempt food from the sales tax. This didn't pass, but there was an initiative on the next ballot, I-345, that did pass. Is that when the tax came off food?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Al Williams was one of the signers of the initiative and Ellen Waters, from the King County Elder Citizens Coalition, and also Sam Smith from the Seattle City Council. And Gary Grant and several other people. But interestingly, the statement in the Voters' Pamphlet 'against' was mostly saying that it is irresponsible to take away a tax without figuring out how you then were going to replace the revenue. That was written by Hubert Donohue and Helen Sommers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Tell me about it! He was the Ways and Means Chair. Donohue was very conservative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he was the chief budget hawk, I guess you would call it. But Helen Sommers comes from a liberal urban area. Was she just being fiscally conservative here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't understand anything she has done. She has done a lot of things that are weird. I can't figure it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How difficult would that be to figure out a different revenue source?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is the most regressive tax of all and it is the most regressive thing you can do to poor people. She did not have any empathy

for the poor or for anybody. She couldn't understand why anybody couldn't make a living or couldn't do things. You know, it's as if she was not human. She is getting better. But, she was the one who got the food distribution place in Seattle, because Senator Moore was the senator from her district and he got her turned around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the big program that he ran, the Food Lifeline?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. He started that and he finally got her involved in it. So, she should have realized, but you see she didn't realize anything in her early days there. She dealt with budgets and money and she didn't want to burden herself with anything that she didn't have to burden herself with, as I view it. And to take the tax off food would be a burden on someone writing a budget. But, you have to find a new method.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And she didn't look for it very hard. I remember looking for money all the time. When we needed to find the money for the trauma care, I found it. We did it! But, anyway that is later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, we are going to come to that discussion. You were also interested in getting some more Superior Court judges for Pierce County. I think several people were doing that, all over the state, trying to augment the court system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there were several counties asking for it, because the state pays for fifty percent of the salary for the Superior Court judges. The people weren't getting justice because they were not able to get into court.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, you weren't able to get it. Ted Bottiger and Marc Gaspard tried to help you with that, but nobody seems to get anything along those lines.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. The civil cases can linger – even now – for years. You can't get into court with a civil case. What an injustice, because criminal cases are clogging the court so badly. I had a bill in, too, to coordinate the court

systems, to merge the district and municipal courts and that really raised hell. Oh, God, that was awful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds like a turf battle to me.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was. Nobody liked it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One bill that I thought was really interesting from a science point of view was SB 2561, to seed clouds for rain, because it was a drought year. Did that work? Did you have scientists come and tell you about how you could do this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We tried it, I think. Well, it didn't make sense, but anything to produce some water. Whoever the prime was on that must have been having problems with his crops and needed some help and he was getting desperate, so he brought the bill up. And everybody was trying to help him out. I remember the bill; I will never forget it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a fantastic idea. I didn't have any idea that people actually did this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Let me tell you something. I was always a believer that the Senate could do anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, make it rain? That's power!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or the Legislature could do anything if they worked hard at it, unless it was unconstitutional. Unless it was barred by the Constitution. I always said that. I used to say that to Bob McDaniel and he thought I was nuts, but he said, "I think you are probably right." I don't know whether scientifically it was done or not. It must have been. I don't know if it rained or not, though.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know. Well, we have touched on it, but one of the big issues for you that year was trying to create the Women's Commission. The Women's Council was instituted by Evans in '71 and you were a member. But, it was suggested, because it was a council, you were just there on the goodwill of the Governor and that was a little precarious.

**Sen. Wojahn:** John F. Kennedy had already established a national Women's Commission.

Then Governor Rosellini established a Women's Commission, on which I served. And Governor Evans had promoted that, too, as a Commission and then he did the Women's Council; I was on all of them. It was needed because we had checked out contracts – labor contracts – and found with the retail store employees that men were paid more than women salespeople – quite a bit more. And then we checked out other things. That is where the whole idea of comparable worth came in, too, from Bruce Hedrick. He figured that out, too, because he was on the Women's Council, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a very active group. That group, supported by women in general, in the 1970s helped get abortion rights; they got the ERA – not nationally, but at least locally. You looked at all the revised codes for discriminatory language.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We changed one hundred and thirty-five codes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You worked on the marriage bill and community property. You revised divorce laws, custody issues, girls' athletics and other school policies.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We changed community property laws in the state of Washington, while I was also on. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were making great strides.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Also, women and credit. And the Displaced Homemaker Bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there was this feeling in the literature that it was time to have a Commission, a full-fledged commission, embedded in the statutes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And we put a sunset date on it, too. About 1984 or something like that. We changed it a few times. But, this was about in 1977, I think, that we put an advanced date of about ten years. After that, we wouldn't need it anymore, we figured. Well, after the agonizing that it went through, then it got attached to other commissions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it went back and forth.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I got the merged bill sent back to Ways and Means. The Senate was adjourned immediately and a Ways and Means Committee meeting was called and they went over and brought the bill back out again. You see, that was all part of this whole thing of merging all the Governor's commissions into one commission. When it appeared the second time, it was bumped onto the calendar. It didn't even go into Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was ready?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it had come out of Rules and then it got sent back to Ways and Means, the Senate adjourned, and then the committee immediately went to Ways and Means and brought the bill back out the same day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is unusual, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and we were adjourned for the night and so the next day, when it was read in again, it was immediately bumped and put on the calendar. The merged bill never did pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then what happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The referendum. That it be repealed by the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A group organized to demand a referendum to repeal it. There was a lot of discussion about what happened there. Some commentators believed that because of all the accomplishments that we listed earlier, there was a backlash. The rise of the conservative right at this time was identified with this development – they organized and opposed this effort to get a Commission and promote women's rights.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the things that happened – and I was wondering if you were present at this – there was a state convention in Ellensburg for International Women's Year, in July.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn't go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A large group of women reportedly stormed that meeting and tried to

take it over and send a different type of delegation to the national convention in Houston.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I found out that a lot of women had not pre-registered and there were Utah license plates all over Ellensburg. They were Mormons. A lot of these women there were from Utah.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The person leading the charge – Susan Roylance – was reportedly a Mormon and the reports said that many of the people who were against the agenda of the conference and the commission were Mormons, as you say. They very quickly got the signatures they needed and filed the referendum. Could you explain this tactic, how a referendum works?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A referendum can be referred by the Legislature or by the people. This referendum was referred by the people. It can challenge any law that is passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there was a group that formed called "Referendum Forty: Yes Coalition." It was a case of one of those odd wordings, where if you voted "no" it meant "yes."

**Sen. Wojahn:** The wrong way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was written the opposite of what you would think. Did you know people involved in that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And the Governor didn't help us at all. She sided with the Mormons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. Did she actually speak on this or just let it happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember her speaking on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not exactly an advocate for the commission, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which she had requested. So, two hundred and forty-thousand voted for the establishment of the commission, but six hundred-thousand and more voted against it. That is a tremendous number. It went down in flames. That is something to pay attention to.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is a backlash.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a hope or idea that Governor Ray would use her reserve emergency fund and powers to continue it, but it took her about six months to deliberate and study the issue and then she disbanded the commission.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She wouldn't help us do that and she wouldn't help us with the comparable worth. Nothing, nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was over. It was gone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And no one touched it. No one touched it until about two years ago when Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles sponsored another bill, but I wouldn't even go on it. We are getting slowly there, but I guess you can't mandate anything. I think women are doing enough for themselves and there are enough women's groups out there.

I got kind of embittered, because after all my work on behalf of women, after the Women's Political Caucus was formed, they didn't even endorse me. Yes! Oversight! I was so busy doing my thing, but I was never out there getting press headlines. I was just doing it. The very first time out, they didn't endorse me and then didn't even invite me when they were giving Pat Thibaudeau an award; they didn't even invite me to the meeting. I raised hell and they finally did, but I didn't go. It was here in Tacoma. I'll never forget that. That was fairly recently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is too bad.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't know. I never joined the Women's Political Caucus. I was doing my thing without being a member of the group and I can't see any point in joining.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, you had been a member of the Women's Commission for a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Under two Governors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did it just feel like ashes in your mouth when this was finally all over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I always thought about other things by that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it is such an effort to manage all of this, to have it go down the drain.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tell me about it! Yes, I know. If I had let that discourage me, I would have – it was sort of ho-hum. I had reached a point then by thinking: no brains, no headache. You know, you work your heart out for something – and I had worked my heart out for the Women's Commission and I wanted it to succeed. We knew the problems and the people – the proof is always in the details, but people won't listen long enough to hear the details. Consequently, you sort of go hoarse talking and it doesn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had accomplished a lot, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had accomplished a lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you feel maybe, that it was okay to let it go a bit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I haven't even sponsored anything for women. Jeanne Kohl-Welles is always sponsoring things and she was always coming over and saying, "You should get on this." Well, I have never done it in the obvious ways. I have done it, maybe in back-ass-ward ways or advocating positions, because it was right, just doing – talking about things and not being obvious about it. She had all these resolutions about women's athletics, etc. And I don't believe in taking up floor time for resolutions unless there is some spare time available. When you are busy in the last days of session, you don't want to bother with those.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, are you sort of a less ideological feminist?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. I am a practical feminist. And if I can get what I want and get it done, why talk about it or why malingering? Why keep reminding people? I think they get tired of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you see that as a sort of a "victim's school of social change?" I mean, how other people would speak of women? There are a couple of different ways that people talk about this. Some people speak to women's strengths and they want to bolster that and other people

speaking to the weaknesses in the culture for women, and for the minorities – more of the ‘down trodden’ school of thought. Where would you place yourself with these approaches?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You speak of their strengths and then add to the strengths. And not even give a thought to the weaknesses. You don’t promote women by talking about their weaknesses. You promote them by telling them what their strengths are, what they can do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you more comfortable with taking the position along the lines of just demonstrating that women could do it? I mean, there you were yourself. A kind of pioneer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You did it. You figure that women can do all the same things that men can do, except things that require brute strength. You know, we can think as well as men; we can do the things that men do. We might not be able to – although women are doing boxing and wrestling now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I was just casting my mind over women weight lifters.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Weight lifters. Yes, some weight lifting is good, I guess. Good for your body. I have never looked at us as a weaker sex. Let’s put it that way. That we have our strengths, just as men have their strengths and their weaknesses, just as we have our weaknesses. And – it is often – that we don’t have the strength that men do, because we are not as big. So, whatever. I never thought about how I looked at things. I have never given it a thought. I just know there are things that need to be accomplished and there are often things that just pop out, not because I have thought about them a lot; they just appear. I guess it is being sensitive to your environment and sensitive to things around you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many women looked to you for leadership. And you were identified as a person who would be sensitive to women’s issues and would take action.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But, I lead by leading, not by telling or talking about it. I guess that is what I

am trying to say – that you need to lead by doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have that profile. Certainly, many people, when they recount some of your career achievements, a lot of them were in the areas of helping women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, and I purposely set out to do that. It was my goal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You gave a lot of speeches that include information about women’s breakthroughs, women’s achievements.

**Sen. Wojahn:** True. I remember the early days of the women in the House and Senate; it was just incredible to think of the things that happened to women. Maude Sweetman, who wanted to be a member of the Rules Committee, you have heard about her?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, but do you want to tell that story? It is not well known.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She suffered from fights along the way, although the men were always very polite to her face. She was a senior member of the House and was entitled to a seat on Rules. Everything was done by seniority at that time – she had enough seniority to be appointed to the Rules Committee. It was almost automatic. She approached the leadership and asked to be on Rules and they said, “You don’t want to be on Rules, sweetie. We smoke cigars, and spit in the spittoons and cuss and you don’t want to be on the Rules Committee. It is just not a nice place for a lady.” She persisted that she did want to be on Rules; she insisted on being on the Rules Committee, so they reduced the number by one member, so she couldn’t be on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there was no opening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** So, there was no opening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she ever get on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think so. And then they gave her a committee called Drainage, Dikes and Ditches, as I remember, and made her committee chairman, but didn’t send her any bills. So, she suffered indignities that were beyond belief. And Reba Hurn was one of the early women elected to the State Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the twenties, wasn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the twenties. I think she was an attorney, if I am not mistaken. And this is well before my time, but I read the history of Reba Hurn.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, she would be someone who, even if it was so difficult, she was there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was there and she understood the laws, because, I am sure that she was an attorney, if I am correct. And probably was at least as smart, or smarter than, the men. But, it must have been just awful. Because in my time, it was awful. The men were just polite and kind, but "just don't get into my territory." And everything was their territory. There was nothing sacred.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were telling me that the passage of the ERA opened the door to a lot of other legislation. It sounded like a floodgate of legislation. Let's talk about some bills that you worked on in this area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, potential legislation. One of which was the extension of credit to women in their own right. I was chairing the Commerce Committee – a large committee. I think there were about nineteen members of the committee and John O'Brien, who was a CPA and was on the committee, congratulated the women who testified for the bill. A lot of them were women CPAs and the women who dealt with the auditing of issues, on their perspective on the bill. He said it was one of the finest bills he had ever voted for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain what the credit situation for women was before this legislation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Women could not get credit on their own right. If they were married, they had to give their husband's name also. It was very difficult for even a professional woman to get it. An example of that was my hair dresser who wanted to have a sign painted on her door because she moved into a new shop. She was having a sign painter do it and he wanted to authorize a contract so he gave it to her and she signed her name. He said, "I have to have your

husband's signature." And she said, "My husband has nothing to do with my hair salon. I have three salons and my husband hasn't anything to do with them." And he wouldn't do the job until her husband signed, so she fired him and called someone else and they did it. Because, by that time, the law extending credit to women in their own right had passed. They had the right to open charge accounts in their own name, which was not possible prior to the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you were a single woman, could you get credit? Was it just a problem for married women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was possible. If you were married, you couldn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn't have to have your father, or somebody else sign for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. No. Even so, it wasn't recognized. The old boys were still in power. A man could tie up the marital estate, also, without telling his wife. In other words, between that and the community property law, we changed a lot of things. A married man owned all the personal property of a woman acquired after they were married.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds like something out of the nineteenth century.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anything that was purchased after you married, your husband had the rights to. In other words, anything. He could commit the property to a large expenditure without his wife even knowing it. He could buy property; although that was limited as far as real property was concerned. But, as far as a car or a boat or any large expenditure, he could buy it on his own without his wife's signature. He could commit the marital estate, in which the wife also became indebted. If there was a divorce, she incurred half of that debt, also. So, it became a real practical thing to let married women know of any large expenditure, because under the terms of community laws in the state, she became a creditor, also. That was the reason the Legislature passed the marriage and divorce act – the marriage portion of it – in order to assure

that there was a contract there. Because marriage is a contract.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For full disclosure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. So we required disclosure of any prior divorce that had occurred on either side. And we required that they have a period for review before granting a marriage license. Each side was required to read over the disclosure on the marriage license – so they knew if either had been married before – it disclosed details of any divorce, or if the husband or wife was committed to maintaining child support, so there were no secrets in a marriage. Of course, the marriage section got pulled off the bill. But, that is all part of the whole thing that women endured in this state, with no rights on their own. Even your clothing which was purchased after you were married. Anything that you owned prior to marriage could be separated from the contract, but it needed to be noted at the time of the marriage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And who would think to do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, of course. It got bitter in the divorce, however.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the Equal Credit Act, was that difficult to get through? Did people understand the issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was so well done in committee with the women testifying, that it immediately went to Rules, got pulled out of Rules, and there was no argument on the floor of the House, because John O'Brien explained it. Because of the Equal Rights Amendment, it went flying through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how about the Senate? Did it fly through the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Fine, no problem. It was a bill that was greased. Because of the Equal Rights Amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though several prominent senators, of course, voted against that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And the community property laws were changed, also as

I mentioned, the portion about real property. That had to have a co-signature of both husband and wife.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that all happened in the mid-seventies?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there other issues along those lines that were left dangling that you didn't get to?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The section on education we covered before, in which the public schools had to spend as much money on education – as far as athletics were concerned, as far as curriculum was concerned – on girls. A lot of the school books had to be redone after that time because they were showing the boys as the stronger of the two sexes, that sort of thing. Showing women looking on while the men did the experiments in the physics or chemistry lab. And so that all got changed. It was an overwhelming change in the state of Washington, an economic change both for women and business. The ripple effects were tremendous. Anybody who was an observer of ripple effects on laws would observe that – I observed that. And it was incredible the things that occurred after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, in this case, it was a good ripple?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A good ripple, but fought – very hard – by the old boys who were still in control, especially in the State Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the community property laws, did those sail through as easily as the credit laws?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had a little more difficulty, because attorneys – and we had a lot of attorneys in both the House and Senate at that time – tended to question everything that was done. They would question whether to leave a comma in or to take a comma out. They questioned an "a" or a "the," and it became real burdensome, but it did pass that session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was a matter of persistence, in that case?



**Sen. Wojahn:** Persistence. Yes. And I was always there, even though “Women and Credit” was not my bill, because I was chairing a committee. I was doing the “Sex and Education” issue at the same time and other relevant bills dealing with equal rights and I chose not to do that, but we had real good sponsorship. Of course, every woman, everybody on the committee was supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is arranging the proper sponsorship as important as doing it yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Rule of thumb: two of the majority and one of the minority. Only three members. It is better to have three members. And I use to rely on the Rules Committee member to be the minority member. Some people go in – novices in the Legislature in lobbying – who sometimes don’t learn the rules of form and they don’t know what to do. They get someone who is on the Agriculture Committee, for instance, to sponsor a bill going into Judiciary. You know, they don’t think and that is especially true of citizen lobbyists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you want to be effective, you have to know the structure and how it works and know how to fit yourself to it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you don’t, you are going to fail unless someone helps you out. I was helped out early on by introducing myself to the Code Reviser who helped me immensely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Once you figure out how it works, you start placing yourself in the right positions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is like the computer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, those were far-reaching bills.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You are right, very far reaching.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You talked, also, a little bit about – maybe not so far reaching, but important to those people – about bills for barbers and cosmetologists.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was another item which, at the time under the laws of the state of Washington, a barber could cut a man’s hair and a woman’s hair, but a woman cosmetologist

could not cut a man’s hair. It was against the law. Sometimes, it was happening, but it was against the law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would even think to bar women from cutting men’s hair?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know. And women cosmetologists had a lot more education. A woman cosmetologist had many more hours of training than a man barber had to have and yet that rule was there. And that is one thing we caught with the Equal Rights Amendment and that got changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, that would change their business immensely.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, it did. Women’s economics increased greatly after that, after the Equal Rights Amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. The limits were off.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The things that followed were incredible. The things people didn’t even think about, that were not obvious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t think people would even realize that there had been such a rule. Everybody is cutting everybody’s hair nowadays.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. We’ve changed the laws on cosmetology and barbering, but not as strikingly as what passing the Equal Rights Amendment accomplished.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It makes you realize how intrusive government can be on occasion, that right down to who cuts hair is built into the legal code.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an infringement on our rights. The women didn’t think to even rise up against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these things are tiny, I mean, for the general population to even have heard about.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that would be obvious only to a cosmetologist.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. It would be hard to picket, for instance, hard to get a mass

movement going on the right to cut hair. But first, you get the big philosophical piece and then all the applications followed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The applications are vast. I can't think of anything more, off-hand, which occurred as a result, except for us changing all those codes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was a case of going through all the codes, combing through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where it said "he."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the gender issues? Sounds like a massive undertaking.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Gender issues: changing the gender or making them gender neutral.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, I guess you would have to do public education to let people know that the assumptions they had were no longer so? That women were now free to cut men's hair, for instance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was about the time that a lot of us started doing that. I started doing a book to consumers that I did about every three years for about fifteen years, where they would get a new book where we enunciated the things that would be subject to change where it affected women, or where it affected senior citizens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it would be something you would give out to your constituents?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was done for senior citizens, but basically it could be used by anyone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds useful. So, it would be just alerting people about various services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we would alert them to new legislation that affected them when we did the laws on the property tax exemptions. That was the first book I think I did, but we did a lot of other things at the same time. We told them where in the district the Meals-on-Wheels were or how to get Meals-on-Wheels, where the luncheon meals were served to the senior citizens. This program came about with the Senior Citizen's Act. I am getting into another

subject, but we also did that, other than areas where their rights could be abused. It was just a general information booklet. It wasn't being done at all in Tacoma. Now, a lot of people are doing it. A lot of businesses are doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is an important service.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But, it was a real service. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It helps empower people by giving them just the information they need. All in one place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Someone told me, some of the seniors said, "I was sitting home alone and lonesome and this helped." It was really wonderful. It was done as a service to seniors; it was very expansive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you come to think of doing this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** People would call all the time wanting information. Sometimes, they just needed help, but sometimes information, and then after, we did the senior citizen property tax exemption booklet and the open-meal places. I was a participant in the President's conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, where we covered all kinds of health issues. And one of the things that I discovered there was that Florida had established these luncheon programs for seniors, especially low-income seniors or any senior who couldn't prepare her own meals. They had Meals-on-Wheels. So, I came back to this state and went to the schools to try and establish one. We decided at the overall White House meeting that there was an elementary school in almost every district within walking distance. So, I approached the Tacoma school system to help me with the statistics, and the statistician for the district, at that time, Alex Sergienko – who later became the Superintendent of Tacoma Schools – developed the statistics for me, which I took to the Legislature. I didn't get the bill, but two years later, Al Bauer got the bill. It was my bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You planted the seed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, planted the seed, got the ball rolling and from that came this idea for a booklet to give to the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I imagine that after you get the tenth call to explain something, you start to think about writing it down. “There has to be an easier way.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. People needed to help themselves, but they didn’t know how. And so, this was one way and I think the first one had important telephone numbers – like emergency numbers. Right after that, then came 911. So, all of these came about after the little booklet was done for the residents of the Twenty-Seventh Legislative District. We tried to find all of the senior citizens in the district by checking constituents who had been voting for a number of years, and who would be over sixty years old. So that is how we tracked them. Also, anyone could have a free copy who wrote and asked for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a great service. Very helpful. On a more personal front, I understand that just the year before you went to the Senate, was the first time that they created a women’s lounge for women senators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn’t have one before. Senator Ruthe Ridder was here and what she did was go into the men’s lounge to use the rest room and I guess she really disrupted the place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a little write-up about how she posted a guard at the door anytime that she wanted to use the rest room and I imagine that would be difficult for everyone!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Startling! And traumatic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Startling or disruptive. Well, the poor woman. You members have such long hours.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was no place. She had to go outside and find a public john. Or she used to come over the House women’s quite often. But, if you are in hurry, that wouldn’t work very well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you are trying to be a senator. You have to be on the floor when you are voting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. So, just about 1975, they carved out a little space for a women’s lounge and there was quite a write-up about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was one john and it was a tiny, tiny room, probably as big as two small closets.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, it was all painted gold or something. It was supposed to be very nice.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was nice, except that it was so tiny. You couldn’t get more than five people in there; they would be crowding each other and they only had one john in a separate room and that didn’t always work, I want you to know. They had problems with the plumbing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They called that the “Petticoat Session.” There were four women senators then, which to some was such an “overwhelming number” of women. That is not that long ago. I don’t think anyone would dream of saying such things anymore. So, there is some measurement of change there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. Well, it is just like the comment that was made, when I was still lobbying, prior to becoming a member, when Senator Rasmussen wanted to pay jurors more money and had a bill in to do that. This is an actual story that happened. He was expounding about the merits of the bill on the floor of the Senate and it made Senator Woodall angry. Senator Woodall was Republican, very conservative, from Yakima, and Senator Rasmussen was sort of a liberal from Tacoma, sitting in the back of the room. Senator Woodall, with more seniority, was sitting in front of the room and he stood up and he always put his microphone in his pocket, so he could wave his arms when he talked. He was an orator, he thought. He got up and poked his microphone into his vest pocket and launched off into a long dissertation about, “The people in Yakima couldn’t afford to pay jurors any more. That it was a small county with limited resources,” and he said, “And besides, most of the jurors in Yakima County are women and they are not doing anything anyway.” Those are his exact words!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was he supported in this assertion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The bill didn't pass. Senator Rasmussen got up – he was sitting in the back of the room, and he always stood with his hands straight to the side and he had this innocent look on his face – he had kind of a round face anyway – and with this innocent look on his face he said, “I think Senator Woodall just impugned my motives, but I don't know how.” That was real funny, but the bill didn't pass. It got sent back to Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear. Well, some things have changed, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, this is true but they have changed gradually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is a process of education and assimilation, you might say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Osmosis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When I was reading that about the “Petticoat session,” I wondered when that type of language finally went away?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember it being called that. It could have been several papers. It probably would have made us angry. I remember when I was still in the House being interviewed by the TV people, Lois North and I, about women in the Legislature and they asked the question, “Do you think there will ever be a time when women will out-number men?” And we both said, “No.” The Democratic Caucus in the Senate now has more women than men. I think I said, “I hope so, but I don't anticipate it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The pace of change is really hard to guess. Yet, it must have looked impossible from that point to imagine...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Women did a very good job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you did your homework. You had to be better than the men, from what some people say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I credit the women, the early women, for doing that, because if all of us hadn't done well, we wouldn't see the influx of women now. Even

with the Equal Rights Amendment. We opened the doors for women. And we didn't slander the men. Although they believed that we did. But, it took women who are more sensitive to family issues to bring out the fact that fetal alcohol destroys children. You know, if you drink, you shouldn't have babies. That is one thing that I worked at and brought up. Very definitely, that you can't drink if you are pregnant. So, those are the same areas that the men needed to concentrate on, the areas that women were different and needed to be protected against – some of them against themselves, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In that case, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But, they didn't think about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think people really knew about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. They didn't quit smoking either when they found out it was harmful and that second-hand smoke was as bad as actually smoking itself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were unproven ideas at one time, of course, so it is just a matter of asking the question. I don't know if people had seen the pattern before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And getting the research done to prove the fact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think fetal alcohol syndrome is a fairly recent idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bad news, definitely. Yes, it emerged in the eighties, I think. The part that was so criminal or cruel about the whole thing was that people were adopting these fetal alcohol babies and that they were not told of the problem that they would be facing in later years. And even when adoption agencies did know about the problems adoptive parents faced, they still didn't tell them. I am told that doctors could tell by the set of their eyes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. I believe their faces are configured a little bit differently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Their eyes are closer set. They could usually tell. And they found out that a fetal alcohol baby was never right and that they

were amoral. They had no sense of right or wrong and then when they became teen-agers terrible things began to happen. We have friends who adopted a fetal alcohol baby. The child is now in her early twenties. They have to take her with them everywhere. She is a danger to herself and to others. And yet, we let them adopt; the only thing that the state did was to authorize and pay health care insurance for adoptees, but that didn't begin to take care of the problems. Imagine, raising a child and loving it and finding out that the child couldn't be taught right from wrong!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was nothing that you were doing. That it wasn't bad parenting; it was just inborn.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. And that is a fact. When we discovered it, I think we came down hard, but the practice was there and DSHS was guilty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I suppose they really didn't know about it either.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they had a hard time but couldn't disprove it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you do with those children? I don't know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Institutionalize them. The foster parents won't take them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They don't have the resources.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would like to shoot a pregnant woman who I see in a bar drinking! It is just awful! The Legislature finally demanded that the Liquor Control Board put warning notices in bars and anywhere that intoxicants are sold stating that pregnant women should not drink.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is such a tough – and tragic issue. Looking at another difficult fight, I wanted to ask you about a measure you introduced in 1977, the first of your Displaced Homemaker legislation. It didn't pass. You had two different bills that were priority requests from the Women's Council, which was still in existence then: Senate Bill 2770 to establish a pilot project for the Multiple Purpose Service Centers. And then another bill, Senate Bill 2846,

to provide for training, counseling and services for women in transition.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We merged those two.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, in the following session, you did. With these bills, which didn't pass, you were out there introducing the idea and presumably holding hearings and beginning to educate people on this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Displaced Homemaker concept was a new idea, as well. I think in one of your speeches, you note that a woman, Tish Summers was the originator of that idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, in California.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She put a name on something that, of course, had been around for a long time, but until there is a label, people have trouble understanding the situation and identifying this as an issue. Had you heard her speak or did you read about her?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I read about her. It came to our attention in the Women's Council, I think. And she got legislation established, I think, in California. And as a result of that, we decided that it was a great idea, because women often needed help. One of the people who came to us and testified about her need was a lady living on Mercer Island, who was well educated, had a baccalaureate degree, and was married but hadn't worked since she married. Her husband was transferred to Washington, D.C. He worked for a major corporation and then their son had been accepted at Harvard University. So, both her husband and her son left to go east, her son to school and her husband to take the new job, and she was left at home to sell the furniture and their home on Mercer Island. She did that. She got everything packed and finally sold the house and was ready to move back to D.C. when she got a call from her husband, telling her not to bother to come, because he wanted a divorce. This actually happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then there she was with nothing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was stuck. She said she became a basket case. For one year, she was just wandering from nothing to nothing and just couldn't get her feet back on the ground. Then, because of the Equal Rights Amendment, there was a women's program started at Bellevue Community College. She had gone to that and then they adopted the term of Displaced Homemaker, also from Tish Summers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She really was displaced. She had no home.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She had no home and she was displaced. And when we finally passed the bill, she came back and testified that she was now a graphic designer for the Boeing Company. She could do it. She found out that she had skills that she was not aware of and she was very successful. And that was a great example. What we envisioned was to establish programs throughout the state – actually centers – with as much money as we could get and ask women professionals to volunteer their time to help these women. That was key. The centers would set up the programs, but we needed women accountants, attorneys, physicians and para-professionals, and cosmetologists to come in and help the women, to figure out what to do with the rest of their lives. All women volunteers. And, eventually, it did happen, after much planning and many discouraging events. In 1979, a bill finally passed establishing a Displaced Homemaker program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't want to leap ahead too much, but I just want to mention that you did this, because that gets wrapped up in some other things. But I just wanted to say what really struck me is the comprehensiveness of your thinking. It wasn't just job training, but the whole person that you looked at.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you are right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You said in several speeches, I think you called it, a "clustering of crises." I thought that was a very apt phrase, because it is not that these women don't know how to do anything. It was like that woman, who had the bottom drop out of her life.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We proved that a woman that had handled a house full of children could do almost anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you can get a child into Harvard, you probably have a few things going for you!

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can do just about anything. You bet. And that was the whole thing, that women had skills. They were marketable skills, but they never bothered to market them before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they hadn't packaged them that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It is a very narrow group, too. Their youngest child had to be within a year of majority. They had to have been married for at least ten years. We were trying to reach out to women in the mid-years who had been in the home all of their married lives raising their children and who all of a sudden were left without financial support, either through death or divorce. They couldn't be on public assistance. At that time, no person could get public assistance if they were able – capable and able-bodied – to work. They could only get public assistance if they were developmentally disabled. We were targeting women, who because of their age, were not eligible to receive Social Security.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, these women would fall through that crack?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could eventually get Social Security but they would fall through the crack, because they weren't eligible yet and they had lost their main source of income through no fault of their own and needed to develop and market their skills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is an instance where a helping hand gets someone back on their feet and they become a productive citizen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I've always believed that you help those to help themselves. You don't just give them handouts. It is different and you don't do that unless it is necessary. But, this actually was the source of support for the woman, a source of self esteem, an economic stabilizer for the woman and also it was great for the

economy, because we – very shortly after that – we had jobs going wanting. And so, it was sort of like it was planned that we needed to do this in order to provide workers for the jobs that were out there. As it occurred, they had to advertise the programs through the news media and it got to the point where employers were calling and asking for a displaced homemaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Great!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because they were steady employees who arrived on time and were happy to have a job; they didn't call in sick.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were mature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ready to work. And it was a great source for the job market. And it is still working. I don't know how much participation they are getting from professional women; there are two centers existing in the state to begin with. One on the east side and one on the west side. I refused to go on the selection committee to decide where the programs were to be located. I felt selection should be handled by unbiased committee members on a competitive basis. We purposely kept it small. The coordinating committee on Secondary Education was the sponsoring group. They wanted to move it either into SPI, or under the Employment Security, or DSHS, and I said, "No."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not DSHS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never. None of those. It would lose its focus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have a different message altogether.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a different message and it would be lost. Pretty soon, it would be eliminated through the budget process. And so we have kept it small and kept it within the Council on Post Secondary Education. They always tried to bounce it out. And we fought and even up until three years ago, we were fighting to keep it there. It has become a part of that group now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read that they formed, about that time, a national network for people working with displaced homemakers. Did Washington State join this national group, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I think it sort of lost out. They had gotten money through some of the educational support groups, like the Apprenticeship Council here got money that they gave to the Displaced Homemaker program. It had to be on a pass-through basis. I don't remember what federal program that was which passed money through and it was used for vocational training. There was a state vocational group. That has been eliminated and they were able to pass some of that money through for displaced homemakers. It is still a small program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some opposition to it. I was wondering if the same people were against this as were against the Women's Commission?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not so much, but they still didn't think there was any need for Displaced Homemakers. And that was the reason I had trouble getting the money for it. I kept hounding the Ways and Means Chair, who was Hubert Donohue, and he would never put the money in the budget. The bill had the money in it when it came over to the Senate. It had gone into Ways and Means and he came to me and said, "Why don't we just put money in the budget for the Displaced Homemaker," but he said, "It is not going to be very much." And he said, "I'll just give it to Tacoma Community College if it is alright with you." And I said, "No, I can't do that. I would break faith with every woman in the state of Washington if I did that." It was three hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars, was all it was, I think. But, I think we indicated that only twenty percent of that, or fifteen, could be used for administration. It was very limited. The rest had to go into the programs. Several days later he wrote me a long note on the floor of the Senate – a little poem – and he said, "There is a time to fish and a time to cut bait. You win. You get the Council on your terms." And he put the money in the budget for the

overall program. The Program was to go into the Council of Post Secondary Education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It surprises me that people who were promoting a traditional lifestyle for women were not for helping these women who are living a traditional lifestyle... when they are deserted; you would think that they would be championing them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Women are getting hurt. I don't think traditional legislators – usually male – ever supported anything like this. It bothers me to see that, because negative legislators are still out there and they still believe they are right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It almost seemed like they blamed the women for losing their husbands.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they haven't been consistent. Most people who are opposed to abortion also support capital punishment. I don't think I ever tried talking to any of the women. I remember one woman who was married to a doctor here in Tacoma and she was also a doctor, but she had never practiced. She was a wife and she was a mother and she never practiced medicine. I think I talked to her about this and she just looked at me blank. You know, they don't understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, you introduced the idea, but it doesn't work out that year, but we will still be following this issue. There was another big development in 1977: the passage of the Juvenile Justice Act. That seemed to preoccupy members and require a lot of energy. You were on the Judiciary Committee, so I was wondering what involvement, if any, you had in that passing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was involved with the task force made up of about five people from the Judicial Council and we struggled with that for about two years, trying to come up with something, because the courts had spoken. Juvenile justice was different than adult justice. You couldn't penalize a juvenile for doing something that was not a crime under state law for an adult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like they were including runaway children and all kinds of kids who were not necessarily criminals.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Often, they were running away from bad situations in the home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure, abused children, really.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Abused children and you couldn't throw them in jail for that. You had to treat them differently. And we got all hung up on the difference about at what age a child could make a decision. Was it twelve years old; was it fourteen years old; was it sixteen years old? We couldn't and we finally disbanded the committee. We couldn't come up with anything. It just didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If it is any consolation, they still seem to be struggling with it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We struggled and I think that the first proposals were better than what we finally adopted which didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed to go on and on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then, one of the things that was done: if a child was put in a foster home, we were going to make the parents of that child pay the cost of care. That is what became law. That they had to pay for the care of that child in the foster home. Well, if there was a bad situation in the beginning and the child ran away, how could you force the parents to pay? I remember who amended the bill with that. I thought it was dreadful. It has never worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Following the discussion in the Journal, there was amendment after amendment. Members were just piling them on. There was just every contingency; it was enormously complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, as short a time as two years ago, they tried to ladle it on the schools. If the school district had so many truant children, they could be fined. It passed. I don't know whatever became of it. I got away from that. I couldn't take it anymore, because we weren't getting anywhere. No one could come up with a solution. Every time a person came up with a



solution that seemed to be appropriate, it got knocked out and it couldn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read that these issues had not been really looked at since 1913. Then not again until 1977, well...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that is when the court said, "You have to do something." Massachusetts has had great success. But, Massachusetts spends a lot of money doing it. You can't do it on a dime and the people here are too cheap. They won't do it. They have had great success in Massachusetts and their Juvenile Justice System is working.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like you can't wait until kids are teenagers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you've got troubled families, you have got to come in there a lot earlier than that, because it is way too late by the time someone is sixteen if something should have been done when they were four.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to listen to children, too. And we are not; the kids are still on the street.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More and more of them, it seems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we are not finding it out and we don't spend enough money. We need to support those children and it costs money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems to be tied up with domestic violence issues, and substance abuse, all these intractable social problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It all evolves around the same things. And it all revolves around the almighty dollar.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you certainly worked at it. It takes up a huge amount of time. A lot of people weighed in on it. Not to say that they didn't exactly improve it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, these might be examples of those tragic issues that you can't just legislate

out of existence. You can only try and make it a bit better.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You are right. You do it through the social sciences and provide the input for the children to be taken care somehow, someday. But, it costs money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There doesn't seem to be a social consensus on how to treat these kids, so I wonder how legislators would figure out what to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There is no consensus on spanking children even. It still bows with the right wingers. "Beat the child and beat the devil out of him." And, I don't know, I don't know. Social science is not an exact science. But, it could be more exacting than it is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anyway, there was this struggle and it does pass, but immediately it is seen as flawed. And according to some people – we will get into this in a minute – this was something that immediately legislators wanted to come back the following year and have a special session in 1978 and work at it again. But, of course, that didn't happen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't even meet in '78.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, as it turned out. Before we get into the '78 discussion, there was one activity I wanted to ask you about. You mentioned in a speech given either in 1977 or '76 that you were on a select committee on Economic Development. And you went around the state and met with different groups and different communities and talked about the creation of jobs and community development. I'd like to learn more about this activity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. One of the things we did was the Sunset bill. It came out of that. Another one was the Foreign Trade Zone, which we could establish in a port district, whereby there would be no B&O tax charged on those items such as cars or other big-ticket items while they were in transit. And we got that bill. It had to be authorized by the federal government, but we had to do the leg work for it. That was another economic development issue. Another one was we added another person to the Port

Commission here in Tacoma. We only had three, but it didn't work; we needed additional heads. We added two more members. What were some of the other economic development issues? That was a real study and we really worked that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there something about better freeway connections? You mentioned something about the need for downtown hotels in Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that was Tacoma. We finally got some. And convention centers. We were able to give tax exemptions or a portion of the sales tax could be used for convention centers. Also, since then, we have done some things which authorized a removal of the property tax on the buildings above the property to be remodeled. That is later, though, maintaining the overall property tax on the property itself, the real property. We separated the two. Also, we couldn't get tax increment financing, which is unconstitutional. We would have had to do a constitutional change, because it is a method which amounts to a lending of the state's credit, which we can't constitutionally do. So, we got around that by calling it "economic development" or historic preservation, which let us get around some of these taxing problems where we could not use the state's credit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that like an enterprise zone situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think it is the same principle. I don't know anything about enterprise zones, but by calling it economic development, we could get around a constitutional amendment and by authorizing certain old buildings as having historic tax credits, we could sell those tax credits on a public building to private industry for money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it would help subsidize them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We have done that; an economic development package came out of that. For instance, the Sprague Building in Tacoma, we were able to sell two million dollars worth of

tax credits to Pierce County Medical Bureau, so that the money from Pierce County Medical could be used by the Sprague Building for construction.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For restoration?

**Sen. Wojahn:** For gutting the inside of the building, but maintaining the exterior. Anything for economic development we could get around the Constitution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because everything has to be taxed equally, otherwise, right? So this was a way of kind of excusing some of the taxes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it is the loaning of the credit by the state. That is what it is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me more about this committee, who was on it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was started by Bill Wilkinson; he was one of the principals. He is an attorney in Tacoma, but the committee was established, as I remember, by the House of Representatives Commerce Committee to study economic development and to develop a method to use tax credits to enhance areas of the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you work all over the state?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we held meetings all over the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This must have been a tremendous learning experience!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was really good. Then, I went to the Senate the next year. Frank Warnke had become chair of the Commerce Committee after me and he was the one establishing an Economic Development Committee. And he got some outside appointees to it. It was a limited statutory committee. And all the members of Commerce were on the committee, but also we had an outside executive officer. And then we invited developers and entrepreneurs to talk to us about what we could do, and from that, came these bills. And I carried that; I carried the sunset bill into the Senate and also, the definition of economic development, which we got, and also, the Foreign Trade Zone, which we got.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were active with this committee in the spring and summer of 1976, just before you came to the Senate in '77?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was done during the interim period. And from the Foreign Trade Zone, they could set aside a lot of port and industrial land that they did not have to pay B&O tax on while the large-ticket items, including cars, were parked there. They could be parked there almost indefinitely. And as they were sold off, if they were going to other states, then a B&O tax could not be assessed on them. As I remember, the land under the port was also property-tax free.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a tremendous boon to a port?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I am sure that was the way it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have particular ideas for Tacoma in mind when you were doing this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, always Tacoma, because Tacoma was probably the most depressed area in the state. Very depressed. Well, some of the rural areas were much worse, because there were no jobs. But for an industrial city, a blue collar city, where we depend upon industry jobs, we needed more. And we needed to enlarge our port, which we were ultimately able to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like this is just before Tacoma starts to turn around. There are some really hard issues. So, you were able to play a role in pulling your city out of the doldrums?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I kept shifting my attention. First, it was the consumer; then it was women's issues and then it was economic development, so I have not concentrated on any one area, I guess. I am an idea person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But this is your community you are helping here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. It needed help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it that kind of thinking or was it some kind of dissatisfaction with the Senate that led you to run for the Tacoma Mayor's position then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of it was because of that, because of the lack of economic development. Because of the fact that we had a group of people in Tacoma – land owners – who controlled everything. There was Burlington Northern and there was Rhodes Investment Company.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it about this time that Weyerhaeuser left Tacoma and went to Federal Way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was shortly after that. They left Tacoma, and in leaving us, left with their tax base. And we almost lost the Frank Russell Company, but they decided to stay here and build a building, because they were going to move. But, we caught them and were able to hold them here. We established an economic development agency, which was another thing we did in the Legislature: we authorized the establishment of the economic development agencies within the cities and counties. And so that is where we begin to pull things together. It was during that time that we established the Economic Development Agency in Pierce County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, to return to the question, at what point did you decide to run for the Mayor of Tacoma? Fortunately, you didn't have to run for re-election for the Senate just then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there wasn't anybody who wanted to run. There were a couple of people who decided, but the powers-that-be were not happy with the candidates who came forward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Mayor Gordon Johnson seemed like a decent mayor. But I understand he was ineligible to run again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A very good man. He was a very good mayor. He was after Rasmussen, where everything fell apart. And he put it back together again. In the meantime, I was working in the Legislature attempting to establish Tacoma economically. And Gordon couldn't run again. I was approached and asked to run. I said, "No," and I kept saying, "No." And finally, I agreed, but my heart was not in it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your campaign seems – excuse the word – a little erratic from what I could follow. I couldn't tell what you envisioned. It gained steam, but your first speeches were – I couldn't quite tell what you were doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I didn't know what I was doing, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your message got stronger as you went along. It seemed like you figured out what you were doing as you went along.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We found out that a Canadian firm wanted to buy land in the city of Tacoma to put up a major hotel and they were discouraged from doing it. And then the Winthrop Hotel, which was a very nice hotel, was sold to the Western International chain. And according to what I was told, they wanted to put in a drive-through lobby and redo the hotel, and the city – or the powers-that-be – would not permit this to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you say the powers-that-be, who would that be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were several investment companies, who represented families who owned a lot of the land. Old money. Either they couldn't get their fee or they didn't choose to – didn't want to change that much. So, the Winthrop Hotel was sold to the Morcks in Aberdeen, who bought it and then it went bankrupt. And then it became an old folk's home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they just complacent? They didn't like change or what? Were they out of touch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I don't know whether they couldn't get enough money for it or whether they didn't wish to give up the property. These are things I didn't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tacoma in pioneer days had once been very dynamic and very competitive and then it seems to lose energy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was controlled by the lumber people at that time. They didn't want competition for their lumber people, for their

loggers. They would have to pay them more money. So, they controlled the early part of Tacoma and did not permit a lot of diversification to come into Tacoma. That is the reason it went to Seattle. And Seattle became huge because of that. There was the Ford plant that came into Seattle – a Ford assembly plant. Things were not permitted in Tacoma while the lumber interests kept their workers doing “dirt work.” They were blue collar workers, because then there would be no competition for the jobs. And so that is the history of Tacoma; what I have read tells me this. It doesn't say so in black and white, but it is there. And it wasn't permitted to grow. The last big growth here was the Northern Pacific Railroad. A certain few people seemed to own Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it is almost strangling itself in a way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you feel that you had what it took to change this situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt that I had some experience, being a legislator, but I didn't feel comfortable running. I never was comfortable running for Mayor of Tacoma. I knew what I wanted to do, that I wanted to organize a group of people who were movers and shakers to start some reformation going on here, but I didn't know how to do it. You know, it is part of a learning process and, as I got deeper into it, I was learning more of what I wanted to do, but I didn't start running until July. It was about a month before filing, so I hadn't really firmed up anything. I just knew that a lot of people didn't want either candidate, but that was no reason to run for Mayor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Mike Parker and Phil Schroeder had filed at that point. And there were some, what I suppose, are called “minor candidates.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they were the two big ones. Mike Parker had been a legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been a representative and then he tried to run for Congress, but didn't make it. So, you kept noting that “he just

wanted an office of some kind” and that he would use this as a stepping stone. You did articulate several issues. One of your concerns was the crime rate and how people were fearful in their homes and on the street. And how you wanted to change how the police interacted with the public.



*Campaign poster for Mayor of Tacoma*

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. I wanted them to be out in the streets with more patrolling and I wanted them to hire stenographic and secretarial help, so they didn’t have to spend their work hours writing reports. They could dictate into a machine and have it done. So, I wanted to change the method by which that was done in order to get more patrolmen on the streets. And I wanted some neighborhood police officers rather than just driving around in cars. We needed more police officers in the neighborhoods.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Tacoma in a bad way just then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was getting bad. It was the beginning of the drug problem. The drugs had hit the high schools and the prosecuting attorneys had told us in Judiciary Committee

that it was getting down into the junior highs and pretty soon it would be at the elementary level. It was becoming a real threat. And we knew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, with drug use, usually comes a lot of burglary and other crime, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** From that to support of the habit. That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You talked a lot about neighborhoods in your campaign.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted to re-establish the neighborhoods. To provide police support in the neighborhoods, to provide economic development in the neighborhoods. We had rudimentary neighborhoods, but some of them were floundering. Some of them didn’t have a decent grocery store. We needed to develop that and that was my prime goal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the role of the Tacoma Mall in Tacoma development a continuing issue? Some people were saying, “This is great,” and other people were saying, “It is killing downtown; it is killing all the small stores.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did. With that radius clause. That is the flaw and it is permitted to go on and I don’t know why. That was the thing that had me in an outrage and I couldn’t get anywhere. So, basically, the people who were supporting me also supported the Mall idea. It was a very mixed up thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was pulling the center of gravity outside the city into the freeway corridor area. Did people in the seventies have enough experience with malls by then to see how destructive they were to downtowns? Now you can get a fair amount of literature about big box stores and what happens to everybody else when they come into town, but I don’t know if there was any discussion yet about the impact of mall development.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had heard about the radius clause that was going in. That people were beginning to lose stores downtown. And it was through a business person that I found out. I

don't know how I found that out, but I did find that out and I thought that was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of the issues that came up in this campaign, we will pick up later in your work as a legislator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It came through what I observed. During the time I was running for Mayor, there had been a market survey done and according to the market survey, we did not have enough retail stores in Tacoma. People were going to Seattle to shop. And so, it didn't make sense to me that if we didn't have enough retail stores in Tacoma, that there should be a radius clause at the Mall, which would deny downtown a chance to stay in business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Destroying more retail.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. These are conflicting things that I actually didn't reason out. I am not a great thinker. I just get ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe, you have a lot of "ah-ha" experiences where you make that intuitive leap there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is intuition, yes. But, that is one of the things I didn't like about it and I lost the race. I barely lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. As the campaign got rolling, one of the other issues was the relationship of city administrators to the Council and Mayor. You seemed to think that they were running on their own and that the Council and Mayor just rubber-stamped whatever they did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did not know. What I felt was that they did not have resources and back-up staff. And that they needed that like we have in Olympia, in the Legislature, because that many people could not have that many ideas. They needed research to help develop their ideas. Otherwise, things would be developed helter-skelter. There would be no planning and, that therefore, they needed staff. And the administrators were telling them what to do when they shouldn't be, because policy was supposed to be left up to the Mayor and City Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was just shortly after the time the Legislature began to get staff, so you were coming from the experience of not having had it and then having it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Knowing that you have to have back-up. And realizing the City of Tacoma did not. It was a new Mayor/Council form which had been established, maybe ten years before. They often didn't have any reason for doing the things they did, except from the seat of their pants – shooting from the seat of their pants – and they needed that in order to justify the things that they needed to do, in order to do a tax structure which would be beneficial. Because, you have to have taxes; you can't go without money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, yes. What is curious is that you were, about then, in a fight in the Legislature with the Executive Branch over fairly similar issues where the executive branch got more information and was keeping things to themselves.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right, so we couldn't make decisions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just the same frustrations, the same issues happening on a different level.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A different level, so we did something about it. We just got rid of the Legislative Council and established a strong committee structure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it is very curious that these things are coming out on the city level, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They all came together at once. And slowly began to take shape. Those are the good things that Leonard Sawyer did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. I was curious about your campaign for Mayor. Was that the same people who had helped you on your other campaigns? Or was it a different group of people; did you call on a different group of friends?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was somewhat different. It was the same ones, but it was expanded vastly, because I had just been elected to the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to get beyond just your district. The Mayor's race would be citywide, so you would have to go beyond your normal borders. Did it cost you the same kind of money? I mean, comparing a Mayor's race with a Senate race?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a lot more expensive, but I didn't generate the money. I had a good finance committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The role of the Municipal League was interesting. Seattle has one too; they rate the candidates, but I have never been able to find out who they are. Who made up the League in Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hardly anyone got a good rating from them. And practically the only woman in the whole race that got a good rating lost drastically. I thought that was kind of interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't know what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They seemed to be out of touch, at least for that race. But, as it appeared to me, you really did get into it and campaigned pretty hard. You doorbelled a great deal, by the sounds of it. Was this a recess of the Senate while you were doing this or how did you fit this into your life? I was wondering how you would carry such a load.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't during the Senate. It was in-between sessions. We didn't have all of the standing committees or the continuing committees that we have now. And so it wasn't too bad. But a lot of people – you know, when I was door belling, especially in my district – people would say, "We would rather you stay where you are." They were all saying that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, they might have supported you, but they didn't want you to be Mayor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That is absolutely right. I had that said to me so many times, even by the people doorbelling for me. They would come back and say, "Well, they really want you to stay where you are." Good will.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Mike Parker wanted a World's Fair; he wanted all kinds of things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Dog racing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dog racing? He wasn't able to bring any of those in, was he?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, he did win, for whatever reason. He edged you out by only a little.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not much. He had the developers on his side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got through the primary and he was a little ahead of you there, but not by very much. Then it looks like you fought hard right down the line and then he pulled ahead and he won. But, you say you were relieved, so maybe the Senate was the place for you after all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My heart wasn't in it. I guess if I had really wanted to win that race, I might have. I don't know. My heart was not in it at any time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was one newspaper article that said. "Tacoma will either have the youngest Mayor ever or a woman Mayor. Which is it going to be?" And as it turned out it wasn't you. How did you feel afterwards? Were you exhausted?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was relieved, just relieved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You gave it a good try.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was exhausted. But I was younger. I had a lot of energy then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were, I think, fifty-seven. You were in your prime. So then it was over. Did you just kind of take a turn and go back to the Senate and you were back in your accustomed place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it wasn't hard to go back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. No, it was easy. I was glad to be back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you got a break because there was no special session in '78. Even though

the legislators badly wanted a session, Governor Ray declined to call one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We went to California right after that, to Coronado and I called and found that there was not going to be a session and so we stayed longer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You maybe wanted the holiday, but as a legislator, how did it feel to not be called? I mean there were issues out there, and people were pretty upset with Governor Ray, that she did that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I was shocked. We wanted to go to San Carlos Bay, which is in Mexico, but we didn't know if we could or not, because I would need to get back at least before Christmas to get organized. And it appeared we weren't going...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She kind of dragged it out, though. I mean, she didn't exactly come right out and say she wasn't going to call a session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She drug it out, but the word that I was getting, it was very unlikely that there would be a special session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was almost unheard of. I don't think that there had been a year skipped for a great long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** From the time I was first elected there were special sessions. None before that. And in the year 1969, I think they started to meet...there had been a special session every time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was her justification?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can't remember. I didn't have any committee responsibilities; I wasn't a chair because I was on Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But her not calling the session set up a sort of chain reaction, where legislators said, "The Executive has too much power. Not only does she not call us, but she's got way too much information; she's running these agencies; we don't know what's going on..."

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't! But that caused us to advocate for annual sessions. And permit ourselves to call ourselves into session.





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## CHAPTER 11: HELPING WOMEN HELP THEMSELVES, 1979

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You came back in 1979 for the regular session, the Forty-sixth Session. Gordon Walgren was your Majority Leader in the Senate as the Democrats were in the majority. For the first time in your experience, Augie Mardesich was not in the Senate. He had lost his seat to Larry Vognild. Did that change the relationships in the Senate? He had been such a powerhouse.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. Larry had a hard time at first, because a lot of us were in strong support of Augie, and we weren't so sure about him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you participate in any of the ethics discussions that shadowed Senator Mardesich's leave-taking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I wasn't involved in any of that. I was not on the committee and I never was involved in that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think that Senator Mardesich was wrongly accused?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Augie, yes, I did. The Governor continued doing the same thing, you know. That's when we decided our places were bugged. Augie ran things, but then that's the way the old boys' club did it; they ran things and they did them according to the way they wanted it. But, I always found if I had a good idea, or a bill that I figured needed passing, I could go to Augie and he would help. And he always did; he helped me with the bacon bill. He helped me with the odometer turn-back bill, which was my first bill, and he was always good. The bacon bill wasn't in his committee, but the odometer bill was – and he had sat on it and I went over and asked for the bill and he got it out. So, he'd been fair with me and as far as I knew, with my colleagues, also. If they had something they really wanted and could give a good reason that it should pass, he would listen and he wasn't argumentative. So I couldn't figure out why the fire fighters were so angry with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The pension bill, I understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The pension bill, yes. I didn't go along with him on the pension thing. I thought it was wrong and I had really gotten it stalled for one whole year. It would have passed the year before if some of us hadn't worked really hard to stop it and so they were angry with him over that but not with me. But I was on his side and I'm sure they knew it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What does it feel like when a towering personality like that leaves? Does it take awhile to fill that space?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Ted Bottiger was already there and I had worked with him in the House and I knew he was very, very fair and he'd been a good friend of Augie's, so it worked out. There was good leadership. Gordon also was very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Minority Leader for the Republicans then was Jim Matson and later we'll talk about what happened to him. But it was also a very interesting year in the House, because there was a tie – an even split between the parties in the House, with co-Speakers for the first time: John Bagnariol and Duane Berentson.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were good friends. And so were Leonard Sawyer and Duane Berentson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the split in the House have any impact on the Senate? Did things get more complicated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it didn't because things moved fairly smoothly. Either side gave votes, as we always used to do. We rarely stopped a bill from passing like they do now. We saw that they passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other thing that was interesting, before we get into the legislation of this session, was that in California, Proposition 13 passed. Did that have a somewhat chilling effect on legislators in Washington?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were very aware of it and we were determined to not let anything like that happen here if we could possibly stop it. You

have to remember that we had a much more people-oriented Legislature than we have now and that we rarely stopped bills – any bill that was needed for the benefit of the state, we didn't stop it. If we needed a tax, we – either side – gave the votes that were needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But with this tax revolt in the wings, did it get a bit more conservative?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. I know that in the House, we resolved the problem. Minnesota had the same problem of a split House and six weeks after they were in session, they had not gotten organized yet. They finally called the Chief Clerk in the House here, and asked what had been done and the Chief Clerk said, "We simply went to two Speakers and two of everything," including committee chairs and I believe Minnesota adopted our procedures. Our Speakers were friendly, of course; one would bring a bill up and the other would put it back in Rules and they played games, but they were friendly games. It wasn't like it is now. Eventually a compromise was worked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The articles that I read about it, there was skirmishing but there wasn't the rancor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was, no, nothing big. They decided they would cooperate, barely, but they would cooperate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They would have to keep their balance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So that didn't affect us at all. We didn't worry about their killing our bills because they didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let's see then, that year you brought in the annual session bill: Joint Resolution 110, to amend the Constitution. Was that a great hit; did everyone get behind that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A constitutional change, yes. As I remember, we didn't have any trouble getting the votes. I don't remember any discussion particularly about it, just discussion that it needed to be done, that we needed to be able to call ourselves back into session, with a two-thirds vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to sail through. So, for the record, can you say what this provision called for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Odd-year sessions had been sixty days and we changed that to one hundred and five days, and then even-years would be sixty days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you could still have special sessions that were thirty days long?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Thirty days, yes, limited to thirty days and the Governor could call us or we could call ourselves in with a two-thirds vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that might have been about it. You supported it, but it wasn't unanimous. The people who did not support it, what were their concerns?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would imagine they would have been more conservative and didn't like special sessions anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they think it was not necessary to have that much government?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what they thought. They weren't very vocal, I know that. Because, if they had been, I would have remembered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a big reform that went through. It came into effect the following year.

Let's look at your committee assignments next: you were the vice chair of Commerce that year with Van Hollebeke as the chair. You were on Parks and Recreation, which I don't think you had ever been before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't want to be on it, but they said they needed me on the committee. And I had fun.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You get to do some interesting things in Parks and Recreation. And you were on Rules. You were also on Ways and Means. That was a pretty big committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted on Ways and Means and Rules and I had to take the other one just to appease, because I was on four committees that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot. You also served – and I wasn't clear if this was an interim committee – on the State Employees Insurance Board. What kind of duties would that be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we actually wrote the rules and policies for the State Employees Insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this something new?

**Sen. Wojahn:** New to me, but it had been going on for some time. It was not a standing legislative committee but they always had a legislative member. It was a good committee organized to handle functions related to health insurance for state employees and we did a great job, I thought. I think that we did a better job for state employees than we are doing right now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Health insurance for employees is a very contentious area these days because it is so expensive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but we got it. That became one of state employees' fringe benefits. They preferred that to a wage increase. You see, we had never met the mandates of the fair wage – ever. From the first year I was in the Legislature, in 1969, we were really paying according to what we believed was appropriate and then we had a committee and every year we got farther and farther apart and we still are very far apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bringing in health benefits was really valuable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very valuable. Yes, especially in view of what has been happening since then. And so we got good benefits for the members, because there were so many state employees who we could demand and get, and if there was money left over, we got it back at the end of the year.

So that we paid so much for every member and if we didn't use that up, then we got it back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, being a large group of people, you can always negotiate for better rates.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We negotiated for very good benefits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you stayed on the Judicial Council. Were you on that your entire career?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I went off the committee, I think the next year. I think that Representative Art Wang, whenever he was elected, was on it and I stayed on it a year after him in order to be sure that Tacoma was represented.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems to be a springboard for a lot of interesting legislation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were also on the Select Joint Committee for the Washington Sunset Act. Is that when you started to formulate the sunset laws?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is when I did the sunset bill. My bill didn't pass. The Senate adopted everything on my bill and gave it to Senator Wilson. All these bills were drafted during the Economic Development Summit of which I was a member. I had sponsored it as a House member and then when I was elected to the Senate, Representative George Walk sponsored it in the House, and I had it in the Senate. They were companion bills. Senator Wilson, a senior member of the Senate, had sponsored a similar bill. So the committee hung my bill on Senator Wilson's bill. The House bill passed and the Governor vetoed it, because she wanted input on it. She wanted a member of her staff to be on the Sunset Committee. So when she vetoed the House bill we corrected the Senate bill to cover her objections and then the Senate bill passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Wayne Ehlers and George Walk and a couple people in the House seemed to be the ones who were pushing it through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they were. Their bill passed and that was okay. I wasn't going to get it anyway. It didn't matter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it got done. But, this is the year you bring back the Displaced Homemaker's Bill. You got Senate Bill 2406 for the pilot program and this was when you are able to keep it with the Council on Post Secondary Education.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is the year it passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As we discussed, you were able to get pretty much everything that you wanted. Except, as you described the budget appropriation, it had to be put in as a line item in the budget. The appropriation was not with the bill. You had to let go of that piece.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They got the appropriation, though.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. That was the year that Senator Donohue added it as a line item as a promise to you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He put it in. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You worked with Senators Ridder, Rasmussen, Gould, Day, Lee, North and McDermott.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a real good line-up. McDermott told me that was one of the best bills he had ever seen. He liked it. Senator Rasmussen liked it because it helped women. See, he was kind of a right winger at that time, but he liked the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were reaching quite a spectrum of support. And then, the women members supported it: Sue Gould, Eleanor Lee and Lois North.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted women on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some amendments, but really, it went through pretty well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the amendments were good. They didn't hurt the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You seemed to be all right with that. There was a little skirmish with Senator Benitz, who wanted it to go to the Commission on Vocational Education. But you got up and spoke to that issue and held firm.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I felt that it wasn't purely vocational, because we were working for the professions, too. It was a friendly opposition. It wasn't crippling but I didn't think it was the appropriate agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The one thing that the press, when they talked about it, worried was that it was "a bill that everyone loved," but that it might not go through because there were so many other issues taking attention. That it might get lost. It was reported that you got right up to the cut-off date. Was there a lot of concern?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. Every bill I ever sponsored was one of the last bills to pass. It always happened! The reason for the late passing was because Donohue hadn't made up his mind. And the budget bill is the last bill to pass. He finally agreed and it went through. If there was no money, it would have been a no-law law because with no money, it couldn't function.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, useless. So, it did pass, forty-eight yeas and no nays. Which can't happen too often, I wouldn't think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Incredible!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently a lot of women lobbyists were really watching this bill and holding their breath. Did groups come and help you lobby for this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was just at the hearings that we got a lot of support. Nobody ever talked to me about it, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were keen on it, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They liked it and we knew that they endorsed it, but there wasn't a lot of over-the-counter talk on it. It was just there and they liked it. They were always at the meetings and hearings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. It seems like you had a lot of moral support.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One of the good things that happened was that we had been calling this "the Displaced Homemaker," but it was Rollie Schmitten that put the final touch on it. He gave it a title: it shall be called the "Displaced Homemaker Bill of 1979" or something like that. He did that in the House and so everybody liked it and I think because everybody liked Rollie, so it was fine. I remember it, because they came over to tell me that there was an

amendment hung and I got upset and they said, “It is a good amendment.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A bill that many of the same women supporters seemed to have been watching, the Domestic Violence Bill, did not pass that year, but yours did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Domestic Violence didn’t get passed, but Phil Talmadge did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Later?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. One of the things I was going to tell you with the Displaced Homemaker’s Bill, I had worked the interim and during the whole session with that bill using my aide who now works for the News Tribune. He worked that bill solidly. He was so good and I will never forget. His name is Robert McBerney. Robert McBerney helped so much on that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is always nice to give credit. Another bill for women that you worked on that year and that passed was dubbed the “Ella Mae Morris Bill.” Senate Bill 2378. Was she a constituent of yours?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the pension bill. Yes, she was constituent of mine. She was married to a police officer, who was very cruel to her. She didn’t have running water in her kitchen, because the sink was bad and she had to wash dishes and get her water out of the bathtub. And it was just awful. He had sued for divorce and he was trying to cut her out of any pension rights that he had and that was about all the money she had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In a way, she was another displaced homemaker.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was a displaced homemaker, absolutely. She was the typical displaced homemaker because she had never worked outside of the home and had no obvious work skills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she come to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She came to me with her story which was just pitiful, but the completion of the story came several years later, I found out. She didn’t tell me this, that he was buying all of

these building materials to fix up the house, but she never saw any of them. He was harassing her besides. She found out later why he wasn’t home a lot of the time – she found out that he was gay. He was living with another man. Believe it or not! I was horrified. And he was remodeling the home that they had together and using all these materials he was buying for remodeling this other house.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And leaving her with nothing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing. They had a couple of daughters who she has not seen at all. They aren’t friendly with her. He was giving them drugs when they had menstrual periods and got them on drugs. It is so bad. It is as bad as it gets. But, anyway, we got her share. Her husband was on the LEOFF pension system, which is a very good pension system, and she had gotten a judgment in the divorce which granted her fifty percent of his pension, but he wouldn’t pay it. And she had no money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The judge ruled that she should get it and the pension went to him and then he wouldn’t pay it to her?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was to get fifty percent of his pension, but the way the pension system was set up, he got the whole pension, but he wouldn’t give her any and the judge couldn’t do anything about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It gets pretty convoluted, doesn’t it? So, what did your bill do to address this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** What the bill said was, “If, in a divorce settlement, the judge rules that fifty percent of the pension shall go to the spouse, then the law of the state of Washington shall be the same and this pension shall be divided at the source – at the pension system.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And not at the husband’s discretion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And not at the goodness of the husband. And she only wanted it for the LEOFF system, but I said, “No, we have to do it for all the state pensions,” because it wouldn’t be fair unless all state pensions were uniform. So we changed all the pensions in the state – the state

pension systems – in which the pension system itself divides the check. We did that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this take very long?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember if it was a year or two. It was hard. Oh, God, it was hard. And I couldn't get it through the head of the Ways and Means Chair and some of the members that the spouse had to have already retired and had signed for spousal support upon retirement. But I had a good friend in the labor movement who worked here as the lobbyist for the state employees; he was head of the state employees for years – Norm Schut. He was a Republican, incidentally. He thought it was a great bill and so he helped me with it. And we finally got through Senator Rasmussen's brain what it did and then the Senator finally removed his opposition to the bill and voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any sense – that it was just not for this one woman – but how many people would be affected?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I knew it would affect a lot of people, but they would have to go back to the divorce settlement and if the judge indicated the pension shall be split, it could be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any research on just how many people this would be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Congresswoman Pat Schroeder from Colorado had gotten a similar bill through Congress for the Armed Services retirees. You have to be retired in order for this to happen. And I had met with her during the time I was working on this bill and I told her I was trying to get a similar bill for state employees. We corresponded with each other. And I don't know if she ever got it for the other federal employees. The Actuary who was with the state at that time helped a lot. We had just hired an Actuary – the year before, I think. And he thought it was a great bill. The pension system was in agreement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it is the same amount of money. It is just divided differently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Once a person retires, it is firm. Several legislators have tried to change the terms of the bill since then but

they have never been able to do it and I hope to God they never do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it help to pass legislation like this to have a story to grab people's imagination and “put a face on it?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** It always does and I usually have a story because most of my legislation was sponsored because someone had come to me with a problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, then, you take that story and you say, “This is one person, but all kinds of people have this problem?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** And would be affected. Incidentally, I want to say the Bar Association loved this bill. They came in behind it. They loved it. It helped attorneys.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, why was it so hard to pass if so many people liked the concept?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It takes people to understand it. It is just a matter of understanding. And I don't always explain things very well. It's complicated, I guess. I try, but, unless you touch every single note, they miss the whole score. It affects every pension system in the state of Washington, all the public pensions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is big. In the press accounts, they mentioned several times that there was a group of women lobbyists who are very supportive and helpful. One of the people they mention is Pat Thibaudeau. Is this where your friendship with her began?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, it began long back when I was lobbying. She started lobbying when I was leaving to run for the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she had been there a long time. How did she help you on this bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was there. It was a tough bill to get. It was hard to get the legislators to understand what we were talking about. I had gone to the fellow that we had hired to oversee the Office of the Actuary. Jerry Allard was on the overall Actuary staff for both Senate and House. He also was involved with pensions. I had gone to him with Ella Mae's problem to learn how we could arrange it, because her

husband had retired and indicated that she was to get the money but it was up to him to give it her because the pension system did not split the pension. I said to him that it seemed foolish to attempt to do it just for Ella Mae, that we really needed to do it for all state employees who were faced with the same dilemma, where it was left up to the retired husbands, who divorced their wives after retirement. She would have to try to garnish his pension, which I don't believe it possible. We discussed it and decided it should be available on all state pensions, so that is what we targeted. It was hard to make legislators understand that the pension had already been granted. They had given their wives a percentage of their income but now they were refusing to pay. So we had to find a way to split the pension at the source. At that time we were in the process of merging the pension systems anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So these women lobbyists, how did they help you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They helped to explain it to the members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ask them to, or did they just come forward?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think I went to them and asked for help. I also went to the person lobbying for the State Bar Association, who is a former senator from Snohomish County. He's a former chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the Senate and then he became a lobbyist for the Bar Association. I went to him and asked him and he was delighted to help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be former Senator Bill Gissberg?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, Gissberg. Also Norm Schut, the head of the State Employees Union. He said yes. And then I was challenged by the fire fighters. They argued that it was retroactive. I just said, "Don't get in my way; this bill is fair and it has to go," and they didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was an issue of justice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is, absolutely! So it was a tough bill. It was tough to persuade people like Senator Rasmussen; he couldn't quite

understand what I was trying to do. Finally Norm Schut – he was a great admirer of Norm Schut – appeared in the Ways and Means Committee and explained it very simply to him: "They have already mandated that a part of the pension should go to their wife after they are retired. They get a divorce, and then it is left up to the husband to pay it, but he doesn't pay it and so we are asking that all pension systems be adjusted so that the wife gets her share if a court order states that she should have it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there is some recourse.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. So any woman who was suffering could come in and get her pension adjusted; it was the matter of getting the word out also. So the word had to go out. I had lots of help when they all fully understood what I was getting at. I'm still trying and fighting it because some legislators want to change it. If the fellow remarries after he's retired – if he has signed his pension to his first wife, and then he divorces and wants to remarry – they want to amend the legislation and I said, "No way."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, for most of these men, I imagine that's the wife who has seen them through all their working years. That's a partnership.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right! That's a partnership. Some of them have been married for thirty years. But Pat Schroeder, who was in the U.S. Congress at that time, had gotten a similar law through for military and armed services retirees, but not for the bulk of the civil servants. So I met with her in D.C. and I explained our bill to her and she was going to attempt to get that for civil servants also. She was very impressed with it. I believe it appeared in the national press because of her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, good for Ella Mae for coming forward.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She came forward and she had been abused – she was an abused wife. She kept getting these bills for building materials but none of them ever came to her house. She never saw anything happen. It was very bad. And she was so angry that she came to me and said,



“What can I do?” I said, “I don’t know, but I’ll find out.” And we did. It was one of the biggest bills that has ever passed the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She now has her name on something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We called it that, the “Ella Mae Morris bill.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least something good came of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got into a tangle later on with a member of the House of Representatives, Lorraine Hine, the caucus chairwoman from Federal Way. Later, she was an aide to Governor Lowry. She tried to change it. We got into a knock-down, drag-out with her. But we managed to make it stick. Senator Rasmussen was solidly on my side at that time and we made it stick.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when he got it, he really got it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He got it and he was thorough. When Norm Schut explained it to him – because Norm Schut was in labor, and the very people that Rasmussen listened to were the labor people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you arranged to have the right person?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you arranged to have the right person – you learn that – you learn who is beholden or on the side of, let’s say...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or speaks the same language?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or speaks the same language. He’s a labor man and I finally convinced him and we had one set of obstacles removed. He was a very, very serious helper.

And it worked, just like the Displaced Homemaker bill. Jim McDermott, who is a psychiatrist, said that one of the best bills he had ever seen was the Displaced Homemaker bill because of what it did for women who had lost their husbands through divorce. They were too young for Social Security and able to work but hadn’t held a job. At that time no one could get

welfare if they were able-bodied and able to work, unless they were disabled or mentally ill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems like one of those instances where government gives a hand-up rather than a hand-out. Help them through that transition.

**Sen. Wojahn:** This is an enabling thing for women who are caught in this Catch 22. I think that was always my philosophy when I went to the Legislature, that I was willing to help people to help themselves. But not to give a hand-out, but to help them to help themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that bill certainly does.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It does. And so we made some social changes there that were serious and that helped women to help themselves. To start thinking and doing. And it’s still working well. We put a target date for sun-setting it out, but it’s still helping people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People are still in that situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There are still women out there and the best part of that bill, I am told, is that a lot of employers have come back and asked for displaced homemakers because they have proven to be very reliable. They came to work on time, they didn’t call in sick, they were willing to learn and so we had a great experience with that bill. It was a very warm experience. We made them tax-payers instead of tax-eaters and it all happened because of that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like everybody got something from that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So I guess that my experience in the Legislature was one to create social change to help people to help themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s worth doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it is. I really never concentrated on one issue. I tackled anything that I found out from constituents that needed tackling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you had that kind of open door that people can come to you with

their problems, then you are going to get those disparate things, because who can ever guess all these issues that are out there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The first several years I was there I would get calls from all over the state, and the conversation would begin with: “I should have called my own representative but I called you because you are a woman and I thought you would understand,” or they would say, “I called you because I hated to bother him.” They would say that! And those are the famous words that were said to me as a freshman and sophomore legislator, at which time I began to understand that the “old boys” in the Legislature were still alive and well and were still kicking and creating obstacles. Some of them were not even aware they were creating them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, everybody gets stuck in their groove, and they don’t know; it’s comfortable and they don’t notice.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right: “Don’t bother me with the facts; let me just keep doing what I’m doing.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that caught my eye about the 1979 Session was a bill that you co-sponsored with Senators Fleming, McDermott, and Talmadge, that there should be a holiday on January 15 for Martin Luther King’s birthday called the “Human Relations Day.” I had never heard it called that before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s never been called that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it didn’t quite come about that way, did it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** After it got taken out of the bill, but maybe it was just called that in the press, I don’t know, but it was a great bill and we finally made it stick and now it’s gone nationwide, except in Arizona who was still fighting it last time I heard. I don’t think they’ve even established the day yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Washington quite ahead with this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believe it was. We were also one of the first states, too, to grant eighteen-year olds the right to vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What interested me was there is this quite involved conversation in the Journal about it and several senators were worried that somehow this would mess up the school year and no matter how many times you all would stand up and say, “No, no, no, just tack a day on later, it’s all exactly the same. There is no budget impact whatsoever,” they never seemed to be able to hear that. It seemed obtuse. Why would they do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, talk about racism; it’s still there and well. Living and well. That is the way that you kill bills, by putting obstacles in the way. They didn’t want the bill. That is the way you try to stop a bill. Anything goes when you are trying to kill a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you did finally get it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, we were well aware; we also had to keep answering the questions and answering them and answering them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was the same one, over and over.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that was George Fleming’s bill. But, you see I had a large ethnic population in my district with blacks and orientals. I had probably one of the largest ethnic districts in the state except for the three sections in Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he come to you or would you have signed on in some other way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he came to me with the idea. He also came to me with the idea for the establishment of a program for homeless and hungry people. We still have that. We established a slot in the Department of Commerce and Economic Development which was local government for that and that’s still in existence. That was a great bill. You see, everything got stalled because we didn’t have a session in 1978. I was elected to the Senate in 1977 and there was no session in 1978. So everything got crowded into 1979. That was a big year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The bill goes back and forth a bit. It fails and then it's brought up again on reconsideration and it does pass; it was interesting to see that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Often too, on a reconsideration, because I was the last one to vote, I would have to vote with the majority, "no" and then change my vote and ask for reconsideration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are the end of the alphabet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If nobody else does it, you have to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You picked up the issue again the following year. In the 1980 session – again, with even more members, but still with Senator Fleming – you co-sponsored Senate Resolution 159 to have a moment of silence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But he was really a great senator, a good senator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But going backwards on human rights, during that session three legislators filed a lawsuit to try to revoke the state's ratification of the ERA: Kent Pullen, Dick Bond and Claude Oliver.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. It didn't go anywhere. Well, they tried. Several states were trying to do it, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this some kind of backlash?

**Sen. Wojahn:** These are the very, very conservative members. Dick Bond was the most conservative, along with Kent Pullen and they were really deadly and dead serious. And they were always trying to do this – also figure out the abortion issue, always. Did the abortion issue come up at that time, too?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Either that or the next year, I can't remember, but they had hundreds of women demonstrating to rescind the ratification – that image surprised me.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had been so successful in getting the repeal of the Women's Commission because we passed it in the Legislature, finally after years of trying to get it and we finally got

it and then the Kent Pullens of this world got a referendum against it and it went down the tube because Governor Ray would not help us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like certain issues never go away or get completely solved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the abortion issue is never going to go away, either. And the human rights never go away. There are those people who still think you have the right to abuse Jews and Catholics and blacks, you know. It will always be a vulnerable issue where there is a legislative body.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you think of the notion that they do represent a certain part of the population, so there is legitimacy to the position? They feel duty-bound to represent that point of view.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that may be true, but they are definitely in the minority. The happiest day in a lot of our lives was when Pullen left the Legislature and was elected to the King County Council. He was very bright, very bright. And he always had reasonable reasons, very logical – and very wrong, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly keeps things hopping. The big issues of 1979 were all woven in with the split in the House, the forty-nine/forty-nine tie, which worked its way through various issues, one of them being the budget negotiations. Finally, Speaker Berentson gave that extra vote to get it out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In some news articles, it was intimated that the Senate Republican Leader, Jim Matson, told Berentson to go ahead, please, and give that extra vote because it was going to go through one way or the other and there was no use dragging it out. There were some consequences for that action...

**Sen. Wojahn:** For Jim Matson, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The budget eventually went through, but Governor Ray seemed to have almost dropped out of the picture. All the press about the budget focused strictly on the legislative branch and she didn't seem to be

saying much of anything. Doesn't a Governor usually have a higher profile during budget negotiations? I wondered if Governor Ray was running out of steam about then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know if she was running out of steam or whether she was either not doing anything or doing things that the press didn't publish.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was rather hard to tell. At any rate, she just doesn't seem to be a part of this process, even though she wanted to fully fund education as mandated by the courts; you legislators have it in place and you are moving towards it, but she wanted to speed that process up. She didn't get that this session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the result of a court decision.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you had a timetable worked out and she wanted to shorten it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing got shortened. We still needed to fund comparable worth and she didn't take that into consideration, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, that seems to have gone out the window.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And she vetoed my bill allowing doctors to get their final and clinical year at the University of Washington, many of whom were going to medical school in Mexico; they couldn't get into the University of Washington med school because there were not enough slots available. They were brilliant kids. She said they weren't bright; she made some statements that were not true. And when she vetoed the bill she said that she didn't want them at the University of Washington because they were not the cream of the crop. All of them were required to take the course of study in Spanish, including their exams. And so, she vetoed that bill. It was very bad. She was not a leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were Democrats at this point just waiting for the end of her administration?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, yes. A lot of us who had been her apologists dropped out and were no longer apologists because nothing was happening. She couldn't make anything stick.

She vetoed the sunset bill for no reason at all until she was challenged enough, then she said it was because she had no part in it, which I don't believe was true, although we did amend the bill to give her what she demanded. She was petulant.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there just a feeling of "Let's ride this out and then somebody else will take over?" People were beginning to jockey for the Governorship and other positions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's when the jockeying began between Ted Bottiger and Jim McDermott for Senate Majority Leader. And they agreed that they would stop beating on each other; it was getting to the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democrats looked like they were in a bit of disarray.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ted Bottiger was not going to run for Governor but Jim McDermott was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the other issues that seem to be woven in there was the poor performance of the Energy Office. This office, I'm guessing, came into being because of the energy crunch of the 1970s: the gas shortage, with the long line-ups? But nobody seemed to think that the office was much of an organization.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Their hands were tied.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Their mission seemed a little muddy. It was difficult to tell exactly what they were supposed to be doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just like the ecology bill. That was another one that was tough to write. A sub-committee would meet every night, rewrite the bill, and come back and it would not be acceptable to the full committee. Finally, they just stripped everything out of the bill and said, "There shall be established a Department of Ecology" and "Do it under the Administrative Procedures Act," to be developed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Short and sweet?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Short and sweet and no direction at all. The same thing should have happened with Energy. That's when Ted Bottiger became

chair of Energy and worked really hard to develop a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are working on it all through these years; I can't tell exactly when the definitive thing happened. People were evidently unhappy with it in 1979. All through these issues there seems to be this undercurrent – or maybe not so 'under' – of gathering material for the election. Members seem to be stepping back and not actually trying to solve problems but just looking for points to use in their campaigns.

**Sen. Wojahn:** For election, for the next campaign.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There seems to be a little more of that than usual for some reason.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, because the Governorship is going to be open and, of course, Ted was – I can see now that he was working to get Gardner elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, for the first time I see Booth Gardner's name being put forward as the potential Governor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right; that is right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been a legislator. Wasn't he Pierce County Executive, at this point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. A lot of us had really turned ourselves inside out to help him to get that job. We worked like slaves. He owed me. Some people don't pay their debts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another issue that may have been fodder for the election was a bill which was trying to get a redistricting commission started to take redistricting out of the Legislature. Redistricting had been the bane of the Legislature since the sixties.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a ruling early in the 1969 session that no bill could be passed until the redistricting bill passed. And so nothing was happening until redistricting was settled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just dead in the water?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Dead in the water; that's right. And that's when I began to think about doing a commission rather than legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you did bring it up. There were something like seven or eight redistricting bills that session. Members were just peppering the works with these redistricting bills.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Was Senator Greive working on that one? He was really the principal senator on that issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actually, he had left the Senate by then. Maybe that was part of the issue. One person who brought a bill forward was Lois North. She had been one of the original League of Women Voters who had worked on the initiative in 1956, and she was still working on redistricting issues in 1979. I don't know how she felt about it, but she was still in there fighting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I worked on the redistricting bill in 1956 too, with the League of Women Voters.

I discovered a good place to get signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unfortunately, it's an issue that comes back to the Legislature with every census, every ten years. You still hadn't solved it. It passed the Senate eventually and was sent to the House where it died in committee, and then the House measure died in the Senate and not much happened. A lot of effort, but no outcome – not yet. So this also went into the election discussion. Everybody was blaming everybody else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Is that when Ruthe Ridder went down the tube because they moved her district? They did the same thing to Bob Charette in the earlier redistricting because he was a hold-over member of the Senate and he came back and ran for the House in his new district because he got redistricted out of his Senate seat. So that happens, and it happened again this time. I know some people, in my opinion, who should be redistricted out who shall remain nameless!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's quite a weapon.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And now that it is done by a commission, do you think that it will be a little better process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't get a touchier subject, I'm sure. So anyway, there was a lot of pressure building for this election. Let's return to something we touched on earlier in our discussion, when Jim Matson persuaded Duane Berentson to cross over and give the deciding vote for the budget. This action is credited with leading to a revolt in the Republican Party against Jim Matson as Minority Leader, right at the end of session. One of the surprises was why did they not wait until session was over? There were still a couple more days to go. This, of course, was not your caucus, so you may have no idea what happened in there, although it impacts everyone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** May 29<sup>th</sup>, the Republicans – I'm not sure exactly how they did it – went into caucus and they deposed their top three leaders: Jim Matson, Charles Newschwander as caucus chair, and their floor leader George Clarke, and they said, "You are out," I guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who did they elect? Did they elect Jeannette Hayner at that time?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that was when Jeannette Hayner came in, but it was a triumvirate. They didn't say which one was going to be the leader at first. They brought in Jeannette Hayner, George Scott and Bob Lewis, but they didn't differentiate at that point who was who, as I understand it, in which position. They just said, "You are out and we're in because we're worried about the next election and we're going to take over. You've been too soft. You've worked with the Democrats too closely; that's it." So, it really blew everything apart.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was the beginning of the end of the ability to negotiate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you comment on the difference between this older approach, Jim Matson's leadership style, and the new leadership style?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was the beginning, I think, of what we're facing today of the lack of cooperation. It was firmed up at this time. It got worse every year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The ousted leader, Jim Matson, was he more the old-style, willing to work with both sides of the aisle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, willing to work with everyone. And we were the ones who passed a lot of bills that he dealt with as far as the Mexican-Americans in Yakima. We helped him with that. Jim Matson needed that bill. I don't remember what it did, I don't remember what it was, but we passed it for him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was he like? Can you give me a little character sketch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was difficult. He had a chip on his shoulder after that to anyone, to everyone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about before this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never knew him very well and I never asked him for anything before that. But I was always willing to help, I remember that. And then he turned on me when he came back the last time and gave the vote to give the optometrists the right to diagnose and treat eye disease for some reason. And I had been a friend of his; I never could figure that out. He was a weird, very different fellow. I think he was the old-boys type.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was very close with Augie Mardesich, apparently. Senator Mardesich mentioned him several times as a person he could work with.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I liked Augie and got along well with him. Augie could work with him. Anyone who was bright could work with Augie. He was tough, but he was friendly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Charles Newschwander; what was he like?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was tough. He's the one who insisted on a community college in his district and refused to sign the Capitol Budget until he got one. That took the land away from the mentally ill and gave it to the community

college: bad, bad! I never forgave him for that. I believe that was wrong. But I was always willing to work with him, especially on dentist bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were you, perhaps, not sorry when those people lost their leadership?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I was sorry about it. We could see the potential for problems in the future, and they've come to pass now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you characterize the new group?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Conservative, business-oriented, unforgiving. Jeannette Hayner, in some ways was very good, but she ruled with an iron hand. That caucus stayed together. Some members voted for legislation they didn't like. And there was no compromise, and that is when we started losing the ability to compromise. The right wingers took over completely in the House and that made it even more difficult for the Democrats to negotiate in the Senate and for the democratic process to work. I always believed that that overthrow was the beginning of the problems for people in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed unprecedented, to do it like that before the end of the session. It was an important year coming up: whoever was in charge of the Legislature would be in charge of redistricting. There were a lot of statements about "whoever wins the next election will set the pace for the next decade."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's terrible that people feel that power to do that. You should never use your power to destroy people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jim Matson left the Senate after that, didn't he?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember whether he lost his next election or whether he didn't run. Eventually Senator Alex Deccio replaced him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Charles Newschwander got a job doing something else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he was appointed to the Tax Appeals Board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just curious, especially with Mr. Newschwander, why they would get rid of him if he was going to be appointed to something else anyway, why not just let that happen rather than take that drastic action?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had gotten angry when Dan Evans was Governor and there was a fall-out at that time. Senator Newschwander never was able to get a strong foothold back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this must have been a big blow-up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It changed the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did the Democrats react when the Republicans came out of their caucus and they'd done this? Did they announce it? Do you remember how you learned about it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The ball was in their court and so there was nothing we could do about it. I remember it happening, but we didn't talk about it. I don't remember ever talking about it much in caucus. It was mentioned, but it didn't impress me, apparently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it catch you by surprise?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember being surprised. It wasn't significant to me and I don't remember any reaction at all. Now, I can react to what I've seen happen as a result of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In retrospect?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I can react to the discipline that occurred in that caucus and every right-wing action that occurred as a result. And if it weren't for a few hardy Republicans, we would have lost the abortion issue. There were still a few good Republican senators who, when the issue became so hot that they wouldn't take it anymore and revolted with their vote. If you work with those members on your committee and help them along, they will be there when the going gets tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a strange session. The Forty-sixth Session began January 8 and went until March 8, 1979 and then you had an extraordinary session that started March 21 until May 12; then it recessed and reconvened, let's see, one, two, three, four, five, six times.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we had to pass a sales tax. We had to impose a sales tax back on food in December of that year because there was no money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were struggling, I guess, with the budget? But this was the last gasp and then you went to annual sessions in 1980.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we recessed because nothing was happening, rather than keeping us all there. Just a small nucleus would stay and work out the problems, which would be the Ways and Means Committee. There was nothing to do in chambers because we had no bills before us and we had to wait until the leadership could come to grips; then we called a committee meeting and signed the bill out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a way for the Legislature to keep control of the process? If you had actually retired, then the Governor would have to call you back, but if you recess and reconvene yourself...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because we could stay in for a month. We could always stay in for a month after the Governor called us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And poke along like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But there was no point in it, because there were people who had jobs and needed to attend to their businesses. But remember that all the time that we were recessed we were getting per diem, unless we refused it. I went off of per diem nearly every one of those times because we weren't doing anything. I think I accepted only enough per diem to pay my share of the Senate cafeteria fee. Finally, I just went off totally because I felt it was bad. My per diem is one of the lowest anyone's ever been.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your final bills?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My final bills were always low. I lived in Olympia during session but moved home during the recess and didn't take per diem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So while this is going on, did you just come home? It does drag on for quite a while.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. Then I went off per diem. Or limited it to pay for the cafeteria, which was still open.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, finally you did end the session in June, but you were back in January 1980, not for a special session for your first annual session. Your new pattern.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were going to do the biennial budget that year and then the supplemental budget in the off-year and correct the budget. But never get into the full budget picture in the off-years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By then the whole idea of a two-year budget, of being able to know two years ahead what was going on, it just didn't seem to work very well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it doesn't with our present tax structure. Because we don't have a stable tax structure – and never will have until we get an income tax. So that was always a struggle. You cannot plan without a stable source of money. And we do not have one. When there is a recession we don't generate enough sales tax. If we didn't have a Business and Occupations tax we would be in worse shape. And yet a B&O tax is unfair because it takes gross income instead of net income. It should be repealed, I believe. The 1982 recession comes to mind when taxes did not meet demands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it gets pretty scary pretty fast.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So, until we restructure our state tax system we are going to have trouble planning adequately. We're never going to have enough money in the recessionary periods.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just when people need more services.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That session seemed to be very colored by "who was running for what." Governor Ray was running again. McDermott, as you said, was running for Governor; Bagnariol was running and Berentson on the Republican side. And Gordon Walgren was thinking of running for Attorney General.



**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The House was still in a tie. So, the press wrote that because everyone was jockeying for these higher positions and because of the tie, nobody was going to do anything very extraordinary in this year. But yet, in 1980 several issues developed. Nursing homes seemed to be a big issue, for instance. The reimbursement issues were tough; that seemed a very touchy thing. What happened with that? Did it just get so bad that finally you had to pay attention to it? What brings something to the top of the heap?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, when it gets so bad that the agency can no longer function, then you have to do something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to be in that state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We wrote the reimbursement schedule for nursing homes, and helped them out in that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a lot of energy issues coming to the fore. Every once in a while there was a mention of WPPSS [Washington Public Power Supply System], but it doesn't seem to be on the front burner yet. The energy office still needed some attention. The issue of nuclear waste was coming forward as well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What are you going to do with it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the question. Where to put it? I think at this point Hanford wasn't going to accept any more.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The federal government was involved at that point, too. They wanted to use Washington as a dumping ground. And we fought that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the first time, the Northern Tier Pipeline is being mentioned. They wanted the power to condemn property?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A corridor for their pipeline.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For their proposed pipeline and the Legislature said, "Wait a minute, you haven't even got permission for this yet," so this was the cart before the horse?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another federal/state issue, they were going to eliminate the federal prison on McNeil Island, so the state was thinking of picking it up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and we needed it. We finally got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes a little while to negotiate that. More federal level issues: there was quite a bit of press nationally about the "Sagebrush Rebellion," but I had not realized that Washington State had a piece of that debate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes, the Council of State Governments in the western division took up the Sagebrush Rebellion, because that's where it was all occurring, all this federal land that the states felt should revert back to the them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a non-partisan issue? How did you feel about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it didn't affect us that much. I remember going to the national conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico and it was a red-hot subject, but we were not that much affected, I don't think, as Wyoming and Montana and some of the less populated states.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly "sagebrush" makes you think of the drier states.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We were more involved with the Indian problem than the Sagebrush Rebellion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be still the Indian fishing rights? Or some other issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Fishing rights and tobacco, the whole thing: tobacco, water rights; yes, they were never totally resolved. The fishing rights, as far as shellfish is concerned, has never been resolved. Never will be, I think. The Boldt decision affected a lot of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as long as there are unhappy people, it should stay alive.

That session you served on four committees: You were the vice-chair of Commerce; you were still on Parks and Recreation; on Rules;

and Ways and Means. Now, those last two are quite powerful committees, so that put you in with the decision makers. Through these years, you were not really in leadership though, were you? You were busy doing other things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you had your finger in there with these two committees. Did that help you keep track of the big picture?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think you always keep track of the big picture. When you are on Rules Committee, you see the big picture and you see the bills coming in and you pick out the ones that are dangerous, in your opinion. When you've lobbied, you have a picture of the way things are and the way they should be but maybe they are not. I didn't believe I was ever clued in even when I was elected to leadership. They never clued me in. They never really gave me much to do when I was secretary or vice-chair, except to run the meetings when the chair was unavailable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The leaders of the Democratic Party at this stage were all men. Did you have any feeling of satisfaction when the Republicans had a woman as leader?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know that I consciously did. I'm sure unconsciously I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jeannette Hayner was the first woman leader of a party, a real breakthrough.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And she controlled them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, she was definitely the leader. She emerged as the leader, because the triumvirate just didn't work out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the others were not strong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they were also were not re-elected when we come right down to it, which was interesting.

You were on several other kinds of committees, actually I think more than the usual number. The State Employees Insurance Board—

**Sen. Wojahn:** Augie Mardesich got me appointed to it; it was very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were still on the Judicial Council, though not that committee, and you were still on the Select Joint Committee on the Sunset Act. Was this the committee that continues to review programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the Select Joint Committee on the Sunset Act was developed by Sharon Case – who was my secretary when I was in the House – she and I were the ones who put it in the Leg. Budget Committee. We were the ones who did it – my bill did it. I'll never forget that. It was our idea that you had to have a committee to review them, because we didn't know what to do with it. It was just a floater; what do you do with it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a bit hard to categorize.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You don't want to establish a new and larger commission or committee, if you already have a vehicle which can handle the task. I remember chatting about it. We thought of the idea simultaneously when we were developing the Sunset bill. And the Leg. Budget Committee was not being used very effectively. So here was a spot and we put it there. It was all turned over to Leg. Budget Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as long as it was happening, that was the main thing? You had another committee that was new to me, the Joint Legislative Timber Taxation Advisory Committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I may have been on it, but I don't remember ever going to a meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed a little outside your area of interest. How much of a commitment are these select committees? The State Employees Insurance Board, was that a bigger one?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that was a big commitment. We met once a month. Our purpose was to provide health insurance for state employees and their families. We fought the issue of midwives. That is a long story! There was only one midwife in the whole state of Washington at the time. I was appointed to the Board. Doctor Adams, my seatmate at that time, sponsored a bill to abolish midwifery. He said, "I don't think it's going anywhere because no one cares." And

so he had this bill to abolish it but it didn't pass. It was one of these no-law laws. At that time no one used midwives and so the statute was never repealed because there just wasn't enough interest in it. And he didn't push it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, soon, weren't midwives beginning to come back, a new generation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not for several years. Later, the issue did come before the State Employees Insurance Board. All the women on the Board – there were just three of us: Leona Kendall – Leona was with Commerce and Economic Development, and Margaret Ouchi was with the State Nurses Association, and me. We decided that we should not promote midwifery; the three of us fought it because we thought it was wrong. At that time there were still only a few midwives, but we didn't think it was a good idea because we'd had children and we knew there could be serious problems. Other board members – all men – wanted to acknowledge midwifery and the women on the board said, "No, we don't want it; we want to abolish it." They wanted to expand midwifery and we didn't. And Margaret and I decided if you were going to have a baby you needed a physician and we didn't think it was appropriate to have a para-professional delivering babies and we fought it. We all voted against it. And we lost, because George Masten – the chair of that committee – said he'd been delivered by a midwife and he thought it was great idea. And so he pushed for it and the three women pushed against it and he won. So we had to establish and enrich the midwifery program. And there have been dangers with it, even so. And when I chaired the committee on Social and Health Services, there were still problems with the program. There were not enough midwives to provide funds for licensing, etc. Eventually the problems were worked out, but not without a lot of thought and work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, midwives are everywhere now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. But they almost disappeared in the state of Washington and if we had repealed the bill, it would have been more

of an effort to get it back but since there was something to hang on to they were able to expand on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are much more regulated now, I believe. They work in hospitals and work with medical teams. It's quite different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and they are not supposed to take any case that is a difficult case. But sometimes they do and it's dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes you can't tell until you're in the thick of it.

You were involved in a slew of things then. You signed onto a bill to establish the office of a mental health ombudsman with Talmadge, Quigg, Moore, Shinpoch and von Reichbauer – an interesting combination...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was really a good combination. That got rewritten by a Supreme Court decision, I think, because mentally ill people had no rights and a family could put a family member in a mental facility, an insane asylum, on their word and there was no recourse. We needed an ombudsman. It got changed by other legislation when legal rights were established for mentally ill persons and there was no longer a need for an ombudsman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you passed it in the Senate and it died in the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But we did it the other way. We got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like an interesting idea. Another one that looked interesting was you wanted to establish a two-year demonstration project on adoptive services for special needs children. That also didn't pass. I was wondering what brought that forward?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We wanted to provide homes for special needs children but needed health services for that child. Families often wanted to adopt children but couldn't afford doctor bills that would incur. We wanted to assure families that they would have a right to health care if they adopted a special needs child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly helps people adopt special needs children if they can get some help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually we got it through the budget some way. It got us started then, and because of that, things began to happen. That's when we found out about fetal alcohol syndrome. We needed to help those families, too. They were devastated. This was an example of the "old boys" syndrome again. They didn't see it. They said, "You are crazy."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** While you were working on this bill, a different drama was taking place. For the Democrats, the big thing, I guess, in 1980 is what came to be called "Gamscam." A lot of people have opinions about this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always supported Gordon Walgren. I still believe that my office was bugged. I chaired the committee which had written the first gambling bill adopted by the state when I was in the House. It was a very strong bill. But the gambling interests kept trying to push for further expansion; Gallagher was a lobbyist for the card rooms and he was trying to push it further. And Bagnariol. Gordon Walgren was not involved at all with this at the time but he was an influential senator and, I believe, had sponsored the constitutional amendment to permit bingo and lotteries. They went to him and tried to get him involved, because they had come to me first and I had refused them. They caught me on the steps as I was going in the Cherberg Building and Gallagher said that they wanted this bill, they wanted me to sponsor it. And I said, "I don't believe in gambling." I don't like card rooms and the committee only allowed them because we allowed them in private clubs and we figured that if we were going to permit them in private clubs we needed to give all people access to them in taverns, but we tightly regulated them. I said, "I'm not interested." And he said, "Well, 'Baggie' wants it." And I said, "I don't care what 'Baggie' wants. I usually don't agree with a lot of things that he wants." And I walked on! And even when he approached me he said, "I've been trying to get through to your office but I can never catch you." I was never in my office. I was located over in the Institutions Building at that time and so I was never in my office. I was either on the Senate floor or in committees and

so they had never been in my office. After that, some things were repeated to me that had happened in my office and I know damn well that my office was bugged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would bug your office? Who would be doing this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Governor. I think she bugged a lot of offices. And I think what happened was whatever you do, when someone comes in and they sit and sit and try to persuade you and you finally say, "It looks like a good idea. I'll look it over and get back to you," finally, to get rid of them. Gordon probably said that. And I truly believe that I would have said that and I would have been the one in Gamscam if it hadn't been Gordon, except he got drawn in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would the Governor allegedly do this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because she knew that 'Baggie' was going to run for Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But why would she do it to a lot of legislators? I mean, why you, for instance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because I was involved with the gambling and all the gambling laws that had passed in the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they came through Commerce?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They came through the Commerce Committee, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was an issue that she felt – or someone felt – gambling was the sort of issue that was messy enough that you could create a scandal with it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, yes. And the card room people were always trying to get more and the Republicans made it an issue, too. They didn't like gambling at all and I didn't either, but after we passed the authorization for bingo, which was a classic form of gambling – because it's primarily a game of chance, there's no skill involved. Gordon Walgren had sponsored the constitutional amendment in the Legislature, as I mentioned before, and then became an

advocate for it and the Republicans fought it. Dan Evans didn't want it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So Gordon Walgren became known as a gambling proponent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, that's right and that's okay. But he was never red-hot like Bagnariol, believe me, because I worked with both of them. And he was never on the Commerce Committee, as I look back, that I knew of. Fact is, the Commerce Committee – there were a lot of committees when Augie Mardesich was there; he had about six different committees under his aegis – one was the Commerce Committee. You know, anything they didn't know what to do with they gave to Augie.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he remarked on that once. He seemed to end up with just about everything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he did. The gamblers were the eastern Washington people. Evans didn't want it and yet Representative Kuehne, who was from Spokane, did – a very conservative guy. The conservatives wanted it: Newhouse wanted it and Kuehne.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a sort of a jobs bill for them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. I don't know why; it's just something in they believed in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody will ever get to the bottom of this, I know, but do you think Governor Ray was involved? How do you think this came about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think she approached the State Patrol. I think our caucus was bugged. I don't know; I can't prove any of it. And Gordon couldn't prove it; but I believe it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the FBI was involved; it was a sting operation. They were approached...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had passed a new bill in Congress in which alcohol/tax people could be used in enforcement also. And also the FBI, but mostly alcohol/tax personnel, who are under the Treasury Department.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gordon Walgren was caught by this, Bagnariol was caught by this and Pat Gallagher was caught by this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I think Pat Gallagher was pushing it for his Vancouver card rooms that they wanted. A lot of cities authorized card rooms, but the way the bill was structured, if a city did not want a particular form of gambling they didn't tax it. And the bill is still that way. Seattle has never taxed card rooms because they don't want them. King County taxes them; they have them. So if you want to play cards in the Seattle area, you play in King County. There are no card rooms in the city of Seattle. The tax money raised is supposed to pay for enforcement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, there are some costs involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then the gambling interests tried to limit the amount of tax local government could assess. We left it open so cities could charge whatever they needed to enforce the act. Gambling interests claimed the cities were using gambling revenue for things other than gambling and should be limited. Well, I didn't think they should because of the extra burden gambling placed on law enforcement. But that's the problem, once you open the door, it remains open and you always have to be vigilant. The Republicans are vigilant, some of them – like Senators McDonald and Jeannette Hayner. I was vigilant; I didn't want gambling expanded, beyond the laws which we gave them. We tried to control it by requiring a sixty percent vote on any future expansion of gambling, but you cannot control legislators and you can't control the money that feeds into future campaigns. If you could control that, you could control a lot of worrisome things happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that just seems to recede into the distance every time somebody tries.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And everybody has a reason. Big government has a reason.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, we may never really know what happened there but one thing was that the

Democratic leadership was destroyed by this in both houses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I never lost my confidence in Gordon Walgren. I believed in him and I still do. I think that he was a liberal and I think he got caught in the web and then he didn't exactly use good sense in some of the remarks he made, I admit that, but you go along to get along. I respect him deeply. I never, never had quite the same respect for Bagnariol. I liked him, but there was something there. And Gallagher, I didn't like at all. I just didn't like him, but I liked the others.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Augie Mardesich had been removed as leader under a shadow, and here went Gordon Walgren under a shadow.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Republicans did it all. And they made it stick and yet they did some things that were so bad. Like the manual that they put out, written by a high-up party leader who later became Attorney General, saying that "Facts have nothing to do with the truth." And "You tell a person the same thing enough and they'll believe it's true." It was later recalled and that got very little publicity at the time. You can't deal with the press. Publishers print what they want and ignore what they don't want, although the public is becoming more aware.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a Democratic senator, you were watching your party disintegrate and a leadership battle begin. Were you a little frustrated? A lot of people came to the fore and wanted to take over Walgren's position; he at first refused to resign. Bagnariol resigned immediately, so things were different in the House. But Walgren hung on. How did you feel about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't think he should resign. Walgren did not accept responsibility; he was not primarily responsible. Bagnariol was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He said he was innocent, for starters, and he wasn't going to quit.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know and I hung with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It set off a struggle within the party. Some senators were reportedly furious and they started jockeying for position and

lining up different people. Bud Shinpoch's name came forward as one. Was Jim McDermott at this point running for Governor? He was not competing for the leadership position in the Senate, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he was competing for it at first. And Gordon was still a leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** An interesting thing happened: Walgren was about to be convicted, I'm not quite sure of the dates, but his name was still on the election ballot and he tried to pull it off the ballot and put someone else on – his assistant or his friend – he said, "I'd really rather so-and-so run and I'm going to bail out of here." But he was forced by court order to stay on the ballot and you lost that seat. Ellen Craswell was elected in his place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We lost a seat. I had forgotten about that. She was in the House. Why was he forced to stay on the ballot?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess it was too late, or something, some kind of deadline had passed; it was not clear to me.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, after filing I thought you had to resign within a week in order to get your name off the ballot. He may have held out too long. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this was getting closer to the trial. I guess where things were looking not so good. For whatever reason, he was forced to remain on the ballot and Ellen Craswell won. Later, the following year, Gordon Walgren had a fund raiser at the Tyee Hotel because he had all those legal expenses. Did you attend?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, everybody went. We all paid our money. There were no freebies, it was jammed. We were trying to show the people that he really was an okay guy – he was suckered into it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been a bit bittersweet; I mean he was going to go to jail. Was there any political risk attendant in going to this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought there was, but it didn't matter, I was going to take it and then I walked in and here were all my friends!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No problem!

**Sen. Wojahn:** No problem. The press never hit me on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it happens, it transpires, Walgren did go to prison. Ted Bottiger became your new leader. Did you vote for him, when it came down to it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think McDermott withdrew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And later, Ted Bottiger, when he took over Gordon Walgren's office, found these curious plastic things on the telephones and nobody knew what they were, but the story is, of course, that they were bugging devices.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bugging, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that is the end of that story, at least for a while. I wanted to shift gears for a bit and talk about something that happened in May that you had told me about: the dedication of the Mother Joseph statue in Washington, D.C. You had originally supported a different historic figure to represent Washington.

**Sen. Wojahn:** George Washington Bush.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Dan Marsh was retiring and as was the custom, members made remarks and you recalled that he was the one who convinced you that it had to be Mother Joseph instead of George Washington Bush.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted George Washington Bush and I was fighting for him. But Dan Marsh persuaded me because he said we needed a man and a woman. That was the thing that did it because we already had Marcus Whitman and George Washington Bush, as history tells us, was the person who provided the money for the early settlers to cross over the Columbia River into Washington State. He was my hero. He was also black. But I gave up because Mother Joseph like me was a woman, and actually built hospitals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, she was quite a woman.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was quite a woman; she even took up carpenter's tools and helped build hospitals where she later worked as a nurse and administrator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've seen photographs of her riding a horse out into the logging camps, you know, getting money from the loggers for the hospitals because they were actually the chief beneficiaries. They had those hideous accidents, and then had nowhere to go for help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Choke setter accidents, oh God, they were terrible. You know, the curator at the Washington State Historical Society in Tacoma was upset over the selection of Mother Joseph, but I believe he was really upset over the way in which the selection was made. He wasn't given a chance to nominate his choice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who did he want?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he wanted George Washington Bush. I don't remember, but I know that he was upset. And I agree that he should have been asked. That's his job, his main job was historian. I don't remember asking him but I remember going down to the Governor's office and seeing him pacing because he wanted to see the Governor before she signed that bill.

But the other thing, well, I told you about George Washington Bush, about the women's group, the Soroptomist Club of Washington, that wanted to memorialize and maintain his house in Tumwater. They wanted to make it an historic place, and had been granted money from the Legislature to do this, but before the preservation project started, the house blew down! So they came to me and asked me to put money in the budget to preserve his writings and other historic memorabilia so that they could provide a traveling exhibit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty frustrating for them!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and they were so frustrated because they told me they really needed this money for a traveling exhibit. They said, "You know, we really tried to maintain his house but it blew down!" I got the money in the budget – that's when Representative Bob Goldsworthy was chair of Appropriations – but I don't know, what became of the project.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there is a marker out there now, I believe, where his house used to stand.

There was another now-historic event that year when Mount St. Helens blew up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were in London. I missed the occasion and the blackening out and the stories that came back. The Indian chief of the Puyallup Indians had abdicated and gone to Spokane because he felt that Mt. Rainier was going to blow. There's an old Indian legend that it was going to blow, so he moved to Spokane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some day it will.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Of course, when Mount St. Helens blew, all the ash blew into Spokane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you can't really get away.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was quoted as saying, "It was the wrong move. The mountain came to me. I missed the mountain and it came to me."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, Mt. Rainier could still do that. Did you ever tour the site? Did they take legislators up there and show them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I never toured that, but I went on my own. I don't remember what the occasion was, it wasn't a legislative tour.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did the Legislature address that event? Were there things you could do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had to provide funding for the clean-up and give some tax credits to the Weyerhaeuser Company who had lost billions of dollars in logs. And I was the president of the East Side Boy's Club at the time and we were having a fund raiser and I was able to get a flight over Mount St. Helens as one of the offerings for the fund raiser. It brought in a lot of money. And then I did tour the new building but it was far from the mountain. But there were telescopes and you could view the mountain and see the damage which was done. And, of course, Senator Alan Thompson's area of Castle Rock was hit very hard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the debris and everything that came down the mountain after the blast.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Castle Rock got a lot of the fallout and all of the particles blew into Spokane and actually entered outer space; apparently the particles were picked up in outer space. It was bad. We saw the film and were able to provide funding for some of the destruction that occurred and provide some help for the people. Never enough, but it was help. And then subsequently, I bought a Christmas tree that had ornaments made from the ash from Mount St. Helens. I still have it; it's my perennial Christmas tree. It was artificial, but there was a lot of natural moss on it that I have to replace every year, but it's a beautiful little artificial tree. It's quite tall and it sits on the end table and the balls are magnificent. So business managed to turn the disaster into a plus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that you had sponsored a bill in 1981 that seems to relate to this event, that death certificates could be given to people even if you couldn't find their bodies. It was for disaster victims, to make the process easier for families of the presumed-dead.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was something which came up through the Health Committee, I think. There were little bills being floating all over that dealt with the disaster. Of course, the main item was the budget item in Ways and Means. We did put in a substantial amount of money to cover Mount St. Helens damage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting what drives budgets. That was something, of course, you couldn't plan for.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that's one reason we attempt to give the Governor a sufficient amount in the Emergency Fund too, to take care of emergencies. That's one need that I always wanted to recognize and made it a point to always review, to be sure that there was enough money in the Emergency Fund, because you never know what is going to happen. And having been chair of the Social and Health Services Committee, I was aware that emergencies did occur.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or what form it's going to take. Well, it was just one of those amazing things.





## CHAPTER 12: REPUBLICAN SWEEP OF 1981

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's discuss the election of 1980. The primary must have been interesting. Jim McDermott beat Governor Dixy Lee Ray who had wanted a second term. And John Spellman, who had been the King County Executive, bested Duane Berentson and Bruce Chapman. So Dixy Lee Ray was out of the picture. She didn't survive the primary.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She doesn't survive. A lot of us were very supportive of her when she first ran, being a first woman and not realizing what her politics were, because she very carefully avoided any stance on issues, except she was a supporter of women, we thought. And then...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She turned out not to be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She chose not to be. The fact is I was on her platform the night she won because I had won, also. And I was on national television. My niece saw me back in Tennessee; it was on National Broadcasting and I had on a pink suit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democratic Party went from having a very conservative Democrat to a very liberal candidate for the Governor's office.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct. And, of course, I supported Jim McDermott.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Spellman, was he considered a moderate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he was moderate. I agree with some of the things he did. Some of the very good things he did, when he vetoed the bill which would have permitted private industry to put – what are those platforms they wanted to put on the waterfront? I was very pleased, because I thought it was going to pass and the industry was pushing hard for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This will be part of our discussion of the Northern Tier Pipeline. Several things happened there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I was a Democrat, obviously, and I tried to stay out of it during the primary election, but just before the primary I endorsed Jim McDermott. I had been Dixy's

apologist. She then had vetoed a bill which I had sponsored, the Sunset bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Democrats feel that she was giving your party a black eye? There was so much antagonism.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. She had dirtied on the name of the Democrats. She was joy-riding around the bay with a marine hat on and driving oil truck tankers and doing all these silly things that you think of kindergartners doing and dragging the name of Democrats down. She had the sausages made up from pigs which she named for the members of the Capitol press corp. John White got some, and he said it was pretty good sausage, but he was offended by it. Those are the things that happened. She didn't know how to handle the press. She resented it when they took her on, which they do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's their role.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's their role and I think they were hard on her. I have no love for the press because I think that they delight on dirtying on people and I think that's wrong. I've always admired the Portland papers because The Oregonian and the Journal are always supportive of the Legislature. They never got on their backs when they went overtime; they were overtime until mid-July lots of times and they never did anything like that. They were very good. And, of course, some of the worst press was right here in Tacoma. The Tacoma News Tribune was rated number-one for yellow journalism. Even over at the P-I it happened, which had always been known as a liberal paper. So it was a bad time for Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about Jim McDermott? Did you feel he could pull you back together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. He had a lot of ideas, ideas which were adopted later by future Governor Gardner; those were Jim's ideas. He was the one who thought up the idea of funding superstructure and granting counties the low-interest rates to restructure their bridges and

public water systems and sewage systems; yes, that was his idea. His idea was the one for the Health bill – Governor Gardner took credit for it, but Senator McDermott did it – the bill which established a program for low-income health care, which is still in effect. Senator McDermott was an idea person and you have to be; if you are going to lead, you’ve got to lead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you have to have something in front of you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right; you have to have something up here, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, yes, brains are always a good thing!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator McDermott was very innovative. I doorbelled for McDermott. I told the people – they were citing him for his liberalism – and I said, “He’s not all that liberal. He graduated from Billy Graham’s college, Wheaton College.” He got his baccalaureate there and then went on to medical school at the University of Illinois, I think, or Northwestern, I don’t know which. So, he wasn’t that liberal; in fact, he was less liberal than I on some issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, those labels seem to mean practically nothing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was the one who was responsible for actually putting over and selling the idea of the Seattle convention center funding. I’m sure he doesn’t want credit for it now, because of the way it was done, but he advocated for that. I voted against it every time. I was very supportive of him and, as I mentioned, I endorsed him a month before the primary. And it was due to his PR person, Blair Butterworth, from Seattle. I liked him. He took me to lunch and twisted my arm and I finally said, “Yes.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It probably didn’t take that much twisting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it didn’t. I wouldn’t have gone if I hadn’t been mulling it over thoroughly. And then I did doorbelling for Jim.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a dirty election from your point of view? In the press it sounded that

way. You had just had that little revolution in the Republican Party and they, according to the press accounts, were very determined to win this election. This was going to be the redistricting session and they wanted to be in charge, of course. That was pretty critical. Ken Eikenberry was the head of their election team.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he did dirty tricks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seemed to be saying, “There’s no limitation to what we’re going to do to win.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he did. He printed that campaign manual; it was really awful and I don’t remember a lot of the sayings in it, but one of the principle ones was that, “The facts have nothing to do with the truth. You can sell anything if you say it three times. You can sell any ideas whether they’re factual or not, or true.” In other words, he advocated lying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In so many words?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Exactly. His strategy worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** His campaign motto – according to the press reports – was “Attack, attack, attack” and that can make for a negative election campaign.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And, it’s been continued since then. The Republicans are good at that. They taught the book on it, because when I worked for the Labor Council, we always had to battle their attacks and I always said, “You attack once and we’ll drop you as our endorsed candidate.” We don’t do that; we go on the record of the person you are running against, if it’s an incumbent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or what you’re for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, what you believe in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was a rising tide of one sort or another because this was, of course, the year Ronald Reagan was nominated as the Republican presidential candidate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he carried a lot of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There seemed to be just a sweep across the country. How did you feel, watching that coming along?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Depressed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that there was going to be this big shift, that the Republicans were going to take everything? Nationally and locally. Did things feel different?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had a foreboding. Oh, we were all so upset over the dirty tricks that were being played.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reagan certainly had a very strong message and he had a way that grabbed people's attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a pretty boy. People like pretty boys. People like handsome people and the people that say the right thing, even though the venom is dripping down the sides of their mouth. He never let that happen; he was always a smiley person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what did you think of his message?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was candy-coated. He just told the people what they wanted to hear. And he wasn't negative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure that was part of the appeal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, that was part of the acceptance. And the people in California that were for him treated him like he was a god. We were in California and I couldn't believe what I was hearing. We were coming back from Coronado, I guess, before the election, and we were at that Danish place, Solvang, outside of Santa Barbara, that used to be a destination place that people went to where the Andersen soup factory was; it was kind of like Disneyland, only smaller and not with the rides, but they had all these Swedish restaurants and Swedish gift shops and a couple of nice motels. And, I was accosted there, walking along there among the shops by somebody who came up to me and said what a wonderful person Ronald Reagan was and they hoped that I would support him. I couldn't believe it, people doing this!

And I just ignored her and got away somehow. I wanted to punch her in the nose, but I didn't...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn't respond?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn't respond; I was aghast that anyone would do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, I imagine you're on vacation and...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, I'm not even thinking about politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're taking a break. What do you think all that meant? That big shift, what were people looking for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted the utopian, they wanted the panacea; they didn't want to be burdened with facts. And everything seemed so nice. And then the Republicans got elected and the bottom fell out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was also the election where you had the rise of the "religious right."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't know what it was all about, I got this questionnaire from – what did they call it? The Moral Majority. I called my priest at my Episcopal church and asked what was it all about and he said, "I have no idea." But he referred me to a former Episcopal priest who was retired; he said he may know more about it because he had more time. And I knew him and I had a chance to meet with him and he didn't know what it was all about either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you got a questionnaire and it didn't really identify the group? Just "the Moral Majority," but you didn't really know what that was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't know what it was and I obviously wasn't going to respond. It was about abortion and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering what kind of questions they would be asking you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, mostly questions on abortion and women's rights, and the Constitution, and I don't think burning the flag had come up at that time yet, but it was all on those lines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you kind of get the drift?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were not constitutionalists, because the strict constitutionalists are very strong on some issues that I'm also strong on, such as separation of church and state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For one thing, they like that separation between church and state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, absolutely, absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which some other groups would like to blur.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true and they are the moderates now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's amazing how that middle shifts around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The thing was that the Republicans had cleaned up their act. They had thrown all of the right-wingers out. I think I told you about being in Port Angeles when Dan Evans and Slade Gorton – they were all there. I happened to be staying at the same motel as the Republicans. I was with the State Labor Council at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this when they challenged the John Birchers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The John Birchers, yes. But anyway, they had thrown them all out and then the Birch Society didn't get a total hold, but I believe the Moral Majority was an offshoot of that – looking back. And the questionnaire they sent out was much the same as what you are getting now from the right-wing people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, when you didn't respond?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't respond because slowly it began to dawn on me this was a new beginning of another group and they were replacing or enhancing what the Birchers were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's always that group of people...

**Sen. Wojahn:** The undercurrent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes different forms, but it never goes away; it just sort of shifts around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what form it's going to take next, but it will be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are a sizable number of people for whom that's an answer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's an easy answer. It's the same as those who want to blow up Iraq now. It's an easy answer that you don't do, although they did it: they killed innocent people, all innocent, but you don't do it. You choose your battles. I guess I was uneasy at that time. I don't know who was really against me; I'd had some really tough campaigns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were running against John Prins that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, he's a friend. Another guy was running too, a guy who borrowed money from a Republican senator, a doctor, Ted Haley. John Prins was running but another guy was running, who worked for the right wing more and he borrowed money from, or had Ted co-sign a note, and then walked away and didn't pay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought that Senator Haley was a rather liberal Republican?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was. And they were also trying to get Republican seats and this guy emerged first running and I remember that because Senator Haley's aide was a very good friend of mine and she told me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you won very handily.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was no issue, John Prins put his name in because this other guy had filed. John was an old-time moderate Republican, a friend of ours. And his wife and I were really good friends and his sister-in-law, Ruth Prins, and I had gone to school together at Roosevelt High School in Seattle and so there was a connection there. He called her and said, "I'm going to file because this guy's nuts and I don't agree with him," and then he sat on his hands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your own election was not difficult. The Republicans did gain the Governorship, five seats in the Senate, leaving you with a one-person majority, and they took the House that had been formerly tied forty-

nine, forty-nine. They now had fifty-six Republicans to forty-two Democrats. So, it was pretty much a sweep. The Democratic Senate was in a tight situation. Did that help bring the caucus together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we tried.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's nothing like an adversarial situation...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ted Bottiger was the Majority Leader and he kept giving in to Peter, giving him everything he wanted. He gave him the Transportation chairmanship.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you aware that Peter von Reichbauer was discontented?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, we all knew it. We all met, leadership met. I was chair of the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee. And also caucus secretary. We would meet as a leadership group, usually at my place; I lived out at the bay in a mobile home and we had plenty of room, and we talked about that. My advice at the time was, "Let him go, we don't want him. You're giving away too much." Senator Bottiger had given him chair of Transportation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he actually threatening to leave at that point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was making noises.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this kind of a new thing, or just new to this session, or had this been a growing discontent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that we sort of suspected because things were...for some time, secrets were coming out of our caucus and the Republicans were finding out about things and we didn't know who it was, but we all suspected. So there was nothing untoward that we could put our finger on and looking back, it was like the upheaval which occurred with Leonard Sawyer. We knew there was something going on – I knew it and I pleaded with my colleagues to do something but they said, "No, it will blow over." And then John Bagnariol, the night before it all blew up, he says, "It's bad." And I didn't say, "I told you so." And then we

were all assigned to go and talk to various people to try and stem the tide. It didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Switching parties is pretty drastic, although not as dramatic as overthrowing a Speaker.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anyway, we had had dinner at my place the night before it happened and I had again said to Ted, "Let him go. You can't afford to keep giving in to him or we will have another revolt in our caucus." He had already given von Reichbauer the office he wanted, a big office in the Legislative Building; he gave him the Transportation chairmanship, he was hoping for more and more. I don't even know what all the things were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was his issue? What did he want?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it just personal or did he want to change your direction as a caucus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Power. This is me talking. That's how I see it. Von Reichbauer was a very good friend of a fellow who had an offshoot television company who later was accused of committing a murder. Von Reichbauer had his own sources. He seemed to know everything that was going on, he had connections. He had the press in his pocket; I'm told he's related to the Blethens. He had it and he used that as a whip and Ted was being whipped around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the caucus only had that one-vote majority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and he wanted to hold on to the majority. But we weren't going to hold onto the majority; even if we held on to it, it didn't mean anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not if you're caving in every time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not if we're losing every time we vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ted Bottiger had become your leader when Gordon Walgren lost in the last election against Ellen Craswell. Was that a

contentious change of leadership? Or he was the natural successor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But there was a little contention because I think Jim McDermott was making moves and they were sort of attacking each other, but I got them together for lunch and said, “Don’t do it, don’t do it!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hard for Jim McDermott to come back to the Senate after running for Governor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and I think he felt that he should be the nominal caucus leader. I was loyal to Ted but what I was seeing was they were going to destroy us and we were heading into an election and they were beginning to knife at each other rather than the opposition and so I just said, “Cut it out, or we’re going to lose big.” Well, we didn’t lose big, but we did lose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when Jim McDermott came back to the Senate, was he able to find his niche in the Ways and Means Chairmanship; did that help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was fine. He accepted it once he was down, he’d lost. He walked. You know, he’s a good egg, he really is and he just gave all his good stuff to Gardner when he lost the next time. You know, he was good. He must have been hurt personally, but he never let it show. He was temperamentally very suited to be a politician.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A special kind of person, isn’t it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He’s one of the few people that has the temperament for it. And the other one is Phil Talmadge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you describe that? Able to take your blows and...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Take your blows with grace and smile. Don’t get mad, get even. If they have a good idea, accept it and build upon it. Always get your ideas out there so it’s recognized that you are here but you are not trying to take away anything, and smile in the face of adversity. I guess that’s the most difficult of all, and remain steady.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don’t get blown around by every little thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. He’s a good congressman and he doesn’t ever give up. He holds his own in the face of adversity; he grins and bears it, grits his teeth and goes on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he’s certainly had a long career so he must know how to do a few things!

**Sen. Wojahn:** He came out of Africa to run for Congress, you know; it’s like the movie!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes! Let’s finish reviewing who was in the caucus leadership group. Your caucus chair was George Fleming; he was pretty active?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was good.



*Working with Senate colleagues, Caucus Chair George Fleming and Ruthe Ridder, Demo. Whip*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you had Bud Shinpoch, and the whip was Ruthe Ridder that year, and yourself as secretary, so two women in the leadership. And Bruce Wilson was the vice-chair.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bruce Wilson managed to stay out of all this. He stayed out of all controversy; he was a wonderful guy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a different kind of talent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The rest of us were there but Bruce wasn’t at the dinner meeting we had, just a few of us, I think Ruthe and Ted and George.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work pretty well together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I had supported Al Bauer to be the Assistant Majority Leader and I'd bucked Ted on that. He had wanted Shinpoch and Shinpoch won. And I spoke in favor of Al Bauer at the caucus – it was a great speech – and then Bauer came to me afterwards and said, "I've already given up." I could have killed him! I wouldn't have made my speech. I showed my hand then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he had already withdrawn?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He withdrew but he didn't bother to tell me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he know you were going to make a big speech?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, he asked me to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe he wanted to hear what you were going to say!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was wrong. So I almost made an enemy of Shinpoch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you able to repair that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not really.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's too bad.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was pretty funny, after he left we became friends, but it was tough because I'd bucked him before. He had tried to get the money in the budget for the "Festival in the Forest," which was for the Weyerhaeuser Company. They wanted to build an auditorium there in order to perform Wagner's *The Ring*. And at the same I was trying to get money for the Pantages Theater in Tacoma. He got his bill on the calendar and mine wasn't on and I tried to amend the bill to replace the Festival in the Forest with the Pantages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No wonder he was upset with you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes I did, I did. I even got a lot of support. And he came marching back to my seat; he was absolutely furious with me, and I said, "Bud, if it had been you, you'd have done

the same thing," and he started to laugh. So! I was still treading on eggs. I didn't get it; I lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, that's quite a maneuver.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I tried. Eventually, we got the Pantages; he didn't get his Festival in the Forest. It was taken out of the budget, but I got my Pantages money later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's get back to discussing your caucus situation. Before the session started, you knew you were in this tight place with a one-vote majority. Besides the situation with Peter von Reichbauer, were there other things that you discussed? Did you have an agenda how you were going to deal with that year?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You couldn't have an agenda because you didn't know what was going to happen next. And we were walking on eggs on issues, bills going into Rules, wondering if they would get in the calendar, and if they were controversial...there were only six weeks in the session, right? I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was this feeling that the Republicans are highly organized, with Jeannette Hayner leading.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if the Democrats pulled together on their side?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, they never do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like the Will Rogers saying about belonging to a disorganized party?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He said, "I don't belong to any organized party, I'm a Democrat."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that one. I was just wondering: if one side tightens up whether it impacts the other party?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, we've still got problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other thing that I wanted to you to comment on is that now you had two women in the leadership positions and as I looked through the list of women in the Senate, there were now eight: Margaret Hurley, Ruthe Ridder, Dianne Woody and yourself as Democrats; Sue Gould, Eleanor Lee, Jeannette



Hayner and Ellen Craswell as Republicans. Even within each party, these were very different kinds of women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sue Gould was considered pretty moderate and Ellen Craswell and Jeannette Hayner held different views, and then within your own party, I would say there was quite a range of opinion. What struck me is at this point, are you seen less as women but as "just senators?" You have as many differences as the men.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't coalesce. Sue and I had similar values. Margaret Hurley and I rarely agreed. Ruthe Ridder and I were real copasetic and believed alike on everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there now enough women in the Senate that you were not a novelty any more, something to notice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and everyone was a free agent. But the only thing was that the Republicans held because of the firm hand of Hayner. She kept them together. Some held their nose and voted. Even Craswell, some of the time. It was bad. But that was the first time we got Ted Bottiger to go with us on the abortion issue, because he was all over the ball field on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had to be a little firmer yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were up against it. There was a vote and Margaret Hurley was on the other side and we had some Republicans with us...And the vote was tied and Ted Bottiger was off the floor and he came onto the floor and I caught his eye and I indicated to him, "Vote no."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this Senate Bill 149? Was this the vote where they wanted to roll back abortion rights for poor women? They wanted to stop the funding abortion through state programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that one I won; I think I helped to win it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you did speak up quite strongly; you took quite a position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And said that if we don't permit money to be spent for abortion, we will be spending – and I had the figures over a twenty-year period – so many millions of dollars as compared to a few thousand for abortions, and we can't afford that because we'd be taking care of the families. And I won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also spoke about how it would harass doctors and how doctors are professionals and the state shouldn't be in there second-guessing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was one argument; that was a minor point, but yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It got people's attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That the doctors would be afraid to do it. And it wasn't fair to force their hand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then it would have been abortions for rich women and not for poor and that sets up inequities in the system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you could afford to go to another country, you could get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Ray came in on the second or the third day of the session and gave her outgoing speech and she mentioned there were some problems with the budget, and that there was a chance of a recession, but in no way did her remarks seem to indicate what you were about to face. I was wondering, were you legislators aware of the coming recession? Or did it blindside you? Did anyone foresee that you would be in such deep difficulties so quickly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know that we did. Did we have a Forecasting Council at that time?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were apparently some problems with the forecasts; that was one of the issues. I don't know when the Council was formed. [1984]

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think we had a Council. I think as a result of that that we hired that Korean, Chang Mook Sohn. We had the Department of Revenue which was supposed to

be able to forecast but they were not fine-tuned to do that and that's the reason I think we funded the Forecasting Council and appointed a member of the House and Senate and Governor, and a person who would be the forecaster. I think that came about as the result of this. So, we probably were blindsided.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a little eerie to read that speech and realize that you were just about to...

**Sen. Wojahn:** To go into a recession.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Spellman, and some other people, blamed Governor Ray because she had pushed through that full funding of education much more quickly than originally had been planned and apparently, one thing or another, had used up all the reserve money. The economy had been very good, so there was this feeling that it would, of course, be good "forever" and you could go full-steam ahead, and so there was no reserve and you were caught. There was also a pull-back of federal money, under President Reagan's program...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We lost \$125 million in federal funding at that time. I think that was what caused the recession to occur.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, about then. There was also a national recession; it wasn't just a Washington State issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Also, we had a lot of state employees. You see, what had gradually been happening, we'd been acquiring more and more state employees. But that had been happening over a gradual period of time, and we were always able to make up money that we lost to the Feds. We lost a lot when Senator Magnuson lost his race; we lost at that time because he always got eleven dollars for every ten dollars we sent back to D.C. He provided the cushion. And then, when we took over all the community college system and the employees fell out of the local taxing structure and onto the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a big chunk.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were only nine community colleges when the state took over the system, and we eventually had twenty-one established over the next few years, and all

these people were being added to the state payroll. Dixy should have caught that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were all good things, except that it does add up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you can't pit one against another. You have to evaluate each area and take their lumps together, but it didn't happen. And apparently she should have anticipated it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, according to Governor Spellman.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He could blame it on that and I think, to me, we may have established that Forecasting Council and that probably was Jim McDermott's bill, but I don't know. It didn't have any pizzazz. It was one of those things that you do that's necessary but it doesn't mean as much until...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Until you really need it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, then you find out later how much you needed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that it probably would have been a good idea. So, Dixy Lee Ray left the scene and then Governor Spellman came in. He had quite a list of things he wanted to do; I'll go over some and ask you to respond how you felt about some of his ideas. He certainly made a big statement about changing the culture between the Governor's office and the Legislature. Apparently, with Dixy Lee Ray relations had gotten pretty bad.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She wanted to be a legislator and she was demanding more and more power and we gave her that with the Sunset bill. We let them put the Governor's person in there; we never should have done that because it wasn't necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were trying to get around that veto.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But Spellman was promising a new era. Did that sound good to your ears? Did you believe that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I didn't; I don't remember being either here nor there. It's just all political talk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seemed to be pretty aware of the problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was an attempt to remove the Legislative Budget Committee that I always fought. I felt that was a necessary part of the legislative process and she tried to get rid of that. I think there was a move at that time to eliminate performance audits; we audit the government agencies, which she didn't want us to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's your only way of getting information about what the agencies were implementing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We audit them for performance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Spellman did acknowledge that the economy was not rosy but he pledged, again, as he had during his election campaign, that there would be no tax increase. I'm afraid that this came back to haunt him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That didn't set well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He admitted there was a kind of a crisis but he kind of softened that. Of course, it is an inaugural speech, so that's not really the place, but still, there's not that sense of "This is going to be really bad and we're going to have to do things differently." He did talk about giving back the reserve fund, something that does happen pretty quickly in his administration, and then he talked about the issues dealing with prisons. Apparently there was a cluster of issues to do with prisons that he wanted to work on and he called for a complete review of the Criminal Justice System. That was something that occupied you for years. He also called for increases in college tuition fees; would that have included the community colleges?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's interesting. He wanted to diversify the economy and work on trade issues; that's always a popular thing. And

he wants to have these tax-free industrial revenue bonds to bring in new, clean industries.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I liked that, there were a lot of things I liked. Some of these I liked because I like the idea that we had to figure out some way to get around the use of public funds for privatization. We did that by calling it economic development. I'd advocated that. My bill which passed which I'd sponsored in 1976. And we'd been trying to get tax increment financing. We never could get a constitutional change, so we moved ahead and just declared that it could be done in the name of economic development, and we did it. So I liked a lot of things he said.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Energy issues were on the horizon and just a mention about issues with WPPSS. And then, you know, he ended with a lot of good will and bonhomie. Did he sing to you legislators at one point, as the story goes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seems to have been quite willing to do that at the drop of a hat. I guess he's rather famous for having a good voice. So, he was trying to set up this new era. It sounds like a fairly moderate program, but of course, the only thing that really happens is the budget situation went completely off the wall. His whole administration was caught up in this crashing budget situation. Some of the figures are as high as a one-billion dollar shortfall. There was a lot of blame flying around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And no increase in taxes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He tried to stick to the "no tax increase" pledge. What did you think of that? As a politician, did he have to stick to his promise?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we just looked at it as so much baloney. It was a political speech. The Legislature has to do what it has to do. I always remembered as the rule of thumb, you could always tell when the Legislature was going to adjourn because the tax package and the appropriations bill would both end up in the Code Reviser's office. So all you did was go down and check with Gay Keplinger to find out if the bills had come down. If the tax package

had come down, you knew you were going to be out of there in twenty-four hours.

But this time, there hadn't been any tax packages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans, especially the House Republicans, claimed that you could balance the budget with cuts. That they did not need to raise taxes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Using phony money. You can't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were ready for draconian measures.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There had been draconian measures that were trying to get out from under it at that same time where we'd done the twenty-fifth month where we'd borrowed into the next biennium in order to fund the past biennium. We were trying to get out of that. We weren't out of that yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was always that game of shifting money around, as Jim McDermott had called it: "a carnival shell game." But then, Speaker Polk was actually advocating not playing around with the money, cutting not a little bit, but whole programs. They were quite adamant that you could do that by cutting social services to the bone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Go onto real reductions, which we certainly never did as Democrats. No, we didn't like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was proposing a very stripped-down government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was not a Washingtonian. He came out of New York.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that make a difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Well, I don't know! He fought the Displaced Homemaker Bill, he tried to kill that. I'll never forget that. That's the reason Dolores Teutsch left the Legislature. She got so incensed over it; she was wonderful. She was a Republican, I was a Democrat. We got the bill in the Senate, and she carried it on from the pilot program into a full-time program and was so incensed with him. He was dreadful. And

Spellman shouldn't have listened to him. Because Spellman was really a good guy. He was on the right track. I never disliked him. But I just didn't think he was being honest and he was listening to people he shouldn't be listening to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they were loud and clear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, I know. And Jeannette Hayner, to a degree, was that way too, you know. These people who have never known what it is to be without and don't understand the feelings of people who are hard workers who can't make it because the economy's bad. And they don't understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did the Democrats feel that they had to draw a line and protect these people? Were there cuts that would have been acceptable to you and then others where you just said no?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. We didn't have much to say about it. We did try to hold our own though, in Ways and Means and did to some extent. We were able to, but there were no increases given to foster care parents and there were cutbacks given in areas of child abuse where we did not have enough staffing, which we should have. Positions shouldn't have more than fifteen caseloads and they were up to thirty-five and forty; it was terrible! And that's where the cuts were coming in the social programs; we fought that. We fought that and got some back but it was impossible to do a good job. They could always blame DSHS for not doing its job when they weren't giving them the money to do the job they were supposed to be doing – that we demanded of them. You can't have it both ways. And that's what we never could get into the thick skull of anybody who had never been without, who had never suffered, who didn't understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the Democrats, the social and welfare issues, were those the areas you were concentrating on? Were there some other ones where you could give a little? Do you remember what your priorities were?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My priorities were always with social services. But I can't tell you where the other priorities were, where we failed. I know where we had some successes, but I don't really remember. We probably took it out on small business because they weren't able to defend themselves. They could only borrow so much against disaster and they were just going bankrupt. But my feeling is that the philosophies of the two will never match. I think they've come together better with more reasoning maybe of late, but then there was no reasoning: the big people were just eating up the small. And there was no help. The Republican's favorite saying was that "small business was the supporter of the people." Well, they are, but they were cutting them out and they are getting away with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Small businesses employ more people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, they are the greatest employer. But I can't think of any program that was actually cut. I think more money was not put into the programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was how they were handling the taxes, too. They were not reducing anything and that looked like an increase. It was one of those semantic things. But they were trying to hold the line. So, when you first came in January there were some pretty heavy issues which we'll continue to talk about, like the budget, but then, the really big thing that happened was the party switch by Peter von Reichbauer, Friday, the thirteenth of February. You had some foreshadowing so you weren't totally surprised, but can you sketch out that day? The morning seemed normal and then you had this very curious thing: in the early afternoon, with no explanation given in the Senate Journal, you held an election for a new Sergeant of Arms.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The announcement came out at eleven, I think, or ten.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a recess and then evidently that's about when it happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can remember when it all happened. I walked over and said to George Sellar, "You're going to be the new chair of Financial Institutions, and I'll help you." I said that to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could see the writing on the wall?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He put his arm around me and said, "I don't want it." And Irving Newhouse came over and said, "You double-crossed us." He said it! He didn't want to be in the majority. He never wanted to be in the majority. Honest!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was like a Trojan horse? "Thank you for the gift, but no thank you." Well, that's very interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The double-cross.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought they would be excited.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Jeannette Hayner probably was. We had to redo everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did Peter von Reichbauer actually switch party allegiance? Did he write a letter? Did he stand up and make a speech?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Called a press conference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then walked over to the other caucus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just think he called a press conference. I don't know, I have no idea. He was in Jeannette Hayner's office that morning, but I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have to physically move his desk? I mean, how does one do this? This doesn't happen very often, especially during session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, nobody moved anything. The only thing was that all the chairmanships fell and the leadership fell and everybody – and it was picked up by the Republicans. But they kept Sid Snyder as Secretary of the Senate, you see. They didn't know what they were doing. They needed him. They kept him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But they replaced Charlie Johnson, the Sergeant at Arms, with Fred

Hildebrand. It seemed like somebody must have known a little ahead because they had these names all ready. And Barney Goltz lost his Pro Tempore position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And got stuck over in the little tiny office. He was Pro Tempore. I had his office upstairs but I didn't offer it back to him; we stayed where we were. He was moved off over into the hinterlands. He was really upset over that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed that he very much enjoyed being President Pro Tempore. And then he lost that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He liked it. He was really good. Very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans gave it to Sam Guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, God! Mr. Conservative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then came all the leadership changes of the chairmanships. Did this create a fair amount of chaos?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did. Anything that was been started was at a standstill. I think the bills, wherever they were, remained in place. All the bills that were in Rules were not sent back to the committee of origin, as I remember that was okay. But, there was a new era and some of those bills in Rules probably never got out. They went down with the Democrat majority. Although in the Senate, there wasn't that much difference. You know, there weren't that many controversial bills. In the House there were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did make for a Republican majority in every branch of government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was the most disturbing of all. Because it was totally controlled by the Republicans: Republican Governor, House and Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was interesting – and which had happened to the Democrats, too – was that there were real splits within that party. As soon as they became the majority, the splits became – to some people – more apparent. The Senate Republicans couldn't hold together quite as well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, they regretted the von Reichbauer walk right away, because he was a loose cannon – always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did he get from the Republicans for his revolution?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The same thing he had. He got to hold onto his chairmanship in Transportation. He was Transportation Chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, so why would he do this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because he had been promised by the Republicans to keep his job. He'd been anticipating doing this for a long, long time. I don't think it was just within this year. I think it was ever since he'd been in the caucus. I think he never liked being a Democrat. I've always felt that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was a particularly dramatic time to do it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But this was dramatic, because then he could hold everything he had. He got to keep the office room that he had, he got to keep his chairmanship, and all the emollients of office that he already had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that you had to change your staff, that the ripple-down effect was incredible. Do you remember what happened there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The ripple effect was terrible. At that point, I think we both resolved that our staff would be a nonpartisan staff. And the good old boys, who were really prevalent during the Democratic regime – there were always good old boys – and that got shaken up, which was good. And when Charlie Johnson left, there were others who left, too, and of course, all the partisan offices could be replaced. I don't think all of them were, but the most important ones, the Sergeant at Arms, of course, was. I think the staffing of the Senate, it seems to me that it was already a nonpartisan staff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think at least some of it was. But there seemed to be a lot of tension around staff issues in the press.

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the Senate, every committee had a Republican staff member. And so there

wasn't too much of a shifting there and I think that the staff director was the same one that was nonpartisan staff. Then when he retired, Stan Pynch became the head, who was Republican, and has kept the job. And the guy, Ed Seeberger, I guess, had been with the nonpartisan staff, he kept his job. But the principle Republican on the staff during the Democratic regime became the staff director.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was some shuffling around there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, in that sense, that they would all work together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess I'm getting a different feeling now about this. At first, the way I was reading this was that there would be a tremendous feeling of betrayal, but it almost seems like maybe it was a feeling of relief. "Okay, it's happened."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was expected and tensions were really bad before that. No one knew what to expect. Nobody could really do very much. But usually the legislation in the Senate was always so carefully scrutinized, with both sides being heard, that I don't think we had the problems that occurred in the House where they had to have double staffing, Republican/Democrat during the equalization. And the Democrats always took care of the Republicans, we really did. We went out of our way to see that they were taken care of. Now, that didn't occur with the other side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some comments along those lines.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But then there was no unanimity because I know the Ways and Means chair, as I observed, had had problems with the fellow who became Ways and Means chair and he relied on the knowledgeable Democrats to help him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you, in a way – this is probably too strong a word – happy not to be the lead people on dealing with the recession? Was there a feeling of, "Okay, let's see what the Republicans can do with this?" Because things were pretty rough, budget-wise.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the Democrats always wanted to be in control, but the Republicans didn't. The Republicans didn't because they have never gone out and sought good solid back-ups for Senate positions. I don't think they looked out as carefully. They brought in people who were not too well qualified. I was unhappy. But I liked George Sellar and there was no problem. I respected him. I knew that he was a moderate, because we had had so many problems with the abortion issue. He was always on our side on that issue and he was always good. Of course, then they destroyed him after that and he got into trouble. He was really a wonderful man. And the Republicans always sort of leaned on the Democrats, and took potshots all the time but I don't think they ever wanted to be in leadership, except a handful of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you had a committee meeting and came into the room, did you then take a different chair? You were now the minority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You don't have any set chairs in committee meetings; you can sit anywhere. We sort of got our place and held it, and we still held those places, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wondered what the feeling was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, a lot of us got cut out of some of the committees. Because the committees became Republican. Although it was so close, there wasn't that much – except Rules Committee changed substantially. On Rules there were so few of them, they couldn't do anything anyway. There were only about five members, as I remember. They cut it way back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Rules changing its place in the process a little bit? For one thing, it was open now; it was not that "secret graveyard" for bills any more.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But it was a last stanchion of finding things out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's still the place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we couldn't win on Rules on policy, because that is policy. Ways and

Means we could; it's policy, but it was also money decisions. And sometimes Republicans, rather than hurt their own constituents, would go with us, so there was a chance. So as I remember, I chose to stay on Ways and Means because I'd been vice chair twice so I automatically was on that but I couldn't hold my place on Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides the shift in leadership and the structures of the committees, was there – how would you put it – a new look to the session? Was there a new message? Did the Republicans take hold and really have an agenda?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it started out pretty moderately as I remember and I don't remember any harsh words or anything. Ted just shrugged his shoulders because he knew it was going to happen, I mean we knew eventually it was going to happen. We thought we knew. And it was so uncomfortable and we knew Peter was talking to them. And he'd asked for something more, but I don't remember what it was. He wanted something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently he feared for his life; he said he got death threats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He's full of prunes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had to have the State Patrol walk him around. The press coverage was just tremendous on this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't believe it! And he had this fellow that he had captured, his go-between that was doing television. I don't know what he was paying him but he was always around in Peter's office. I remember Ruthe Ridder said something about, "I always thought prostitution was reserved for women," to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there were some cutting remarks!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never thought I'd live to see the day. She called him a prostitute!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was a fair amount of bitterness?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had the rest of the session to get through and what you had was a spiraling downward of the economy. Despite the rosy "better days are around the corner" speeches, it actually just got worse and worse.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Is that when we raised the sales tax? Put the sales tax back on food?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a lot of ideas about how to deal with this. Governor Spellman began with the statement that "There will be no new taxes," but then he proposed different things. The press called it "floating balloons," trial ideas, just to test the waters, perhaps. He started off with the traditional methods: the freeze on hiring, purchases and travel for state employees, borrowing from other funds and such. Then apparently they got into some scrapes where for several days each month there would be no money and they would come scrambling around and the State Treasurer got a little testy. He didn't like that; he found what he called the "fiscal sleight of hand act" too much for him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** McDermott called it "smoke and mirrors."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, and then Governor Spellman raised the idea of a couple of other things. There was the temporary surcharge on the sales tax and the B&O taxes, in other words, a tax increase. And bringing back the sales tax on food – which, of course, was kind of a hot one – and then what was equally hot – he talked about taking the lid off property taxes, which apparently had just been put on the session before. Speaker Polk just really got on the soap box and said that there was "an absolutely vehement, overwhelming resistance to any such thing." But, in fact, it seemed that apparently people were paying less in property taxes than they had for years and years because of inflation and the way it is all calculated; that, in fact, people weren't paying very much.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Our property tax never has been great; it's the special levies that could cause the problems and you can't touch those. So he could ask for more of the state property tax go to the



state, because we'd been reducing. It was ten percent at first and it was being slowly reduced, I think, down. And we were getting less and less.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there didn't seem to be many places where you could go for more money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There wasn't. But the most important one: the Republicans wanted to bring the tax back on food. That was their big thing. One of the bad parts of the sales tax on food that always bothered me was that we collected sales tax on food stamps and I thought that was just awful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's going pretty far.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I tried to get it off from the time I went into the Legislature, I never could get the bill even heard. I thought that was so wrong and I was screaming my head off over that and nobody listened to me. In fact, I finally stopped dropping it in, I guess, because it wasn't going to work. The way we got it off and kept it off when the tax went off food – we did put the sales tax back on food for a month, but it was with the understanding that they could never put it back on the food stamps. We won a point there. But DSHS said they could give them extra stamps with the money from the tax. That was their argument.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot of bookkeeping – it sounds like an accounting nightmare.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's a bunch of crap.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently, the situation worsened over the summer, but what's interesting is there began to be calls for a special session, but Spellman was very reluctant to have one. In fact, he said, "The Legislature would spin their wheels for several weeks, run up costs and merely add to the problem." Now, as a legislator, what do you think when you hear that? Do you think that's a fair characterization?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a good characterization. I think he was right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Legislature meet for weekends, or whenever? Were you discussing this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we were, because we had committee weekends at that time but we weren't in session; we couldn't actually do anything. We could just discuss issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have some ideas yourself of what should happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember what I thought we could do to repair it. I don't remember even having any idea in my head.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel it was an executive issue and that you didn't feel the Legislature could solve this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think we all worked on it, tried to figure out a way. There were all kinds of ideas coming in about taxing wheels, like cars with wheels. There were all kinds of ideas for what we could tax next, but there was still the whole idea that there could be no more tax increases. So what do you do? You can't...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans were holding pretty strongly to that, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Except that we could have a tax on a tax already there, increase the B&O tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, no new taxes, just some slight increases or reworking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's all the same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It almost seemed like Governor Spellman was rather regretting that strong promise and that they were kind of holding his feet to the fire on that one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you know, we still held on; the thing that I kept – the Displaced Homemaker bill did not go down the tube. We kept those things. See, that was the thing that we were able to do but we weren't able to provide any answers; it wasn't our job. But we did work at it. I think we all tried to think of some way to do it, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed pretty dire.



*Speaking on the Senate floor, Senator Wojahn was able to save the Displaced Homemaker Program despite draconian budget battles. Senator Marc Gaspard in foreground*

**Sen. Wojahn:** Like later, finding funding for trauma care, we did it. Not a tax but a fee. So there were ways to do it but we didn't have our thinking caps on too much because it wasn't our responsibility. They asked for it. But I'm sure if anybody came up with a brilliant idea, it would have been accepted. But nothing was a brilliant idea if it raised taxes, so we'd just be slapped down anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did seem that way. That no one could fix this; it was deeper and more difficult.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's always the thing: "Don't tax you, don't tax me, tax the man behind the tree." Don't tax hops, because that was really Newhouse's thing; don't tax soy beans because that's somebody else's and don't tax wheat because that's somebody else's. Don't tax apples, don't tax cherries, don't tax peaches, don't, don't, don't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Meanwhile, it was going pretty deep into the red there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was even an initiative at that time to end the state inheritance tax. I don't think that passed, but it seemed like bad timing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it did. No, no, we rewrote the inheritance taxes after we got the majority back, but then the next year after we passed that bill, they did repeal the inheritance tax by initiative. We don't have an inheritance tax in our state. They are basically mad because people come here to establish a residency. I had that happen with a friend who had maintained his residence in Texas but hadn't probated there because he was living in Washington at the time he died.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's an interesting little maneuver.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes, that's right. You don't do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So somehow you got through the spring, the summer, the fall. By fall you are talking about the tax on food and things were not turning around. There were pronouncements that, "Oh, this is as bad as it's going to get."

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had a special session in November of that year and so we put the tax back on food. Things were really bad. But we left it only for a month, didn't we?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You tried to put lids on pretty much everything you did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So it would self-destruct. We did something else to the sales tax; when the tax went back on food, there was a tax increment change in the sales tax. When the bids had come for the Tacoma Dome and there was so much allocated on the bid for sales tax and that was increased by \$150,000, which wasn't a lot of money – it was on materials, I guess. And I tried to get a waiver for that. I didn't get it; I lost the bill. And that infuriated me so I wouldn't vote for any taxing for the Seattle Convention Center or anything else after that because they wouldn't

give it to Tacoma for this and so that was the end, no more!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it delay the building of the Tacoma Dome?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The City had to pay that, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somehow they scrambled it together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had to. I think they finally got some kind of a concession with the contractor to split the cost; it was about \$75,000 maybe – it was about \$150,000; it wasn't much. We could have done it, and it would have been fine, but we didn't. So that took care of that and that was my big issue. That was the biggest issue I had that whole session, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at another issue raised that session: with the Republican hold on the two Houses and the Governorship, this being the year for redistricting, did they actually get a plan passed? There was talk of creating a commission to do it rather than the Legislature, but I don't think that came through until 1983.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Maybe not, I know that there was one passed that took away Ruthe Ridder's district and put it down in Aberdeen or Shelton somewhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't she from Seattle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but her district went down into Shelton so then she was out. And Bud Shinpoch advocated for the redistricting and voted for it, and benefited from it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did some Democrats cross over for that? Redistricting is just legendary for all the machinations that occur. I was just wondering how this one went.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We Democrats tried to keep our foot out of it, but he didn't and I think he voted for it. Senator Ridder never forgave him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty brutal when that happens. Did your district change lines?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a lot. I can't remember where I went with the last redistricting. I guess that's when I lost Dash Point and Brown's Point and got some of Fife back and I got almost into

Puyallup; I go down the River Road. That was the last redistricting. Yes, my district changed substantially.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it doesn't seem to have hurt you. You continue to be re-elected. There is nothing more personal for a legislator than the boundaries of your district.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I lost a lot of good people with that one. I liked Dash Point and Brown's Point. They were really good. And Fife – I got Fife back; I'd had Fife before. But the area that I got: I go from the River Road to the Clark's Creek Bridge, which is almost in Puyallup, clear out to 512, which is all conservative, right-wing. I can't get a feeling on it, but I think my vote was stable in the city, the north end of Tacoma and I lost a lot of the east side, which was my base.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you think they were trying to undermine you? Deliberately?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I do, oh yes. But they weren't able to do it. My strongest base had been the east side, because that is where I'd lived and where my husband's family home was and the home we bought. I lost a lot of the voters there. It strengthened the Twenty-ninth District. But I know where I lost and it wasn't Fife, and it wasn't the north end; it was the Puyallup area, the rural area. I exchanged some rural for some other rural, so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides Ruthe Ridder, was anyone else impacted quite as heavily?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ridder, I think that was the only district that changed hands and affected us. I don't remember anybody else. She ran for King County Assessor and won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she managed to stay active?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But she was really upset and I don't blame her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one issue that touched that session. You actually passed twelve different bills that session. It was one of your better years. You also sponsored or co-sponsored – I didn't count them all – but it was

an enormous number of bills. That was a very active year for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, a lot of the Republicans wanted me on their bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, in some ways a productive year, but a very tense time in other ways, with the budget and the change in majority?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was no money. It was a bad time. A bad time for everybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a lot of bad feelings which made everyone grumpy, it seemed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And even among the caucus, they were between sixes and sevens. I remember getting really angry with Ted Bottiger because he wouldn't step on von Reichbauer and deny him some of the things he was demanding, as a member of the leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was an odd thing in the Journal, which I wish you would explain to me. It's a protest that you put in and several other people did, too. You are saying that the Journal did not record your vote properly, somehow. You said, "I voted on this amendment, it wasn't recorded; I voted on this one, it wasn't recorded, and I wish it was recorded." I was curious what that was all about, was there so much turmoil that the votes weren't recorded properly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what it was. It was a complete change but Sid Snyder was still Secretary of the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You weren't the only one, several senators spoke of the problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always kept roll myself, which was just pro forma. It was for my own purposes, for the caucus purposes. Apparently, there was sloppiness with the vote taking. And that was during the Republican take-over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was during some kind of budget debate. I wondered if there was some reason behind it, about not recording the votes. So occasionally, would that happen, where the votes would not be recorded properly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they were all roll-call and so either the guy was deaf or one of us didn't read it right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just struck by the process. Several senators got up and made a point of re-recording their vote.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, this is a comparable worth battle. Apparently, they had me voting no and that was an issue that I was particularly keen on. I had worked for comparable worth ever since it was first introduced by Bruce Hedrick, so that's apparently what I was angry about, that they recorded my vote. McDermott and Charlie and Hugh had all been with me on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it would be a matter of principle in this case, to stand up and make sure your vote was counted?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had offered the amendment; apparently it didn't pass. I would never have not voted correctly on that issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's your reputation. Several things come up that year: three-way insurance is still alive, the Republicans were still...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pushing for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was product liability; was that part of the tort reform?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, there was a big push in 1981 for a lot of prison issues. There was the creation of the Department of Correction, carved out of DSHS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We took it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's talk about that in a minute. There was the creation of the Sentencing Guidelines Commission – a lot of rethinking about prison issues. There was also a huge debate on capital punishment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was opposed to it and I've never voted for anything to do with capital punishment. In my earlier years, I debated with Helmut Jueling on television over the issue. And he thought he was right and I thought I was right and neither one of us won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's not really a party issue; that's a private conscience issue, right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very much so. I think that they were all over the landscape on that one. But some of us could never vote for capital punishment, we don't believe in it. I just don't want to be a part of a society that takes a life. You don't take lives – you preserve life. Keep them in prison forever and you could do that; we have the statute on the books. It's been on there for years: the habitual criminal who never gets out of prison – that was on the books and it's always been there. Because maybe these people can't be rehabilitated, but we can keep them under lock and key.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about taking over McNeil Island? You finally achieved that. Did that impact your district in any way – you are somewhat geographically related.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought that was a very appropriate step because it had been a federal prison. My husband had worked there as an engineering aide, an architect; he was working his way through the university and he had to take two years off to make money to go back to school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was the issue controversial?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know; the people there I don't think wanted it to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does anyone live on McNeil Island besides the prisoners?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think not. I don't know. But the people who live closer – some areas, when the tide is out you can walk from McNeil over to the mainland. Now, whether the tides have changed, but people on the Peninsula didn't like the idea because the federal penitentiary didn't have the criminal types – like state level criminals – they didn't have any of the dangerous criminals. They were people who committed fraud and bad checks and things like that and it was okay, but to put in hardened criminals was not to the liking of a lot of Peninsula people. But I did not represent the Peninsula.

I'd been over there when they were talking about taking it over and then we got a temporary prison there. A friend of mine was the warden at this time. Bill Callahan was his name. He had been the superintendent at the juvenile correctional facility at Cascadia and was promoted. The state had wanted him to become the warden at Walla Walla but he refused. He said he would retire or quit first and so they gave him McNeil Island. I think he shared my feeling on capital punishment, if I remember correctly. So I went over when Bill was there, with other legislators and he was able to show us around.

That's the time that the Cuban refugees had been kept there – they had been sent up from Florida by the Feds. Many of them had been habitual criminals. The Cubans had been living in the warden's house and they had literally destroyed it. We finally got rid of all of them. They were bad people. Superintendent Callahan took us around and showed us all the things they had done to this lovely home. I did not oppose the requisition of McNeil Island for a state prison although I felt the new State Corrections Secretary was a little bit too quick to throw people in prison. And I'm told that when he left North or South Carolina to take the post in Washington, that one in every-so-many people in that state was in prison.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whew, sounds like Texas. Was that Amos Reed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Amos Reed. It was a high ratio, anyway. And that his idea was to throw them in prison and talk about it later, but he left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you a supporter of creating the Department of Corrections? Did you feel the same way about it as carving out the Department of Health?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it should come out of DSHS. It wasn't working well there. And to do that you had to establish a Department of Corrections; yes, I supported it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the Sentencing Guidelines Commission? What about that idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'd been trying to get legislation on determinate sentencing for years prior going to the Senate. I believed that sentencing should be uniform throughout the state and that a person committing a crime in Spokane should be given the same sentence as a person committing the same crime in Seattle. A Sentencing Guidelines Commission could address that because we had such disparity among the prisons throughout the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a judge over there is giving three months, this judge over here is giving two years, that kind of thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, it was so awful. And the prisoners were beginning to realize the disparity and were threatening to get cases into court on disparity of sentencing. And so we really had to do something and I supported that. I had sponsored legislation when I was on the House Judiciary Committee on determinate sentencing, so there were certain things: you do the crime, you do the time. It was a good bill, but it was too narrow. We needed a Sentencing Guidelines Commission. And someone else took the idea and developed it. I got the idea from the stories I had heard coming from the various prisons, the women's prison in particular. Women were formerly held at Walla Walla.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When did the women's prison move to Purdy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, when I was a freshman legislator, I think, was when they separated it out and moved the women to Purdy. I was involved with Corrections because of my seat on the House Judiciary Committee and was looking for ways to answer complaints. When you are on a committee you get complaints from all over the state on disparity of sentencing and all this. And so I remember talking about the problem but committee members paid little attention because I wasn't an attorney. You know, "What does she know what she's talking about?" I'd been to several seminars throughout the country on this same issue because there were advocates for it, and I was loaded with ideas or facts, but anyway the committee didn't buy it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you put it out there and who knows what chemistry happened after that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually it developed into a very good bill, much stronger than what mine would have been. So, that's all you can do. You get the ideas. I think that probably my basic contribution to the Legislature is getting ideas, listening to people, and tossing them out there. And other people mulled them over and changed them, but they were there, and we got changes because of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It all adds up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It all adds up. It's just incredible the way things reveal themselves, as we talk about them. I knew where the distractions were; I knew where the lumps were; I knew where the ripple effects were worse than the cure; yes, and you pick out and change those on behalf of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just have to be patient, I guess. That year you were on several committees: Financial Institutions and Insurance – you were the chair, but then, of course, you lost that after February 13.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And George Sellar became the chair. You still had a load of bills that you were interested in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were just housekeeping bills, a lot of them. Things that needed to be done that had been ignored before and we had whole wad of them. And I had sponsored them on behalf of the people asking for them, after I had reviewed them. I had sponsored them before. They were good banking bills. The big one I didn't go on. That was the one that gave mutuals a big leg-up and that was Senator Sellar's bill; I was the second sponsor and I refused to sponsor it because it was a huge bill and I wasn't comfortable with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain a little more about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it gave them a lot more power. And don't ask me what the details were; I don't remember because I didn't sponsor it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a tremendous amount of banking legislation at this time. Does legislation come in waves like that, where suddenly your attention is taken up with one area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of the things had been under study prior to session and anything that had been under study during the interim was brought in at that time. I was a chair of the committee and so I sponsored the ones that I felt were good and kicked back the ones I thought were bad and tried to stop the increase in the interest rates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the interest on credit, they wanted to take the lid off the twelve percent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did; I couldn't stop it. And that's the reason I took the committee because I was going to stop that bill. It was dedicated and I couldn't stop it. They voted on it on Good Friday. We were in session on Good Friday. I remember I was just getting infuriated. And I don't remember if I said it on the floor, but I said afterwards, "People are being crucified on the cross of plastic!" Yes, I don't think I said it on the Floor, but I said it afterwards. It was terribly frustrating! I said it to my buddies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To work on something for years and then have it...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had settled it; twelve percent was enough. And the one that broke the bank, because he had always been with us, was Kent Pullen, who's on the King County Council now. He always was with us in controlling interest rates but he thought it was okay to tie it to the Federal Reserve Board interest rate. And I said no because it would never be controlled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's a mechanism that will go up and down? I see, but it never does seem to come back down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It could be so many percentage points over the Federal Reserve rate, and that could cause it to exceed twelve percent. I fought it but we didn't have the votes to stop it. Kent Pullen offered the amendment and he was able to sell it. And so it could go over twelve percent.

It never would go below twelve percent, but it could go over that. He claimed it could go under, but it never would.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were successful in some other areas. You were able to pass Senate Bill 3042, extending the authorization for "satellite facilities." I just want to make sure we know what we were talking about here: "unmanned, free-standing facilities with functions similar to cash machines," so those must be ATMs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Those are ATMs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Regulating individual account deposits and financial institutions." Let's see, you worked on "authorizing parity between state and federal savings and loan associations." Some institutions were backed by federal insurance, and the state ones wanted the same backing? Now, the Savings and Loan crisis came later, but was there a relationship?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were already involved with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were S&Ls in Washington that had some problems, but not like Texas, for instance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did not do any of the things; they were able to sell to other banks. Nobody got hurt, except the federal bank who got hurt badly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, you couldn't see that the S&L crisis was going to happen, but Washington seemed to take a different path.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had separated the Commissioner of Banking, made it a separate office, rather than under General Administration. They were all good bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you had Senate Bill 3632, modifying provisions relating to branch banking.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Permitting banks to branch across county lines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To allow for more competition? Was that it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Revising the Securities Act,” a bill having something to do with security sales persons.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we regulated them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it looks like it. “Department of Licensing requests legislation to address the increasing nature and complexity of the securities industry.” Were you on these bills with Ray Moore? These sound like Ray Moore issues. Was he on your committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was a freshman then, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** His first year in the Senate was 1979. These just sound familiar to me: “Authorizing certain lenders to be identified as mortgage bankers.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got mortgage brokers at that time, in an effort to increase business in the state of Washington. We had to permit some way for them to put together financing to build a shopping center. A friend of mine was a savings and loan officer; he became a mortgage broker and put together that shopping center, that strip mall in Hawk’s Prairie.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like this is a highly regulated area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is highly regulated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have hearings and people would come in and say, “This regulation promotes this or prevents this sort of activity but we would like to be able to do such and such?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** To promote activity in areas in which there was little or no activity before in order to encourage business. And from that Hawk’s Prairie has grown, expanded tremendously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that how did you learned so much about banking? Just through osmosis? These are very complicated bills.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Osmosis and through committee hearings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was certainly a lot of activity. And you were on Ways and Means which is, of course, the money committee. You

were second vice-chair at that point, under McDermott as chair, but then George Scott became the chair. Was that quite a change in direction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, George Scott was really a very fair person, I felt. He refused to be pushed around and I think that he suffered because of it, perhaps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who was trying to do the pushing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The leadership, the Republican leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he was part of the little group that brought in Jeannette Hayner.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. And I think he may have lived to regret it; I don’t know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He lost his seat after that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he did. Well, that’s because there were so many factions and she demanded that they stay together and vote right and that created a lot of animosity, I’m sure, among members. You push a balloon one way and it comes out another; it’s the same idea that they didn’t confront. There was no confrontation but there was probably a lack of enthusiasm, is as nice as I can say it, for some of the ideas that were being pushed by the right wing who were there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were very successful in keeping together, though, for a time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And she insisted. That’s what we don’t do very well as Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t think you could appeal to “authority” in the same way. Following an authority somehow doesn’t seem like a Democratic ideal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, I don’t think so either. That’s right. That’s why we’re Democrats. My family were all Republicans; I was a Democrat because I knew that I wasn’t a Republican. I don’t think my family were very good Republicans; they never told me how they



voted. They always voted though. But they never talked politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's probably just as well, in some families. You were on Judiciary under Talmadge, but then you left that committee...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I gave my seat up to Talmadge because they only had so many slots.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because then you were in the minority, I see.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I liked it, but knew he was more qualified than I was and there were only a few slots for Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had been on it for a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. No, I gave it up to him. I could have gotten back on, but I chose not to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then you moved to Education, which is a new thing for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I didn't stay on very long. I got aggravated when they were trying to consolidate school districts and some of them wouldn't and we needed to consolidate in order to save money – if you consolidated you only had one principal and staffing, whereas with the lack of consolidation, you had double that amount. I remember a district in Pierce or King County, I don't remember which, was refusing to consolidate and I listened and I finally walked out and got off the committee because I just couldn't take it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine there are some issues where you have that extra patience or that extra interest or whatever it is that carries you over those rough spots and then other are ones where it's just not right for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it wasn't right and I don't know if I got off right away or traded. I may have stayed on for the rest of the session, but I wasn't interested in it. And I knew that there was no way you could control what went on; the politics were going to beat you every time. And the other thing was – the same with insurance – I got so annoyed with the Insurance Committee that I remember one time we were talking about the reserves and how they never used the

reserves to benefit the people. The reserves were held and there didn't seem to be a limit on the amount of reserves that a company could hold. So I listened and listened and I finally stood up and I said, "I've listened for a half an hour here and as far as I'm concerned you're all a bunch of parasites living off the woes of others." I said it! I shouldn't have! It came to me and I had to say it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These are the insurance company people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, insurance companies. I hope they've forgotten it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whew!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I said it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have given you some satisfaction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it gave me satisfaction. It got me, I guess. I didn't go back to that committee either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certain statements kind of close doors. Let's look at what else you were doing.

You were not on Rules during this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I lost Rules. Because the Republicans only allowed about five Democratic members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also served on the Joint Select Committee on Mental Health. To my recollection, this marks a beginning; you later do a lot of things for mental health.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We didn't do much. This was beginning to find out what we needed to do to assist and determine future needs and costs. If I remember correctly, that's the reason Lyle Quasim lost his job, during that period of time, or it was during this tell-all period in which he had said he couldn't do the job for any less. And what we had said, "We have to know how much you need." We were trying to find out the cost of mental health treatment and how much we were going to have to raise. There were a bundle of proposals, as I remember. A basic one was one which Senator

Janice Niemi finally got through assigned a sum of money to each individual person in the state of Washington who was mentally ill. It had never been done that way before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the money follows the person no matter where they get their care? Rather than the money going to a program?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The money follows the person. That's right. Except there's never enough money.

It was better, a lot better than it had been. But what we really needed to do to establish a program equal to physical health programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were also on the Joint Select Committee on Workers Compensation. And you had some interesting bills – you had quite a few different ones, like Senate Bill 3610 that had to do with serving alcohol by arts groups, presumably at fund raisers. Were there some groups forming in Tacoma that were trying to get off the ground and you were giving them a little help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, right. Wanting to serve wine with their openings, yes, we had to establish a new licensing, I think for that. Yes, that was fine. We were loosening up; that was part of the whole wine business, of promoting Washington wines, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Rasmussen was very concerned that children might be at these events or that it would be like football games, where people spill beer down your neck.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I hate that!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were pretty strong that these were decorous affairs and that people would not be rowdy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, people at an art showing, you don't have children at art showings. They are usually in the evening and it's a pleasurable occasion. It would be fun to have champagne or wine, sure. Anything for the arts; I always supported the arts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a raucous affair. You were quite a supporter of Pantages Theater and I was looking for a connection where you were

helping these groups have these events and support themselves.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I also remember, very early in your career, you made some changes in the voters' pamphlet and here you were again with another one requesting Braille be used.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Braille for the blind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And tapes and transcripts to be available of the voters' pamphlet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, we got that through a friend of my legislative aide, Evie White's, who was having to learn all this, to be blind, because she was going blind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was a constituent who came to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was through Evie that I found out about it, either a constituent of mine – I don't know whether it was a friend of hers, but she told me about it – and so we put in the bill to change the voters' pamphlet to provide for Braille for the blind. I believe at the same time, we also got a bill to provide books-on-tapes in libraries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was new just then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was introduced about this time, too. I don't remember if I was involved with the library tapes but I was involved with getting the Braille voters' pamphlets.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a wonderful service. It's always interesting, you know, where do you get these ideas? And, in your case, it seems to be somebody bringing you the problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Braille for the blind came from me, through my legislative aide, Evie White. At the same time Ralph Munro, the Secretary of State, found out about it, but I already had the bill in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got a lot of bills passed that session – twelve bills passed that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Is that right? I never counted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Given the political chaos of that session, I thought it was a remarkable achievement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were housekeeping bills, or bills that were such good ideas that people wouldn't oppose. And we had many constituents including the blind there helping; they were wonderful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there's kind of a sweet little bill where you're the prime sponsor, but everybody is allowed to pile onto the bill, acknowledging that Bing Crosby is a "world class entertainer."

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was born in Tacoma but he was raised in Spokane, so Spokane was always taking the credit. And there was a group of people in Tacoma who were insulted by that and they even set aside the house in which he was supposedly born. It was just a resolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bing Crosby's obviously been a world entertainer for a long time, why that year? What happened? It was just this group of people who wanted to acknowledge Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, people pushing for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody could be for that in a tough legislative year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Nobody was against it, everybody was nice that day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a whole slew of bills, of course, that had your name on them that didn't pass. I was just going to throw out a few of those because some of them are ideas that come to pass, some of them I'm not sure what happens to them. You were still working to extend the Displaced Homemakers Program and that goes on for awhile.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got a pilot program but we needed to get it transferred into a permanent statute. But because we were in the minority I was having trouble getting my Senate bill passed in the House. And that's the one that the gal from Seattle got, Delores Teutsch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it happens later, so you were keeping it alive. You were trying to get insurance – medical insurance, I guess – for

alcohol treatment. And that's a long battle, but that doesn't work out that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We identified alcoholism as an illness and we got the nonprofit centers established in the state. We had gotten the money. We got that one year and then the next year the World's Fair in Spokane was going to occur and so a group of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce people came over and they wanted to hold up enforcement of the bill because they didn't want the drunks on the street during the Spokane World's Fair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't want transients?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted to pick them up and throw them in jail.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They thought treatment would somehow not be effective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they couldn't pick them up and throw them in jail; they had to either get them into a detox center or hospitals or let them be on the street and there weren't enough detox centers or hospital beds, apparently, to take care of them in Spokane. It made me so angry. I was so offended at the committee meeting, I remember saying, "If you get this bill," I told the chair and everybody that would listen, "If you pass this bill, I'm going to put in a bill in which we have to provide detox centers for these people, because you can't just throw them back in jail."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not if you'd already declared it an illness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We'd already declared it an illness the year before. And so, they did and I did. I put the bill in but I didn't get it for a few years. There were a few centers. The Sundown Ranch in Yakima wasn't available to all; it is a private facility. We needed to establish facilities under DSHS and fund them through the state, as I remember doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's quite a change in thinking. It's quite a revolution.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, we got it. And then later on, whoever was heading the program for DSHS complained to the newspapers that they weren't

getting enough money. He was badmouthing the program and so I called him and I said, “Well, if you think you’re not getting enough money and the program isn’t working, I’ll simply repeal the bill this session and you will get nothing.” And that shut him up. Some reporter got hold of it. He was bruising the idea of doing it even, and really castigating the people who had promoted the program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And yet he’s in charge of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know if the reporter went to him over it or he went to the reporter – but it was in the paper. AP picked it up apparently, the Associated Press. It was really dreadful. Instead of trying to work out a way to effect more money and going to the Legislature, he went public. I think that’s the time that DSHS told their employees they couldn’t go public any more with their thoughts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It can backfire?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had two separate bills in to reduce paperwork in schools. Were teachers coming to you and saying they were very bogged down?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were. There were so many rules and regulations they had to follow they didn’t have time to teach. I don’t think that bill ever passed but at least the Legislature was alerted to the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it didn’t. This one was interesting to me: you wanted to remove the sales or use tax from insulin. Are all medications taxed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know. Maybe it wasn’t considered a pharmaceutical drug, I don’t know. I remember when we removed the sales tax from pharmaceuticals, there were just certain ones that were covered. And this, apparently, was not one of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then it forces you into the position of doing it drug by drug.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that’s what was happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems kind of difficult. You also put a bill in supporting the creation of the Commission on Minority and Women’s Business Opportunities, and I believe that did pass, but later.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That happened; it passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I like this one: you had a proposal to make Christmas Eve a statutory holiday. I was just curious to know, what brought that up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I remember that, that was kind of fun. A constituent request. They said nobody ever worked anyway. Businesses usually closed down mid-afternoon and had a party for the people or they’d stay home and have a party. So I decided to make it a holiday. It never happened, but you try. You please your constituents sometimes. I didn’t usually believe in doing bills like that that had little merit. We usually do a resolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is one of a slightly darker character: a bill relating to veterans exposed to chemical defoliants – I imagine Agent Orange and various things like that for Vietnam vets. Were people coming to you with that issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t remember where I got that idea. I think that we were aware that a member of our caucus was made very ill by chemicals – by farm chemicals that were creating problems – and he eventually died. That was Senator Arlie DeJarnatt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a Vietnam vet who had been sprayed by these things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think he was. You know, I don’t know, but all I remember is that there are certain chemicals that do bother people who have allergies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many people believe they cause cancer as well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. So I don’t remember why – apparently it was a constituent request.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just one of those bills that kind of shined a light in a dark corner.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you shine a light but you don't – it gets rid of a little tension sometimes, but it's worth doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly. That was a long session, the Forty-seventh session: you met January 12 to April 26 and you had a special session of one day in April 28 and then you were called back in November for almost a month.

**Sen. Wojahn:** November, wasn't that when we put the tax back on food for a month, or how long was it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine these special sessions have to do with the budget because this was the time when all the projections fell through; they thought they are going to have enough money – there was that, "We're going to turn the corner" syndrome, but, of course, you don't turn the corner. It was still bad. And so you were constantly having to figure out what to do about the shortfall. The next session, 1982, comes practically on the heels of the second extraordinary session of 1981.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were going back in January.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You only had a few weeks off. You went until March 11 and then – right the very next day – you had another extraordinary session from March 12 to April 10, and then you came back in June and stayed until July. It was pretty constant. Now, this was when annual sessions were instituted – that was supposed to take care of that problem, but obviously, with the economic issues of the day, your regular sessions were just not going to be enough. Was there a push at that time to make sessions longer? Always, there's a lot of tension expressed in the newspaper articles about, "They are late. They are using up our money." It's almost a false issue in a sense, because they do it every time. No session could be short enough to suit the newspapers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And the Washington papers are always bad. Oregon never took their legislature on. They ignored the fact that they were still in town but they don't have annual sessions in Oregon yet either. The

idea for annual sessions occurred almost every time after a new election, it's the odd-numbered year when the Governor's elected and the new Legislature, and we do the biennial budget and then the even-numbered year is when we'll only be in sixty days, to correct or adjust the budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The supplemental budget. Two years is a very long time; all kinds of things can happen to the economy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Too long. Especially in a state which lacks planning, where there is no way to plan because of our tax structure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These continuous sessions, is it just a poor economy or was there something else going on there? There was a lot of division in the Legislature and there was a lot of press about Spellman being a weak Governor. About him not being a strong leader, especially on budget issues. Was there a lot of fumbling going on here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the whole atmosphere was sour. Von Reichbauer changing and then a Republican Governor elected, and the people's business seemed to be stalled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There seemed to be a lot of crankiness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, crankiness and out-of-sorts. The Democrats knew that they weren't going to be able to control anything at all because of the strength of the leadership in the Republican Party and I think that that accounted for it. And I think from that may have been the beginning of the problems that we're having today with people getting angry and taking things personally. It was the beginning of the emergence of the right wing again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some very conservative members, just not going to give an inch on anything; pretty ideological.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. And we had to watch people like Ellen Craswell getting her way on issues that we were absolutely adamantly opposed to and there was no give-and-take.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was the emergence of a new type of legislator with the Bible in one hand, saying, “I’m right because I’m following the word of God. God tells me I’m right.” You hadn’t heard too much of that point of view earlier, I don’t think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, you didn’t hear too much of it and I think it is disappearing now but it was prevalent for a while. And that was because of the Moral Majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a new phenomenon in politics, to bring religion to the forefront.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, and I think that it actually created problems for the Republican caucus because there were liberal Republicans, or semi-liberal – they are moderates, let’s say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least secular.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, like Kiskaddon who couldn’t always choke down what they were trying to force on him. And even Pullen, at times, had difficulty, choking it down. So there was confusion. And we had some really conservative members within our caucus. They were slowly disappearing. But Ted Bottiger was one of the more conservative ones – not a social conservative – I think he did care about people, but I had trouble with him at times. And Dan Marsh was another – very conservative – from Vancouver. He fought the adoption changes – I think that was occurring about this time – where social groups were beginning to accept the fact that the secrecy about adoptions should be removed if both parties agreed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So more of an open policy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and that was bitterly fought. I had a bill on child selling and that got caught up in that same problem of adoption, and Senator Marsh killed the bill; only Talmadge amended it onto another bill so it passed, but not under my name. So there was a lot of stress. Again, there was a tug of war going on in our caucus and a tug of war going on in the Republican caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republican caucus seemed to disintegrate, especially the relationship between themselves and their own

Governor. This was the session Governor Spellman called certain members of his own caucus “troglodytes.” But they took that as their badge of honor and ran with it. But relations seemed bitter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn’t helpful; it didn’t help him to win re-election because they were at odds and that was too bad. He didn’t have a chance, really. He was business-oriented but he was compassionate, I believe, and that’s where he fell down in the eyes of some who didn’t want to share.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was certainly a hard edge to the discourse.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then he vetoed the bill on the graving docks...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Chicago Bridge and Iron project?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I loved that; his stock went up one hundred percent. I really was pleased with him for vetoing that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think he got an environmental award for that particular action.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I’m sure he did. I understand the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company built a graving dock in Ireland that’s never been used, even to this day. And there was one built in South Carolina that destroyed the environment but never was used and that was wrong. They were going to build it up around Cherry Point or Bellingham. No, it was an appropriate veto.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a huge amount of lobbying pressure, I understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it went all the way through and then he vetoed it. That took some courage.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. You bet it took a lot of courage. He was right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He’s a hard Governor to read. Something of an enigma. This veto was unexpected by many.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He wasn’t very friendly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was a hero to some, in cases like that, but it's really difficult to gauge his program. He seems to be having a lot of internal struggles with his own caucus groups. I was wondering if that sort of mired down the whole process. There's no clear sense of what you should be doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think Spellman's problem was that there was no clear line of communication between the Senate Republicans and the Governor and there were no clear issues. As I remember, things were clouded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reading about it in retrospect, it's very difficult to get a handle on those sessions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He couldn't get his program through because his troglodytes wouldn't vote for it. Democrats often did vote for the things that he projected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. I read an interesting article in one of the papers. I can't remember now who they were interviewing, but it was someone who had been there a long time and that person's take on it was, "The era of the power brokers is over and this is what happens when you don't have" – and he named – "Martin Durkan, Augie Mardesich or Leonard Sawyer." That there was this vacuum and you couldn't get anything to happen. But he also said, "It's a different era," because now you had the PDC and the ways that Durkan and Mardesich got...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Got things done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** ...is no longer "done."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Well, it's true, because the Democratic leadership gave many of the controversial bills to Mardesich and he got them through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was somewhat impervious...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he was good to business – he didn't neglect the poor, but he was very good for business and so was Sawyer. And they were able to do it and get by with it, but that's what the Republicans attacked. So they did it at their

own peril, because they both lost. The state ran very well when the power brokers were there, I believe. But things were changing anyway because of the Vietnam war and the problems on the campuses that were occurring. They had been slowly changing for the better, I believe, and had changed – we had open meetings and there was none of this big secrecy any more. So, things were getting better. The problems which might have been anticipated didn't happen because they were acceptable changes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a tremendous shift in style though, when you bring in all those changes, which by themselves might not mean revolution and you put them all together and...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a different world.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Larry Vognild beat Senator Mardesich and Leonard Sawyer didn't run again. But Mardesich still wielded an awful lot of power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These were the years when WPPSS was finally getting some attention. It seems like that had been simmering on the back burner but every once in awhile you'd see something about it, but now it really emerged as a critical issue. Did you go to hearings or get involved in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember ever being involved with that decision. Ted Bottiger was Chairman of Energy. I was in the Institutions Building at that time and the Energy Committee was adjacent to our office, so we knew there was activity going on there, but really didn't try to keep up with it. We just knew that everybody was fighting over everybody else to establish a silo in their area and then they were going to make money on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At what point did you realize that this was going to be big and really bad?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, when the City of Tacoma wanted to buy more and more of the WPPSS bonding and wanted to get involved with it. We had always had competitive private and public power in Tacoma. Tacoma City Light had a project at McCleary and they didn't know if

they were never going to be able to sell that power. It was greed; they all got greedy and then it all blew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's an enormously complex issue. Sue Gould seemed to be the person who was raising the issue. At least some legislators were calling for a halt in construction and for studies.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. She was on the Energy Committee – she was chair, wasn't she? There was awareness with people who were involved with energy that there was a problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At any point, did the ordinary legislator get involved with WPPSS?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not much. Nobody knew that it was dangerous because Three Mile Island hadn't exploded yet, where it became abundantly clear that it could be dangerous as hell. But we had no state energy policy; still don't have one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the economic picture? It seemed like the contracting end of building those plants was completely out of control.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was out of control and it was authorized and then the problems occurred and that was the end of that, you know. Nobody had even worried about it until we realized it was going to be bad and that the bond rating was going to be affected. A lot of us didn't realize it until it actually happened. The bond rating went down from Triple A to B. I don't know if Chernobyl had occurred at that time or not. But they figured there was danger. And we should get by on water power – dams.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, when economic times are bad, people turn to gambling. There was a lot of pressure to allow more gambling and to get a state lottery.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always fought the state lottery.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That didn't happen yet. But you do, in this year, get the Displaced Homemaker's Program continued with House Bill 286 and it passes quite easily. So somehow

some of the tension around that is resolved and people recognize it as a useful thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Polk was the Speaker at that time, I think. And he's the one who fought the Displaced Homemaker bill. I remember when the bill came before the Senate; we got the House bill over and we didn't have the votes and I held up a vote on another important bill until one of our absent members could get there, Senator Jerry Hughes. Delores Teutsch quit the Legislature after that bill. She figured she'd broken her pick; she was a really good friend and she bulldozed it through the House in spite of Speaker Polk's opposition. The Senate was holding back because they wanted her bill to pass. Really took it away from me. It was a bill I had sponsored, protected, preserved, kept in a small non-operating agency. And it's still there. It simply showed how ugly politics had become when the conservatives took over the Legislature. But I didn't worry about her getting the credit for the bill at all because without her commitment the bill would not have passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The main point was it passed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you don't have to keep pushing on that one. You kept your vision.





## CHAPTER 13: HARVESTING THE FRUIT OF EXPERIENCE, 1983



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you kind of limp to the end of the 1982 session and then there is an election and the Democrats regained the majority. What was that election like? Were you able to take the Republican record and say, “Is this what you want?” Were people unhappy with the Republican record?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, apparently they were, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, in hard economic times the electorate often flips parties.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s true and the Republicans had had to impose the taxes because they were in control and I’m sure that fact was used by the Democrats before the election. And Spellman wasn’t going to get a second term. So that was two Governors in a row who had not been elected for a second term. I tried to stay out of the Governor’s race.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Fortunately for Spellman, there was no Governor’s race this year, not in 1982. He had two more years to go. But in the

Senate, the Democrats pulled back up; they had twenty-six to twenty-three members after everything was counted.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Got the House back, right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it flip-flopped from a Republican majority of fifty-five to forty-three to a Democratic majority of fifty-four to forty-four. In the Senate you didn’t have a huge margin, but a lot more comfortable than a one-vote margin. The House Democratic victory changed the character of the House. The new Speaker was Wayne Ehlers, a teacher and librarian.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was a librarian, in fact from Pierce County – Tacoma. He was a disciple of Ted Bottiger, you know. He’d helped him win all of his elections so they were really good buddies. He knew the Legislature like the back of his hand because he had been campaigning with Ted so long, and working with him on legislation, so it was a natural.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s always helpful to have an experienced person at the helm.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. He was very capable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Barney Goltz regained the President Pro Tempore position. One thing that was interesting was Sid Snyder was still the Secretary of the Senate – he never lost that position, even when the Republicans were at the helm. So that says something about him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They couldn’t handle it. They didn’t have the expertise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ted Bottiger was still your leader and George Fleming was still the Caucus Chair. Bud Shinpoch was the Assistant Majority Leader, but you changed position. You were moving up a little bit; you were the Vice-Chair of the caucus now. What did you do as Vice-Chair?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing. Just through leadership. They have to listen to you when you have little meetings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That helps. Your Majority Whip was Larry Vognild, who was also rising in the ranks, and Dianne Woody took over the Secretary position. Ruthe Ridder had left the Senate at that point?



*Walking on Capitol Campus with Senator Larry Vognild of Everett, Senate Democratic Whip*

**Sen. Wojahn:** She became County Assessor in Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had slightly different committees this time. You were on Commerce and Labor. Isn't that a new combination to include Labor with Commerce?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they combined the two. There had always been a Labor Committee and a Commerce Committee and they combined the two and I didn't like it. They just needed to consolidate committees and they did it and I thought it was a mistake.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't seem like they have identical or even compatible interests.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they were absolutely, diametrically opposed to one another. You didn't get them fighting in committee but between the bills – supported by business and not supported by labor and vice-versa – there was always controversy in the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed a rather awkward combination. You were the Vice-Chair, so you were still on Financial Institutions, but Insurance has been lopped off of that – so maybe after your big speech, it was a good thing? That committee actually changed a little bit. And you were back on Rules and still on Ways and Means. That seems like quite a full plate. You were a full-time legislator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, I always have been.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These are big committees; you have a lot going on. The budget was still a mess. You were struggling, struggling, struggling.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But McDermott was chair now, wasn't he?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. There were a lot of tax bills, but I want to talk about the gas tax that you mentioned earlier, HB 235, sponsored by Representative Martinis, which was a request bill from Governor Spellman. What can you tell me about that bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an increase, a substantial increase; it was the last substantial increase that we have ever made on the gas tax. And that was when we formed the fund to assist local governments. They allocated money to be used by local government from the gas tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For transportation issues? For, say, county roads and things like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. For transportation-oriented things. And is that the year that we identified ferries as an extension of the highway system? So we had to pay for that out of the gas tax. And the one that was just repealed, that's causing all the problems now?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The car license tabs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It brought in lots of money. It seems to me that Peterson was chairing Transportation at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he was. He offered amendments to the bill and was heavily involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If we were in control, why did everybody vote against it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** From what I could tell, at first the Democrats were opposed to this. There must have been some provision in it that you didn't like. And then Senator Peterson brought in extensive amendments. In the Journal they go on for five to six pages modifying the gas tax, and then Senator McDermott brought in some amendments, but Senator Peterson objected to his amendments. He said they were beyond the scope and object of the bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So it was scoped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there was a pause while the President of the Senate figured out, I guess, what the ruling was going to be; you had a little "at ease" session. And about twenty minutes later the President called you back and said, "Yes, Senator McDermott's amendments were beyond..." He gave his ruling and Senator Zimmerman brought in some amendments.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He's a Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are several points of inquiry, some from Senator Jones and Senator Peterson answered them. Back and forth like that. Senator Zimmerman asked some questions. You brought up a pretty interesting point: one of the issues was, if you increase the gas tax, people in the border counties were very concerned about this because everybody would run across the border...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. To buy their gas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You ask the question about self-serve gas stations in Oregon. You'd just been down there on a trip.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they don't self-serve. They've never self-served in Oregon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what was your thinking? If our gas tax is higher, it's still not as expensive as full-service gas?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, if our gas tax is higher than self-serve, people could pay less by serving themselves. There wouldn't be that disparity between Oregon and Washington. And I wanted them to recognize that. I supported the position of the border counties that were really being raped because of the limited inventory tax, because of what was happening to border counties. We eliminated that to help the border counties survive. Because all of the building supply companies were building right at the border, at Jensen Beach in Oregon; sure, and so I'd always been supportive of that. And Al Bauer had always been supportive of anything that we wanted as far as taxation was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And he's from the Vancouver area, a border county.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Except for that. And so I felt more loyalty to him and what he was attempting to do in behalf of his own constituency. So I brought that up to explain that maybe there wasn't this disparity that we were anticipating, because we did let people serve themselves and save some pennies. Whereas, it was a flat across-the-board in Oregon. And I think that was the reason for the question – to clarify.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They brought up the Idaho border, as well. That's a lot of counties. Would opponents of this bill be elaborating on this border issue as a sort of red herring, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well no, they didn't like the idea of raising the tax on cars, on the price of a car. I think that's where the disparity occurred.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you have to register your car in your state. I mean, I thought it was quite difficult to buy a car out-of-state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can buy a car in Oregon but when you bring it to this state, you have to license it and you pay the state tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's not like gas...

**Sen. Wojahn:** You're not saving any money, no. But what they were objecting to, I think –

most of them – was the fact that there was such a bounty on cars. I mean, the cost of licensing the more expensive cars was so expensive and had increased so much. And that's what the battle was over, I'm quite sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't seem to come up in the accounts of this one, but it might be simmering in the background.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sometimes they don't talk about the things that are bothering them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What they are really thinking about and what they are saying may not match up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several points of inquiry. Members were really working this over pretty thoroughly. And then more amendments were offered and finally there was a roll call vote and only eight people voted for this, thirty-nine voted against it, one absent, one excused. So it was not really going anywhere. You voted against it and it's declared lost, but then there was a notice for reconsideration, so it's not dead. What was interesting to me is that then it kind of sat there. That was April 27, and then it disappeared for quite awhile and did not resurface until May 11. What was going on in the background?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of arm twisting. Trade-offs and arm twisting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody wants this even though only eight people voted for it. What was the big attraction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Republicans wanted it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But why didn't they vote for it then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did in the end. Spellman was still Governor. He'd been twisting arms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody is certainly twisting arms.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Good twisting Republican arms. The Democrats were not going to vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but it was very striking how very few people voted for it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, everybody realized that the only way that you could win on this was through the additional expense of the licensing of a car and if you bought a car from another state, you had to pay the tax when you brought it into the state anyway. So, you were going to be hit regardless, if you bought a new car or even a used car in another state. Because when you went to license it, you would have to pay the difference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your own mind seemed to be changing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did. Because I was getting pressure from home. The road building contractors were calling me. But that didn't do it because I was able to thumb my nose at them whenever I felt like it. But the Chamber of Commerce – I represent the Chambers of Commerce in my district – and all the people who were working on the roads, they needed the bill. So labor was for it, and the Chamber was for it and the Woodworth Company – John Woodworth who was a friend of mine, was for it. And his second-in-command, Ed Sheriff, was for it and was a personal friend of ours. And Tacoma needed it. How do you vote no?



*Ribbon cutting at Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce to establish the Retired Executive Mentor Program*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So everywhere you go, people were actually for this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All of the business community and labor community.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were feeling a certain amount of heat here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn't feel heat. I just knew I was going to vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they put it in a new light for you? And so you said, "Well, okay, I see it differently now."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think I was approached, that as former Chair of the Commerce Committee, I needed to recognize that there are certain things that you needed to do to keep the economy going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, the economy was not in good shape.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And if you remember, I'd run for Mayor before that and had a lot of support from the Chamber and from people and I felt it was my duty to vote for it to help them out. I was getting a lot of pressure to vote for it. But I never told them how I was going to vote, never! I don't think I really knew how I was going to vote until it actually hit me. The moment of truth is when you vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, let's set the stage here. It was read in and placed on final passage and then Senator Bottiger wanted the Senate to be declared at ease. Right in the middle of the debate, he called a halt. Now what happened then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lobbyists in caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you came back onto the floor about twenty minutes or so later – just a brief time – and then Bottiger wanted it deferred. He said, "I'm not ready to do this," I guess? Can the leader just say, "Put it back on the shelf."

**Sen. Wojahn:** He calls the bills up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then it was deferred, but not for a long time. That was where I got tripped up and couldn't follow the action.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Was this a House bill or a Senate bill?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a House bill. Representative Martinis was the prime sponsor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Martinis, but this was Fisher's bill. She was on the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anyway, he puts it off and then the Senate switched gears and worked on some confirmations and gubernatorial appointments. There was a whole list of them but you only did one and then, suddenly, you were back talking about this bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were waiting for everybody to get there. Often it's withheld when there is a caucus and all members are not on the Floor. While they're waiting for all the members to get in their seats, they do housekeeping things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Inside your caucus, would people have revealed how they were going to vote?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you kept that to yourself, what you were going to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't tell anybody. And I don't remember even talking about it in caucus. And I can't figure out what it was but I assumed it was to discuss the bill and I don't remember speaking up for or against it in caucus. I don't know how Ruth Fisher voted in the House on it. She was real active in Transportation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that sway you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sway me, oh yes. But she didn't call me about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you just would know?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If I saw her name.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You considered some appointments and then swung back to considering this bill and did a roll call vote. They called all the names – you're pretty much at the end of the alphabet, or close anyway, and you told me earlier that Jim McDermott was standing near you...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was watching the vote. But I don't know whether he voted on the first track because they don't announce it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what happens when you vote? What do you do? Do you press a button?

**Sen. Wojahn:** When you vote it's just a roll call. A verbal roll call and I had a roll call sheet and I was counting the votes. And it got to me and I was the twenty-fourth vote, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what about Jim McDermott? When did he change his vote?

**Sen. Wojahn:** At that point. He had walked away from watching the count and I had said to him, "Jim, you have to vote for this. Tacoma needs it." And he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because he would have voted before you, alphabetically?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He would have voted before me or he may have been off the floor for part of the vote. He may have been off in the wings or off the floor and come in then and come over, because I sat right behind him, one seat removed. And he would have walked up to watch the vote count because they were clustered around me, watching the vote count which I was tallying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He voted for it, but Marc Gaspard did not.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I know. Neither did Bottiger. I knew that. Hardly any of the Democrats voted for it. I think Jim and I were two of them. Oh, it just barely passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Bauer did. And Ray Moore, Lowell Peterson, Shinpoch, Vognild, Frank Warnke, and Dianne Woody. But it passes twenty-five to twenty-three with one excused. It was very tight.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if it hadn't been for me, and my asking Jim, the bill wouldn't have passed. And that was the last big gas tax that was passed in this state. And that's what I keep telling everybody. Jim McDermott may have been a liberal, but he was also a team player. And people don't understand that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people didn't vote for it. Why didn't you approach them? Marc Gaspard, for instance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't know who was going to do what. I wasn't aware that these people were all going to vote for it or were not going to vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then it was too late?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there was no way to do it. We were in the middle of a roll call and I was trying to take the roll call. It might have been reconsidered. All I know is that I got flowers from the Chamber of Commerce and I couldn't imagine why they were sending me flowers. I mean, it didn't seem to me that big a deal – but it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was to them. If it means that their projects can go forward, it means everything. So that was a very tight vote for a big change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But nobody knew how I was going to vote, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are the moments that stand out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was a real – that's the reason you don't forget. See, some things you never forget, other things – so many things happen and you have so much stored in your head and you feel like your brain is going to bleed sometimes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, when you're about to cast an important vote, is it like in the movies where there's all the action around you, but you are centered in yourself and it's like there is an island of quiet around you? And you are ready to say "aye" or "nay?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** I've always been able to concentrate. I've been able to concentrate so hard when we're talking about something on the floor and I'm reading something that I need to absorb before the vote comes up. People have stood there at my desk and not been able to get my attention. I don't even see them; it's like blinders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must be an important skill there because it's always noisy and full of distractions. I would think a person with ADD would have a very difficult time!

**Sen. Wojahn:** They would have a difficult time working with the Legislature because you have to retrain yourself. Pretty soon they'd tap me on the shoulder, you know, and then I'd come awake. And the other thing that I always done is listen to both sides. They say that very few votes change listening to debate and I would agree with that, because you usually know how you're going to vote when you walk on that floor. And it's very rare that you really need to listen hard, but I always did. Because you pick up the emotion of the person that's talking and you pick up how important it is to them. And if someone is so persuaded that they were right on an issue that I may have been ambivalent about, then I would make up my mind then. But usually on any important vote, you know how you're going to vote. But you get so many issues that you couldn't possibly know especially if they're not controversial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And bills are not always worded in such a way that you would understand what's behind them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely not. That's the reason it's tough to find out what the ripple effects are. But you need to; on any controversial vote, you need to know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even some bills that don't seem controversial turn out to have great ripple effects.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true, too. We've all been trapped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure. There was another very big issue that session: comparable worth. A little background: it got on the stage in about 1974 with Dan Evans. He put some money in the budget to start to take care of the inequities, but then Dixy Lee Ray, the next Governor...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Wouldn't put money in the budget. I went public on that, I was so angry about it. Because it wasn't that expensive and it was something we couldn't let go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like the longer you put it off, the worse it got.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. The City of Tacoma never did get it. And so anything that we could do at a state level we needed to do. And you couldn't let it drop for a year or two-period because it would fall off the charts and it would never come back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It became a campaign issue between Spellman and McDermott. They were actually both supportive of the position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then it got lost in the horrible recession-budget mess. There just wasn't the money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was no money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But other people were saying, "Who cares if there's no money? It's right."

**Sen. Wojahn:** You need to keep the idea alive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1982 you, with Senator Eleanor Lee, sponsored a bill, 4769, for comparable worth for higher education personnel and state employees. Previously, did they want to do it all in one big lump? Your idea was to phase it in over a ten-year period. So that it wasn't quite as difficult, I gather.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because of the fact that you didn't know how the budgets were going to work out. That you shouldn't take it out and then have to expand on it the next year. It became a necessary part of a future budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like a good stratagem. You gave that to Ways and Means, it went to Rules, and came out of Rules. But some more conservative senators were opposed to this. They start to pull it apart – some arguments come up again and again. Senator Pullen wanted to put an amendment in that challenged the foundation argument which is that men and women doing comparable work – in other words, jobs that take as much skill, training and responsibility, though not necessarily...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Knowledge and education, right.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the same levels should be paid in a similar fashion. The strategy for Washington Women United, and other people supporting this, is that women should be brought up to men. And it wasn't always women, but mostly it was women who were underpaid, in comparison to men. Senator Pullen adopted the strategy that no man should be brought down to where women were; women should be raised up. That was pretty interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, you can't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because then you would have all the men up in arms?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was not a friendly amendment?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. He was very clever at manipulation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounded reasonable except that it would not work that way? The other thing that he wanted to do was strike out the word "similar" and put in "virtually identical."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That wouldn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That changed the intent. The idea is that the jobs are similar and not identical. And, again, those are just a couple of words...

**Sen. Wojahn:** He just did it to kill the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was evidently pretty devastating. They were offering a lot of them. There was a lot of action there. It was put on final passage but McDermott returned it to second reading, or he wanted to. Is that because he sensed there were just not enough votes for it, do you think?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it passed the Senate but then it went to the House where it never saw the light of day.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had no control in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So perhaps McDermott, would he know that you weren't ready? Why would he try to pull it back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. Did he have an amendment to the bill? Well, the only other thing, if he didn't have an amendment, if he didn't know if there was an amendment to the bill, the philosophy that you pay it all at once rather than over a ten-year period may have been the reason he wanted – I don't know why. I didn't ask him. I think we knew we had the votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The only Senate members who voted against it were Craswell, McCaslin and Pullen. Except for these three senators, everyone voted for it. But then it didn't go anywhere. You brought it back, you and Eleanor Lee and a slightly different cast of senators, brought it back in 1983 as Senate Bill 3248. There was a lot more battling along very similar lines. Same amendments, same people. Same action – a lot of delaying tactics. It slid into special session and you kept it alive. It passed the Senate and it was sent to the House. They proposed some amendments. The Senate did not concur, but the House receded; they removed their amendments. I didn't follow exactly what happened then, but it did pass.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The House must have receded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, they did. It's there, at last. It's called "historic;" it's a landmark bill. It's even given an appropriation of \$1.5 million and you say, "It means that the Democrats are serious about comparable worth." How did you get so involved in comparable worth?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was just a matter of justice. It was there. It's the same thing as women of comparable talents; it's the same as a professional woman being paid the same as a professional man in the same profession. There's a degree of unfairness there. And I guess women are now making seventy-eight cents to every dollar that a man makes, even today.....

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Instead of fifty-nine cents.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, but comparable worth was even more divisive. Because some of the comparisons that we had were – one of them was a truck driver was able to make three

dollars an hour more than a nutritionist with a four-year degree, or a nurse. And typically, women's jobs have always paid less than men's, even though men enter that field, they're still in the lower bracket. The nurses, the teachers, the nutritionists in the hospitals, they are very professional; it takes a lot of education, and so that when I heard about the truck driver getting more – three dollars an hour more than a woman who had a baccalaureate in food and nutrition – that really blew my mind. And a lot of this was true. Women who understood computers were getting less than men who understood computers. There was no comparability there. And that needed to be corrected. And so, I guess it's just my own basic sense of fairness that got in the way here of my doing anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The one argument that I wondered if it gave you pause, was in these hard economic times – because you were still not out of the recession – if you raised some salaries, some people were going to lose their jobs. Because there was this “x” amount of money only.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so, women down at the bottom would be the ones laid off.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But all things being equal, it wouldn't occur because a capable woman – it might be the man who lost his job. It wouldn't always be the women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was an argument that people were using: “We can't afford this.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** “Because you're going to cut people off.” That's what they say about minimum wage, too. You pay more and you cut people off. That isn't true. We always seem to be able to rise to the occasion and it's been going on for centuries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it just was a very long, hard fight.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, everything that women have attempted to do has been. We had to prove and re-prove and discuss and battle and prove again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Eleanor Lee seemed very strong on this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was very strong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Her statements were very thoughtful. What was it like to work with her?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Fine. We usually agreed on things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She's a Republican, but she seemed to hold very similar views on this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, she was a good gal except when she got involved with the need to vote straight-party line. When she got caught in that trap, too. It must have been very painful for the Eleanor Lees and the Bill Kiskaddons and the Zimmermans, to a degree, who were thinking people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She seems very liberal in her ideas. She was a strong feminist.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Her daughter was able to take advantage of the sexism-in-education bill, which was the bill that we passed early on, because she became a member of the track team at her high school and maybe got a college scholarship, I don't know. But a lot of gals got college scholarships because of that – because they were offered. They had to offer the same as men. And now we have a woman's baseball field at Husky Stadium. And the women's basketball team is doing great and so that's all happened because of that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, that's a ripple effect!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was Title IX that did it, but we hooked onto it immediately.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty interesting. Another thing that you did for women in that session was your bill, SB 3197, on reconstructive breast surgery.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, we got it. I had told the people who supported me that wanted it that I couldn't possibly get it because we were exempting mandated benefits. But I said, “I'll try. I'll put a bill in and we'll see what we can do.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a constituent, again, coming to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a constituent, a physician, a plastic surgeon. He had operated on the daughter of the aide to Governor Cherberg, Mary Lou. Her daughter had to have a mastectomy and wanted to have reconstructive surgery and so it was because of her story. The doctor, who was a constituent of mine, came to me and asked me if I'd sponsor the bill. They said they'd picked me to sponsor the bill but I told them, "I'll sponsor it, but I don't think there is any way in hell we're going to get this bill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you begin by educating members on this issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We educated the senators. We got the bill into the Commerce Committee, which Ray Moore was chairing at the time, rather than in the Health Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems an odd choice. Was it because it is an insurance issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We were lucky to get it assigned to that committee. Anyway, it went into Senator Moore's committee – and I wasn't on the committee at that time – I had been, but I wasn't then. And I had Mary Lou's daughter come in and testify. And the AWB – the Association of Washington Business – sent a member to testify whose wife had gone through a mastectomy and so they also supported the bill. It was incredible! It was a coalition that wouldn't stop! And labor, of course, supported it and the physicians supported it and so it was beginning to look pretty good. But I was still skeptical we could get it. The physician who had performed

the surgery on Mary Lou's daughter brought his slides to the committee meeting; they turned out the lights and he showed the slides of what actually happened and how maimed it left a woman's body. And they turned on the lights and every man in that room was as white as those candles. It was an all-male committee. Someone moved to approve the bill and send it to the Rules Committee with a "Do pass" recommendation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No more slides!

**Sen. Wojahn:** No more slides! No more discussion! It was just a riot!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is very frank.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and I pulled it out of Rules and wham – away it went. And got over to the House and Mike Kreidler was chairing the committee over there and the doctor who had done the plastic surgery was in the same Army reserve as Representative Kreidler, so he walked in and they knew each other.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there it was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he had his slides and the bill bounced out – flying through like it had been greased. It was incredible! Then all of the insurance companies came down on it and tried



*Governor John Spellman signs the bill authorizing insurance coverage of reconstructive surgery after a mastectomy*

to kill it. Yes, tried to kill it. And they made some changes, but it's still there. It's still good. And I think we were the first in the nation to get it. It was a good one.

It's like the alcohol one; it was the first in the nation – or second – to get alcohol treated as an illness. See, those are all mandated benefits. We passed the alcohol bill before we passed legislation denying mandated benefits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was a very important wedge, to get that in there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was incredible. I guess it was something that was supposed to happen. And you could have knocked me over with a feather when the AWB came to me and said, "We support your bill; we think it's great."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a case of one picture being worth a thousand words.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was true. That was true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whose idea was it to actually show slides? The doctor's?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The doctor. He said, "I have some slides. Do you think I should bring them?" And I said, "By all means."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's what made people face up to what they were really talking about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wouldn't forget that one in a hurry.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no. The same thing with the hearing aid bill. You know, that was an early, early bill which I sponsored. It was the very last bill to pass that session. The Senate had removed it from Senator Greive's committee. Ted Bottiger was in the Senate at that time; I was still in the House and the bill had passed the House. The reason I sponsored the bill was because Mrs. Bell, who was Governor Evans' mother-in-law, had come to me and asked me to sponsor it. She knew I did consumer issues. That's the one Representative Charette was being funny and he said, "This is the bill we call the Ma Bell bill." He said it out loud when I was still talking, explaining the bill on the Floor of

the House – he yelled that out to me – and I repeated what he'd said! And then I had to apologize. That was terrible! I apologized right away and said I said, "I can't listen to the audience." It was my mistake, but I did apologize. But anyway, those were mandated benefits which require a doctor's prescription for a hearing aid. It stopped the door-to-door hearing aid salesman from selling incorrect and ill-fitting hearing aids.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interestingly enough, with the reconstructive breast surgery, Jim McDermott did not support that bill. He voted against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know why. I didn't even know he voted against it. He is a physician.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's a psychiatrist. I mean, that wasn't his area of medicine. That surprised me though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the physicians supported it, most of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. You also passed a bill regulating charitable solicitations. Apparently, they had been regulated and then the regulations were taken off and then it got a little...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was fuzzy; the law was not clear. And we had to redo the bill to prevent abuse of charitable solicitations.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you get those heart-breaker phone calls, asking for donations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so you buy through a telephone solicitation and never see the results. Often the "charities" were keeping eighty percent of the profits or more. And so we set goals in which a solicitor could only keep so much of the money. They had to file with the Secretary of State and if personally soliciting door to door they had to wear identification.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was quite a racket.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a racket and they managed to find all kinds of weaknesses in the bill. We needed to strengthen it wherever there was a weakness. Some bills were not that detailed. We often left it up to the administering agency to write the rules and regs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The main thing is the idea. Let's look at SB 4204 now, a bill which you sponsored that certainly went through the wringer. This bill extended the life of the Board of Health for another two years so that it could be studied or at least not disbanded. Was that a stop-gap method to just hold on and buy some time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a stop-gap to try to keep the Board of Health in existence, to give them money to work with. The Board of Health is a constitutional office. And in order to remove it, we would have had to do a constitutional amendment. And the forces that were trying to force it out – DSHS – because they wanted the ability – in my opinion – to write the rules and regs for the whole state, rather than letting counties participate in the rule-making process. And I felt that was wrong because what one county needed would be another county's disaster. They didn't need the same things. They each needed to have their own voice in the writing of rules. Every county was different. And so there was a need for representation from the local county health departments throughout the state. In order to preserve the Board of Health, we had to stop a House bill which would have taken away all of the responsibilities of the Board of Health and given them to DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought that it was leading to that. So your bill just keeps it in place, but the other bill, HB 509 that I think that you are referring to, was this the one that tried to do this end run around the constitution?

**Sen. Wojahn:** To give DSHS ultimate power, and to do an end run. Actually most of the people involved were from private industry, so the lobbyists would be running DSHS and telling them what to do, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of private lobbyists for what kind of groups?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was like the insurance lobby, the health care lobbyists who wanted out and didn't want to be controlled at all by the locals or the state. And they felt, in my opinion, if they could get all of the rules and regs being made

from the top down, they would have a lot more control over everything – the whole health care industry – everybody. House Bill 509 was a ninety-two page bill – that totally disrupted the health care system in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It involved forty-million dollars of local government money. It was a huge bill – as you said, ninety-odd pages. Representative Kreidler was the chief sponsor. What was his take on why this bill would be a good thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. I think he figured bigger was better. And I believe that that is not necessarily true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people like to centralize; some people prefer local power.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct. And that was the difference between the two of us and I felt what he was attempting to do was wrong. And to destroy the Board of Health, I thought was a disaster. Which would leave the local governments – local health departments – with no say at all. We had already almost removed their authority when we established DSHS. We had taken away a lot of authority at that point, and almost destroyed them. And all we left in their place was the Board of Health and this would have removed the last vestige of local power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the Board of Health predates DSHS and they used to be the power that looked after these areas?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Along with the local health departments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then when DSHS was created, it was put above them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct. And it became the towering influence over everything that was done. And we had found out that the DSHS was not always correct. That there was trouble within the ranks of the various agencies. That they couldn't get along and they wouldn't talk to one another and they were all fighting for their own portion of the budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was just too big?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was too big, too powerful and it was destroying itself. And actually did, because we started removing parts of it before that. It was a great idea and they appealed to me to organize DSHS – and I was a tongue in cheek – I didn’t like it. I finally went along and then I backed out completely before the final bill passed. Because they contended that they needed the authority to do these various things. That if a fellow were being released from prison, he needed social services; a person being removed from the mental health agencies needed social services, and this could create a coordination of benefits within the agency. Well, it didn’t happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds logical on the surface.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s very logical but it didn’t happen!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Different kinds of professionals? Different approaches?

**Sen. Wojahn:** As a matter of fact, it became so powerful – because Corrections was under it also – that the Secretary of Social and Health Services removed a murderer who was a veteran from Walla Walla penitentiary – this actually happened – removed him from prison and put him into an old soldier’s home in Kitsap County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what happened to this guy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that created a lot of the fear. That this had actually happened! He was elderly, but he was a murderer, and to get him out of Walla Walla – he wasn’t well – they wanted to put him into this old soldier’s home where he could get probably better care. But I felt that that was exceeding the authority of the Secretary, a lot of us did. I think that that was the final straw. But anyway, there were other instances when this all-powerful, super-agency was doing things that were wrong – they should have been limited. When that DSHS bill was written, there were too many things to cover – to cover all the minute details of things that could occur. The original organization made sense, but it didn’t work. And so this Kreidler bill was an

attempt to give them further power, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You called it “the battle between the little guys and the big guys.” And it’s interesting, you think of DSHS as almost like a victim agency because they are often battered by the press, but in this case they are the “big guys.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were the big guys and they were able to make all the big decisions at the top level and very little of it filtered down to the local levels.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m trying to grasp all the implications of this action. Somehow in the midst of this, the hospice programs were at stake?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We took them out of that. We took out the things that could be affected negatively and left them alone. The hospice program – that was the most important one, as I remember. They didn’t want to be touched.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the hospice programs were really run by the local government people and with this, what would have happened to them, if they had been taken over by DSHS?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they would be moving people around. In other words, we try to keep families united within the local community. That would have given DSHS the right to move them, in my opinion, into any area they wanted to – where they had room – which would save money. Because they could take one from Pierce County and move them into Spokane County if there was a vacancy, even though it would have disrupted the family.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No one could visit them; no one could be with them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right – participation. Some of that has happened with nursing homes but we’ve attempted to stop that from happening. Just as we believe that people coming out of mental health institutions should go back to the community from which they came. They shouldn’t be allowed to stay in the community where the facility is located, because it creates problems. And these are part

of the overall things that could happen and were happening. I didn't believe that was appropriate. Actually, again, it's the same thing where you try to coordinate the programs in order to accommodate "Big Brother," the state, at the expense of the local communities and families. I was always of the opinion that you keep things within communities. You handle things within communities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were credited with derailing this effort.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did, we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you go about doing that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was tough. I had a little bill in that repealed the sunset provision on the Board of Health and maintained that control, and gave them more power and more money. Because they had no money. They had been hollowed-out by the super-agency. They had no money; they didn't even have telephone cards to call one another. They couldn't make contact with one another without pocket expense to themselves. They were hobbled. And so we gave them more power and gave them more financing. The fact that the Board of Health was a constitutional office gave me my only power. And that was the one that Senator Irving Newhouse understood. Few people understood that, but he understood it, totally. He voted against the bill because he believed we shouldn't have to do it. We shouldn't have to be advocating for the bill because we have a constitutional amendment that protects it.

But we got into a knock-down drag-out because Representative Mike Kreidler had all the forces of the House behind him. All the leadership was behind him in the House: the Speaker of the House, all the committee chairs, because he was a committee chair. And I took his bill, House Bill 509, and went to Senator Frank Warnke, who was the chair of the Commerce Committee, and asked him to request the bill when it came over from the House. I said to him, "We've got to do something to stop this bill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that considered a friendly committee or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was friendly. Because Senator Warnke agreed to ask for it. Senate Bill 4204 was initially drafted for Senator Haley, who was a medical doctor, and he knew what was happening. I was aware of what was happening but was not as involved as he was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It had a lot of amendments; it had a substitute bill tipped in. It went through a lot of changes. One thing that I thought that was interesting in trying to track it, was the involvement of Dennis Braddock, who later became known for his work in this area, but who at this stage was just a freshman.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We convinced him HB 509 was a bad bill. He's the one who was able to disrupt it. Braddock was my hero in this whole thing. Because I explained to him what it would do. He was involved in local politics in Bellingham at that time, and he understood what I was telling him. And so anyway, what happened, I signed on with Ted Haley and he took his name off as prime and left me as sponsor. He said it was because we were in the majority – and he convinced me that it was alright. And then I had his help and the support of his caucus – the Republican caucus. And so I took SB 4204 to Frank Warnke and explained what we were trying to do, that we absolutely could not let the Kreidler bill pass and that I needed to get this bill through the Senate and get it over to the House as soon as possible. As I remember, the Kreidler bill came on the floor about the time that we were jockeying around for position. The night before it was due on the Floor of the House, we had done an amendment to the Kreidler bill. And I took Braddock, who was a freshman, and a senior member, Representative Charlie Moon, a veterinarian from Snohomish County, to dinner. I gave them both a copy of the amendment which was similar to the Senate bill and I said, "We have to get this amendment hung on the Kreidler bill. We've got to strip his bill and hang this on it because his bill will destroy the Board of Health and cave in all of the regulatory practices practiced by the local health boards. He will topple all of those and I

don't think that is appropriate." And they agreed to help. Charlie promised to help Dennis who was a green-as-grass freshman. Then I went to the Speaker and tried to get him to listen; he wouldn't listen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I love the description given of this action: "They are working like skilled quarter horses. Representative Dennis Braddock and Charles Moon dissected the bill with amendments and saved all these things." That's quite an image!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's what they did. Dennis had to get up on the floor, a new freshman, and explain the reasoning behind it, which he was very capable of doing. He very patiently explained the reason he needed to do it and the reason that everyone needed to vote for it. And he hung the amendment. He scalped the bill and hung the amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a pretty big move for a freshman.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was incredible! It was incredible!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you watching from the wings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. My coaching and Charlie Moon's coaching and the Clerk of the House. And the Speaker had no control. Anyway, the bill went back into Rules; they didn't bump it. They sent it back to Rules Committee to kill it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reading through this, it was amazing to me how many different things local health boards looked after: immunizations, venereal disease control, solid waste, sewage and water quality management, mother and infant counseling – a real range of issues – senior citizen health screening, school health services, food inspections, environmental detection of health hazards – a whole miscellaneous. That would be a huge impact!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, it was tremendous. It would have affected all of this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's quality of life stuff.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, absolutely. And the other thing, we had to contact all the Health officers of the state. We need to back up a little to explain another reason for my getting involved. At the beginning of session I had gotten a letter from a doctor in Yakima who was the Health officer for Yakima and Kittitas Counties. He wrote me of the seriousness of the House bill. I had just scanned the letter, didn't even digest it and I gave it to Evie and told her to file it, that he wasn't from my district and therefore we didn't need to even respond. Then I got another letter a week or two later, saying, "Apparently you didn't read my first letter," and that got my attention. It was from the same Doctor Robert Atwood. I went back and read the first letter, realized that this bill that Doctor Haley had wanted me to co-sponsor or prime sponsor was very, very serious, more so that I'd even dreamt before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did this doctor from Yakima know to write to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He wrote to every member of the Legislature, apparently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But other legislators, they just filed it as well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably, except the ones from Yakima and Kittitas Counties. Later, I got letters and help from most of the Health officers in the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you started to make a noise about this, did other legislators say, "Oh yes, we got a letter about this, too."

**Sen. Wojahn:** They began to, because most of the state Health officers formed a telephone tree and when the bill was in the Senate they began calling and writing letters to their senators asking for help on the Senate bill. But most of the Health officers had given up because they said, "We can't win." They didn't like it but they were going to do the best they could without the Board of Health to still make their presence known with the state. When they found out about the Senate bill many of them came to Olympia for a meeting. There were about twenty-five of them. Frank Warnke came to the



dinner meeting and they honored him because he was a hero. He did everything we asked him to do; he did and his committee did.



*With Senator Frank Warnke: "He did everything we asked him to. He was a hero."*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he understood it right away?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, he knew damn well that it was important. Yes, he understood it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this a major initiative of that session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, it may not have appeared to be, but it was. There were many heroes, Chuck from the Labor Council and Marvin Williams, and the lobbyist from the Board of Health, Mary Selecky and Dr. Atwood and his nurse. They were incredible. Dr. Atwood's nurse was the one who generated the telephone tree. Her name was Linda, but I don't remember her last name. Anyway, they orchestrated the whole thing and so the Legislature was just bombarded with telephone calls and letters in support of the Braddock and Moon amendment to HB 509.

Anyway, they sent the amended bill back to Rules, probably to kill it. That night I called Marvin Williams, the Secretary/Treasurer of the Washington State Labor Council, people from the Board of Health, some of the health officers and all the lobbyists involved. And I told Marvin – who was probably the most effective lobbyist there for labor, "You've got to go to the Rules Committee meeting; they are meeting at eight o'clock in the morning." John O'Brien was the chair. "And you've got to go to John before the meeting and ask him for that bill." And I said, "Then you've got to go to the Rules meeting – all of you – and you all ask the members before the meeting for the bill; then go and sit in the meeting and glare at them until someone pulls it for the calendar." I don't know who pulled it, but they got back on the floor and it passed. And that was it; it passed! Because it was our amendment, hung in the bill and the bill passed!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You won!

**Sen. Wojahn:** And nobody even celebrated, I think we just collapsed!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the surprise alone – just the relief!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was a big one! And then the next big one was the one to separate the Department of Health from DSHS. It took several years to get that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a long fight, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. It was four years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is one of the opening salvos, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the bill getting the Department passed the House first, because I had asked a doctor in the House to sponsor it and he passed it and the Governor vetoed it. And then we made some amendments and put our bill back and the Governor signed it, but that was later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what longevity is all about. Some issues take years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That proves that longevity is necessary. And a historical memory, you've got to have it. Otherwise you're down the tube.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if everybody's a freshman, it's like starting over every year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There is no historical memory left except for Sid Snyder. The closest one is Senator McDonald and he really doesn't have it because we started way back in the sixties. I started lobbying in 1964. And so I have a lot of background. You learned to pick out the problems and the potential ripple effects of legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And know what to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And know what to do – and know what not to do. And knowing what to do was effective in the passage of the Patients' Bill of Rights, knowing what to do in the passage of the Trauma Bill, the funding for trauma care – you've got to know. You have to have your finger in a lot of pies. You cannot devote yourself to one issue. Some legislators do that and in so doing shortchange themselves. I think I developed an overall picture of all of the issues when I lobbied. I had my own issues to lobby but I had to have an overall understanding of everything. As much as possible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, things fit together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They all fit, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like each session has a kind of theme. People are paying attention to certain things. What's always interesting is how does something get on your radar screen in the first place? In this case it was a letter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, a letter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then a second letter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The second letter is what did it. But I'll never forget that second letter, because that's when I really dug in and then I started meeting with people on the Board of Health and they were clamoring, "Isn't there something that can be done?" And they were afraid to try it. They were afraid that if they did, they would be pressured against doing it and that they could lose other issues. You know, dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a calculated risk.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was dangerous. And if somebody isn't willing to take the lead and put themselves in danger's way, nobody is going to get involved. Every time you do that, you risk losing more than you gain. And I think that's what I recognized, that you can only go out on-point so many times before you lose your credibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if you never get out in front on anything, then why are you there in the first place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is the reason nothing is happening now because nobody is willing to go on-point – to lead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder, how we can bring down the risk factor so that people are freer to go on-point. I mean, has it gotten too risky?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It isn't the risk factor so much. There are those out there that are scared to death of losing their seat in the Legislature. That is paramount with them! It's maintaining that seat whether they do anything or not. And that bothers me. It takes a lot of energy. It takes a lot of follow-up position and a lot of collapses and pick-ups. It doesn't just happen. Anything worth doing is tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But on the other hand, when you win one like this, you must feel pretty tremendous.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never thought about that. It was just, "we won." We won and it was great and now you go onto the next thing. The next challenge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** True, but wouldn't you have felt pretty crummy if you'd lost? Knowing what was at stake?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd have been devastated! And I'd lost some things and nobody knew it was a mistake. I'd lost some things. But you have to pick yourself up and go on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Live to fight another day?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess that's what you do if you aren't completely crushed and able to get up –

stagger onto your feet again. You again pick up another cudgel and you go after it again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You find some other issue or cause?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You find someone in need or an issue in need and you pick it up. And that's your nurturing and that's what women do. You nurture things that are appropriate. And you fight against things that are not. And even though you don't understand all the 'ifs, ands, and buts.' You have to go with your gut reaction sometimes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of this legislation, I don't know if people can see down the road how it's really going to turn out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, you never know. You're trying to find what the ripple effects are going to be. That's the one thing I always looked for when I lobbied. "Look for the ripple effects," I was told. "Don't look at face value; look at the ripple effects and what this will do, what will this overturn, what is the undertow, and what will it do? What is it that happens to people if this passes?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So many things to consider. Here was another issue where on the surface, it was one thing, but you saw another ripple effect – there was a bill in to tax boats and you managed to get the exemption for boats owned by non-profits that work with kids.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I managed to get that through and that was an amendment to the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you come to think of that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because it didn't seem fair. We don't tax non-profits on other items and so the Boy and Girl Scouts' boats should not be taxed. Someone reminded me. I didn't think of all these things myself. Someone approached me and said, "What about the Boy Scout boats?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These years were hard economic times, with homelessness becoming one of the big issues. You had a very important

bill that passed, 3657, to open up state armories for homeless shelters.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there is an armory in Tacoma that is still there, that is located close to the food that was served every day at St. Patrick's Church.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another issue on another front: 1983 was the year the Legislature created the redistricting commission.

**Sen. Wojahn:** To redo what we were doing before because we couldn't handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It had been a continuous struggle for decade after decade.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. When I first started, they were doing this in 1970 and they held up the whole Legislature until the redistricting was done. No bill could pass until that was done and so it was held up for well into the session. And we decided we couldn't do it, so the commission was established to do it for us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that an easy decision? Were you quite happy to get rid of it as a legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Because it was tying us up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bringing you nothing but grief?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing but grief. We'd send bills into the Rules Committee but we couldn't pass anything – except emergency measures, of course, which I don't remember there being any – until that was done. And it delayed the whole session. It got people on edge and it was a dreadful session. It was our second session and it was bad. We were not in the majority at that time, we didn't have to pass the bill, but we did. I think it was almost unanimous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you found a formula that made it seem fair and got it out of your hair, basically?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's what – four legislators, two from each party, or something like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. And then we were able to appoint a nonpartisan, I believe, and then two citizens, a Democrat and a Republican. I don't remember the make-up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The committee was balanced, at any rate. And they did the work and then they bring it back to you for a straight up-or-down vote? No fooling around at that point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they ask that there be no amendments because we were trying to balance the population and there had to be a one-man, one-vote; there couldn't be more than a ten or fifteen percent differential.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Between districts – pretty close.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was minimal. And if anyone amended it without good reason and without taking care of the population base, it could throw it all off. I think everyone was fairly pleased with the structure and felt it would be done fairly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were still in the Legislature in the nineties when they brought back the report for that decade. Did you go through that process with them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we just brought back the report. Each time they would bring back a report with the redistricting it was generally accepted without too much discussion. I think there was one occasion in which there was a discrepancy that we corrected. But we finally adjusted the population so that it was alright. And so it was simply done – and efficiently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably a great relief.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And we removed all that rancor that went with the other, because it was bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it had gotten so convoluted and complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And gerrymandered, but the gerrymandering still continued to a degree, but not as bad as it was. There was some gerrymandering done up in the north Seattle/King County area. They did a little node

to bring in one member, but other than that it was fairly done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was something that had hung around the Legislature's neck for a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we had to balance everything. We had to balance population, we had to balance communities of interest, and if you had a large ethnic population, you couldn't split them and it became a real chore. And some of the discrepancies that occurred where the Commission got changed – because they had split, I think, half of Hoquiam, as I remember, and that had to be corrected. But eventually it got worked out and we had a committee that worked with that. I was never on that committee. But a lot of grandstanding occurred prior to that. And challenges.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a big thing for legislators. Another issue came up that session – rather perennially – was the suggestion to close Evergreen State College.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That rose again in 1983 as an idea; it was usually brought up by conservatives who wanted to save money and also because they were somewhat affronted by the experimental quality of the teaching there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the caliber of people there... Also, we were getting a lot of out-of-state students because it was a liberal college with relatively cheap tuition for out-of-state students. There wasn't a lot of room for our own in-state kids, as I remember it. Plus the fact that there were all sorts of incidents from students coming in here...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Protesting at the Legislature, you mean?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Protesting at the Legislature. I remember, an out-of-state student ran into one of our staff people and wrecked his car – totaled it; he didn't have insurance, he was an irresponsible Evergreen student. These are the things that created more and more rancor. And the fact that there's little or no structure at Evergreen – we decided if you weren't a self-

starter, you shouldn't even go there. A lot of people sent their kids there because they believed it was an easy way to get a degree without doing much work. They still raise the ire of conservatives and even some of the not-so-conservative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Usually it was Republicans who wanted to do away with it. But this time, reportedly fourteen members of the twenty-five member Democratic caucus, supported the idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was with them because I was offended. I believed that tuition should be increased for out-of-staters and that we needed a tighter admission practice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who set that policy? Does the college set that policy or does the Legislature? I didn't know colleges could set their own fees.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believe the Legislature has the right to establish a fee structure. And at Evergreen we were providing a rich man's college for out-of-state students.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the things that intrigued me was the idea floated that if you closed the college that the state could use those buildings for offices.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were getting a little crowded?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We would have liked to have had the college for a state building, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would you have moved out there? Agencies?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. We were renting buildings all over Olympia to house state agencies; that had begun back in the late seventies. Developers were having a field day providing buildings to lease to the state. Friends of mine talked about buying stock as a long term investment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, there is quite a practice of leasing offices.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That bothered me. I believed the state should build in order to own its buildings.

But nothing happened. The bill closing Evergreen didn't pass. But I was one of the fourteen, I do remember that. I was offended about what I was seeing. About the same time, there was a protest at the Legislature and students demanded their way into the Senate and tried to break the door down. These things all happened! And they did get into the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was kind of a wild time. So this issue doesn't get resolved, but doesn't go away either.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It will never go away until we re-establish education in a structure that makes sense. And I don't think that we have ever arrived at that, even K-12. Our kids are not learning. We don't manage to separate the kids with learning disabilities to help them. We have kids who are dyslexic who still can't read, still are not being helped. And that bothers me. I've tried many times to get more funding for dyslexic kids – for learning disabled kids – and the only school districts that have taken it up are Renton and Olympia. But Tacoma, they put them all in Special Education, as if they are stupid. It's very bad!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of them are extremely bright.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. And they get lost. But there is hope now for them because of computers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. One of the other things that happened during that session is that you really tighten the drunk-driving laws.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We started to. That's when Mothers Against Drunk Drivers was just beginning to form. It was just in its infancy, not doing much good but making a lot of noise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if that was part of it. Is that a case of where an outside movement creates an opening for legislation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** One mother lost her child and started an uprising that managed to draw a groundswell, but it took years for it to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several comments that the driving laws were perhaps the toughest

in the country here but that you discovered in the following session that there wasn't enough money to enforce them. That the counties and cities were having a real problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think at that time we decriminalized driving offenses and left it up to the Supreme Court to make the decision, to help us with the fines that were to be expanded through the court system. And I think that was done by the Judicial Council; they were the proponent of that, of decriminalizing traffic offenses and increasing the new fines to help cities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess there was some lag there, because they all came back to you and asked for more money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what we recommended doing and we did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read about this issue in your newsletter. Had you always used them to communicate with your District?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd always used them before. We always sent at least one newsletter out at the end of the session. Once in a while, we'd send a questionnaire at the beginning of session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a pretty effective way of keeping in touch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it's good. When we were able to do the things we wanted, until they cut down the size of them. I used maybe a six-page lay-out. We sent them out always after session as a wrap-up and it covered all of the topics that were covered in depth during the session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The big ones?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The big ones and then small interesting items we'd put in also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also things that touched your district.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read in this 1983 newsletter that you worked to help clean up Commencement Bay; that that seemed to be an issue that was coming.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it got to the point that you couldn't eat fish that came out of Commencement Bay because they were malformed, especially around the Port-industrial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was the old industrial waste? ASARCO?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Waste had been dumped into the Sound for years. And we had it brought to our attention many years before that the dumping was going into Commencement Bay and we tried as a local community to take care of it, but we didn't have the clout to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it must have cost a fortune.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember Judge Rosellini, who was not a judge at that time, led the first strike on cleaning up the Bay. I still remember that. That's way back in the sixties that we had begun to talk about it. And he showed the effluent being poured into the Bay from St. Regis and they were forced to clean up their portion. And they had done a pretty good job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When awareness was being raised about Lake Washington and with the formation of Metro in the sixties, did that push Tacoma people to look at their water?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we'd been pushing. We'd been looking at our water long before that. Because I remember the committee that was formed under the leadership of Hugh Rosellini called attention to the problem. And I remember the papers using the media to alert the people to the problem with the fish being malformed – with big jaws or malformation of their belly, because of the heavy metal run-off from the industrial plants along the waterway. That was discovered. That was when people just didn't eat what came out of Commencement Bay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would get your attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That did get our attention. But then the Feds agreed to help, but it was a long time in coming.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What's the status of Commencement Bay now?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's coming along. They have discovered a method to clean up the Bay. There's still a group – Citizens for a Healthy Bay – who are out there still working on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are just some things that seemed important enough to include in our conversation. In 1983 you finished the session, but then you had a one-day special session that was rather unique that had to do with the death of U.S. Senator Henry Jackson. What were your feelings about this loss?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was really closer to Senator Jackson than I was to Magnuson. I was devastated. And he had just come back from China and I still believe that he contracted something there. He'd only been back a week, I think, when he died.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a surprise?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a shock! A surprise and I think it was definitely due to something he picked up in China. I remember going to Everett for his service. It was a very sad. He was a local man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wasn't that old.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, and my feeling was we should never have appointed a Republican

because we had lost all that power in the first place. We went from one of the most powerful states in the nation, with Senator Magnuson being the number-one and Jackson being number-three, down to zilch. We'd lost all that power. We needed to retain the power of the people through the Democratic Party because Washington had historically had been more Democratic than Republican and we lost that with Evans. But that was sad and we had no power; we lost everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you had to start all over.

**Sen. Wojahn:** All over. And we're still building it. We still have very little power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess states go through cycles. It was pretty extraordinary that little Washington had two such powerful senators.

## CHAPTER 14: ADVOCATING FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, 1984

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By 1984, the economy was beginning to turn around; it was not another horrendous session like you had just been through. Were you pretty battered by then by budget battles?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you have to keep your equilibrium.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Things were a little easier and you managed to have a sixty-day session, which you hadn't had for quite awhile. And you had a budget without any new taxes, which you hadn't had for four years. So it seems like you are over the hump; you were over the worst of it. Something that you did this session that I thought was interesting and seemed to be new, was that a lot of the legislation was billed as a package. You grouped legislation and pushed for whole areas of law, whole slates.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we tried to bring it all on the floor – all the bills that were related, together under one theme – so that we could go back to the people and say, “We did this area, this area, this area, and this is what we’ve come up with as a result of that.” By coordination we felt we could do a better job of legislating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed quite a holistic approach.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we wouldn't make as many mistakes or suffer ripple effects on bills. We instructed the committee chairs to cluster any bills that were related and to research them thoroughly in order to determine what the ripple effects would be of any bill relating to that area of interest. And it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This year was billed as the “Year of the Child.” I believe there was some tie-in with a UN program. You had a whole host of bills to do with family issues and women too, but mostly your focus was children's issues. Senator McManus, who was the chair of Social and Health Services, seemed to be the person who was orchestrating a lot of this. But you seemed to be the person who did a lot of the floor work. You were called the “Caucus



*Speaking on the Senate floor as caucus coordinator of ‘Year of the Child’ package of bills, credited with successfully steering fourteen bills through the process*

Coordinator” for the legislative packet and given credit for delivering fourteen bills to the Governor's desk, which seemed like quite a lot. You weren't necessarily the lead sponsor, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I wasn't the sponsor of many of the bills but they were issues with which I was concerned so I pulled them together and made sure they were placed on the calendar together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You managed them? Was that a new role for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I had never concentrated on single issues before nor attempted to coordinate my concerns with other members' issues. But at



the same time I believed that women and children's issues were being left by the wayside. I believe women generally are more inclined to reflect on children and families than men – and I guess it just seemed like a natural thing to take over and it made sense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Either because you are very experienced, or one thing or another, you seem to be very effective at getting these bills through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had been advocating from the time I first started – before I got to the Legislature – the coordination of effort between business and industry and government to establish day care centers. And I tried to get the Boeing Company, with the aero-mechanics union, to establish one. They had built an apartment – an unrented apartment in Renton – and I had suggested that they have a day care there. Some industries were beginning to add day cares as a part of their business, where a family could leave their child and go for lunch with them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've read it cuts down on absenteeism.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! And I'd been advocating that for a long time – never got anywhere. I advocated also my friend's idea – Dr. Grace Graham, who was an educator at the University of Oregon – building housing developments with all levels of economic strengths in them so that children would commingle and have a day care. And that's long before I went to the Legislature. That seemed like a great idea. Also, that we should establish day cares where a person could leave their child for only one hour or all day, where we would have children coming in at all times – where wealthy women could leave their children with other children of other economic strengths. So the children would become accustomed to all levels of economic strata. And I'd been advocating that forever, but nothing ever happened with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty revolutionary.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I talked to West Coast Telephone, they were just beginning then – it's now called – the big new telephone company?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, Verizon?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Verizon. It was West Coast and then it became another company and finally Verizon, and I talked with their lobbyist Alan Tebb about starting such a program and he picked it up. And they actually hired someone, but it didn't work for West Coast Telephone, which is now Verizon. So that's way back. I really liked the idea, so that children would have an equal chance at success. And also, I contended there would be less battering of children. I could visualize a mother getting up at five or six o'clock in the morning, getting her kids up and into day care by 7:30, so she could be on the job at eight o'clock. If she didn't have a car, she had to do it by bus. Then when she got through her busy day at work, she had to go – especially if she was a single mother – pick up the children, take them home, feed them, and if they had lessons, help them and get them to bed. She must be exhausted. And I said to the Legislature, "Just imagine a mother coming in and having the teacher at the daycare saying, "What a wonderful child. I'm so glad she's with us because she helped us today," or "Your little boy was a leader and helped us do some things." Give the mother a compliment. Do something nice for her because she must be exhausted day in and day out. And I tried to get the Legislature to understand how it felt, but you know, men don't really get down to that level. And I didn't get the message across, I guess. But they knew it was there. They knew – apparently my beliefs managed to permeate the Legislature – because it happened. That's where "The Year of the Child" came in and that's where we tried to coordinate the effort in order to get bills through that would help families and children. Then I found out who my allies were, too. You know, people who were interested in children, they are putting forth bills that helped children. And Pat Thibaudeau was there at that time lobbying for children. She was outstanding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before we discuss the bills, there seemed to be this conference that you'd

had the year before, in the fall, called the Conference on Economics of Child Support, Paternity and Custody. It must have been a fabulous conference because a lot of these things seem to come out of that conference.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was coordinated by the gal who's now the legislative liaison for Corrections. Patria Robinson-Martin, she's still there. I introduced my idea of my marriage bill again, and it went over like a lead balloon.



*Attending the Conference on the Economics of Child Support, Paternity and Custody, the impetus for innovative legislation on family issues*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you never know with ideas, if you just keep putting them out there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a good conference, a really good conference. That's where we established the payment for child care – the whole system was revised at that point, to provide a reasonable living for the mother and child who were left after the husband walked away. That's where the whole idea – well, not the whole idea for displaced homemakers – but that was a part of it, you know. A part of the whole picture. You had to have that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It looked like one of the big focal points was to see how the dissolution of a marriage affected children.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had already passed the divorce act – we cut loose the marriage part and I tried to introduce the idea of the marriage

contract as I had visualized it before, and I couldn't get anyone to go along with me on it. So I backed off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are quoted in their material. You note that more than one-half of the parents who are ordered to pay child support fail to do so. That seems like a very large number. And then you say, "For whatever reason, when absent parents won't, or cannot pay support to their children, the public must.

By tightening our support laws everyone wins." So you saw it as an economic measure as well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So those provisions were tightened up considerably and you managed to get that through. Let's see, Senate Bill 4373, you were a co-sponsor with several other senators and that was passed unanimously. A lot of these bills went sailing right through, several of them unanimously.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, no problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because they were so well prepared or people finally understood? Or because it reached both family needs and it was good economics?

Is that a part of a universal appeal?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Because it's good economics, it's good for families, it's good for everybody. And you make people responsible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Win, win. Well, that reaches into some Republican concerns about economics and responsibility and accountability. So, did you fashion that on purpose to reach pretty much everybody?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right, but the Republicans did a turn-around when I sponsored a bill just recently – which passed finally, because the Feds helped – this comes later, but I had read about a bill in Massachusetts which would revoke a license of anybody who hadn't paid child support for six months.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Their driver's license?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, every kind of license. We got that bill. That was my bill back about 1998 that I fought like hell for. Congress adopted it, and did it, and so we just had to adopt their approach. I couldn't get it when the Republicans fought it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they think it was too sweeping?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They thought it hurt too many men. God help us! They didn't say that but that's what they meant. I couldn't understand why – why would they ever be offended by it, but I sponsored the first bill – this came much later – Talmadge was with me on it and he was the chairman of Judiciary and he didn't even hear the bill. He said, "It's a great idea, but I don't think you can do it." I remember that. You know. But it all comes together. It's a pattern, but I didn't realize it was a pattern at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Only later?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess I never thought about it. It just worked. If it works, you do it. And I had always preached the economics of the situation because I could remember over the abortion issue – when they weren't going to pay for public abortions – and my main strength on that was if you don't pay for them, under this current situation, we're supporting those children until they reach age eighteen and it was the difference between half a million dollars, or a million dollars a year, and twenty million dollars a year. It makes good economics to permit abortions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes what people can't buy socially, they can buy economically. The language of the "feminization of poverty" was current in society at that point.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was all there. It was all there. Someone put words to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's often what it takes, it seems. There are these ideas floating around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You've got to focus on one issue. And when a person doesn't pay child support, it's the child who suffers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly. The conference material went on to say, "The failure of absent

parents to meet their financial obligations to their children is one of the greatest socio-legal problems facing the state and the nation today." It seems to be a really heightened level of awareness. Experts agree that divorce is the surest way for mothers and their children to become impoverished and the whole look of poverty was moving from elders to children. That was the new group. And you were trying to get this to come together. It was quite timely, and it reported that "the bills moved with uncharacteristic, but much welcomed speed." I find it fascinating that legislation can be stalled for years and then suddenly everybody gets it and off it goes!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Well, it was the result of that conference because there were many legislators there and there were enough legislators there to pick up the cudgel and everybody pitched in and grabbed their own issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was that conference so successful? How does that happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was very well done. I think it was McManus's idea, but one woman put it together. Another one who came after her was the woman who established the Children's Defense Fund at the national level, with whom I worked, Marian Wright Edelman. Peter Edelman is her husband, I think. I met him, he was at a recent disability conference. He worked for HEW, Health Education and Welfare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a powerful couple.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He's still a good strong Democrat and is still speaking out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like they had a lot of charismatic speakers, a lot of good information.

Some of the bills go right through that session, some are amended, but they all seemed to pass. There was a Council on Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect that was created in 1982 that was, if I understood this correctly, was about to be sun-setted out of existence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We stopped it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you gave it another appropriation to keep that onboard. Here was a little glitch that I found interesting. Senate Bill 4730 – you were a co-sponsor of that – worked to extend health insurance benefits as part of child support. That’s a very important piece.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a good bill. They wanted me to sponsor it and I said, “No, we need to get everybody.” That was one thing I said to Pat Thibaudeau. I think she came to me and asked me to sponsor it and I said, “No, we need to get everybody interested in this. We want to bring more men in, more men who are interested in sponsoring this bill. Give it to somebody who has never been with us before and never thought about this before.” So I encouraged them to give bills to other people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was only one man in that group. You co-sponsored this with Senator Woody, Lee, Rinehart, Hayner, Hurley – all women – and Senator Dick Hemstad, the lone man.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a pretty big group of women. An interesting bi-partisan group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but generally speaking, I asked them to get other people to do children and women’s issues other than women, where possible, because we need to bring in more men, we needed more people interested in the issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a good method. Senator Ray Moore seemed to be part of the team. He had a bill that he said was one of his most important ones on parental kidnapping. I guess that was quite an issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, where one parent kidnaps a child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of custody issues? Those little slips you get in the mail or on backs of milk containers? Often the child’s name and the abductor’s name are the same, so you get the impression that it’s a parent or relative of some sort.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, all these pictures. It’s still going on. I don’t know whether Senator

Moore’s bill ever passed. Ray Moore became chair of the committee after Senator McManus, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seems pretty involved. You had a bill concerning domestic violence issues. What struck me is that you were looking at all the different pieces of this. Here’s the child and the mother thrust into poverty, they don’t have health care, they are often victims of domestic violence – this whole circle of issues around the dissolution of a marriage: some economic, some social. You also – and this seemed an interesting breakthrough because of the recession that you’d just been through – there were a lot of people who used up all their unemployment benefits and among those groups were two-parent families who, either one or both of the parents, had formerly worked but had lost their jobs through just the normal economic downturn. And you worked to make sure they could have welfare benefits without having the father have to leave the home to keep the family intact. I think that passed but was that a difficult concept?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. During the recession – before that – they had made a determination that if you were eligible, if you were under the age of sixty and able-bodied and able to work, you couldn’t get any type of welfare because it was all state welfare. And you could not get it unless you were handicapped or developmentally disabled in some way, or ill. You could be mentally ill. Then you could get public assistance, but because it was all state public assistance – no federal money was involved – and consequently, it was a terrible burden for the state welfare system when both parents lost their job and were unable to get another job. I don’t remember whether the bill passed or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it did. It seems like you were looking pretty steadily at what was going on with families when they break up and looking at what you could do to keep a family together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, rather than letting them split apart. And that’s one thing Republicans

wanted – to keep families together. I think there was consensus on that – that you didn't split a family apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This measure was couched in terms of: this is an emergency; this is not a long-term thing. "This is just for now."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, another thing, too, even if you were able-bodied, you weren't eligible for unemployment compensation, you still couldn't get public assistance if you were under age sixty. It was impossible. That was one reason for the Displaced Homemaker Bill, because women couldn't get it if they were able-bodied, but had never worked outside the home. If the husband left them or died...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It makes you wonder what happened to those people. Pretty scary.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What happens to them? Yes. I don't know. We tried to stop it. I remember there was a battle over funding for it because I wanted the money from the divorces to pay for it and the lobbyist, former Senator Bill Gissberg, for the Judiciary saw what I was doing and he grabbed the money for the Judicial fund to build libraries. It was just awful! He took it! So we had to go to the marriage license and at the same time the domestic violence people were trying to get it for child abuse – the same money. I backed off the Displaced Homemaker to let the domestic violence people get it and then we came back and got it another time. But it got to be really nasty and I could have killed that guy. Gissberg was a former Judiciary chairman; I'll never forget what he did. He wanted it for the Judicial Information Center. And he got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the funding relationship?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh God, I don't know. None. It was a percentage on the divorce. Which had nothing to do with the Judiciary – but it had everything to do with children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of these bills is supported by a five-dollar charge on the marriage license.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's it: one of them is the Displaced Homemaker and the other is the Child Neglect, so they both got a portion of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the other end of the spectrum of who needed help, the elder abuse issue was starting to get some recognition and you seem to be paying attention to that, too. You and Senator Peterson co-sponsored a bill to address the issue of care of what were called "functionally disabled adults." What kind of people would those be? People with dementia?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, dementia, or they could be people suffering from Alzheimer's disease. It was the Alzheimer's group which really was hit and they needed some kind of relief for people taking care of their parents...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the respite care issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Respite care is what it was. Peterson was very involved with this issue and I agreed that we needed to provide respite care for the families. They had to have a break and we had to have money to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Often it's an elderly spouse caring for another elderly spouse and it is exhausting. And if they both get sick, then where are you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we targeted that. One of the things we did, if one of them had to go in to a nursing home, leaving the other partner in their home, they could still get the tax break on the property tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because they had the extra expense of the nursing home?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So they got to keep the lion's share of their pension rather than it going into the nursing home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that so at least the other partner – the healthier partner – was not also forced into a nursing home prematurely?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. They may have been healthy but if the person who was getting the pension – he was getting his pension and his wife was getting her share – she got to keep his share if she were in the home and he went into

the nursing home. Then they would take her share and she would get to keep his share. So it helped if it were the man who went into the nursing home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that to help people keep their independence?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And I think that the Feds finally closed that out. But that's federal and we had to get their support and then they changed the law and I don't know what happened after that. But I know that we were able to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of these bills are just to help people stand on their own feet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. A lot of things – giving tax breaks to people in order to stay in their own home – is a lot less expensive than putting them in a nursing home at between \$2,000 and \$2,600 a month – keeping their own home with a little bit of money or letting them keep the greater portion of their money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or with chore services or a little bit of other help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And giving them chore services...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was a case of giving a little bit of help and getting a greater benefit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so the sheer economic argument would support this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we've always looked at that, ever since we started adult day care, in which one of the spouses could go for day care during the day and be taken care of and then brought back at night. It also provided relief for the caregiver who might or might not be the spouse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of this is that you changed how these people were labeled; what language is used always indicates the thinking behind something. From calling these people "developmentally disabled adults" you began to call them, "adult dependent persons." Did that include more kinds of people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read that there was some concern – I don't know if this was related to this language, but I wondered if there was a connection with this new concern about elder abuse and needing care not just for people suffering from some kind of illness or whatever, but somehow the way the law worked, if only developmentally disabled adults could get help, it left out these other people? And so if you re-labeled them and called them all "adult dependent persons" they too would be eligible for help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I see. It was just a glitch in the language that created a problem. Yes, what we did, too, was to outlaw the use of the word "imbecile" or "idiot." You couldn't use those words any more. They were called "developmentally disabled." And that was a kindness to them and then it opened the door. I know where that happened because when we changed the words from not permitting the word the "imbecile" or any of these words to be used in calling them developmentally disabled that brought them under the umbrella of all aid and assistance. And that would be part of the same issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Widened the umbrella?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It also was a kindness.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it showed a growing awareness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, and becoming more sensitive – imagine being called an imbecile! Of course, we do it for fun, every once in awhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, but usually we don't mean what it used to mean.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. We couldn't use the word idiot or imbecile or – there were all kinds of words. Now it's "developmentally disabled." And that was done in order to open the door for assistance to which they were entitled, but because of semantics weren't getting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You worked on a bill, Senate Bill 4541, with Senators Woody and Granlund, concerning domestic violence reporting. I'm not exactly sure how it worked before, but that also seemed to open the door to more people who

needed help with domestic violence. Previously, the way it was worded, it sounded like only people whose marriages were in dissolution were included, where they were already in the judicial process of divorce or separation – this seemed to open it up to more people, even if they were not divorcing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were funding – or assisting with the funding – of domestic violence shelters at that time and encouraging the development of shelters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This bill was about obtaining injunctions. Is that no-contact orders? I'm not quite sure what this was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Often when a woman was physically abused, she would report it to the police and then when it came time to swear out a warrant for the arrest, she would refuse to sign.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, she's in a bad place, usually.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely true, and so we changed the law. I know the prosecutor was able to effectively do it in Pierce County. Once they did that, they could go ahead and prosecute and issue a warrant without her signing it. It had to be made easier because women were backing away – because, well first, they were threatened if they signed the warrant by the spouse, and so it made it easier for the prosecutor to go in and prosecute the people for domestic violence. They throw them in jail – which depletes the economic status of the woman. The whole thing – it was a no-win situation. And a lot of women simply wouldn't sign the warrant. So that had to be what that was all about. Because now they can do it without – they have some kind of a waiver, I don't know what it is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All those situations are slowly evolving. There was no provision in the law until recently about “marital rape” and all these different new understandings of what can go on and what to do about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we actually legislated the fact that “no one is a serf.” And “you don't own anyone.” And it was subtly done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a real breakthrough process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Certainly. That you don't own your wife; you don't own your child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people still don't understand that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They don't understand it. Well, that's the reason I sponsored a bill – which didn't go anywhere, on your request for marriage license application – there was a statement which said that, “This does not entitle you to abuse” – whatever it said. And I couldn't get the bill! And it was good! It was saying, “The eyes of the state are on you – don't do it!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose that's hard to enforce.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really. The Pierce County Auditor adopted it and it's on the application here, but it should be done statewide.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a little aside, Senator Barbara Granlund, a Tacoma area senator, seems to be really active on all these bills. Can you tell me something about her? You seem to be doing a lot of work with her.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was Chairman of the Corrections Committee. We worked together because I'd been on a committee that she was chairing. She was a new senator. She was from Kitsap County; that's all I know. Her husband was the county commissioner, I think. He was a high school principal over there; then he eventually became a county commissioner. And I don't know her background at all. But she was



*Exchanging ideas with Senator Barbara Granlund*

from the Twenty-sixth District. As chair of the committee she was deeply involved in the issues. She hired Evie, my former secretary, help her along. Evie didn't want to work full time and so she left and was going to stay home but our caucus needed her to come back to work for Barbara who was new to the Senate but had worked with many of the same issues in the House. So Evie worked for her for one session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Having a good assistant is all the help in the world.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It all worked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also a sweet little bill that passed that allows elderly people to have pets in nursing homes. I think it was Senator McManus, who was a former owner of a retirement home, who helped that bill through. That was another humane little touch, I thought, to add to this comprehensive look. I imagine if you were going into a nursing home or retirement home that that would be one of the worse dilemmas, if you had to give up your pet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think all nursing homes would permit it, but some of them do. And some of them have pets coming in, but they don't live there, I think. It's good. It helps with their blood pressure and other health issues.

Barbara was really instrumental. She made a lot of real changes within the Department of Corrections and was really on top of her assignment, and then she decided to give it up and her husband ran and he became the senator from the Twenty-sixth District.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, they just switched places? She took a break?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had a daughter who had diabetes, but I think Barbara felt she needed to stay home with her. She was an adult, but needed care. I don't remember the details of that, but she was really a very good and active chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe, by having her husband do it, it sort of kept the interest... was it a team effort?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They probably worked together. And he was outstanding. He was a very good leader. But she started the ball rolling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These are just some of the issues – part of this whole raft that you pushed through of the fourteen bills. How did that feel by the end of the session? It was a big accomplishment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't even know I'd done it. I wasn't aware. I guess I never paid much attention to the number of bills that I passed. I would check my status sheet to see if a bill needed help once in awhile but they seemed to move.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did go through, one right after another. And I thought how intense that must be for you to be on-point again and again and again; standing up and moving a bill along and paying attention to all the maneuvers that that requires. But on the other hand, a lot of them sailed through with not a huge amount of rankling – some of them without amendments; they were popular.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were probably amended in committee. They became substitute bills – a lot of them. When you chair a committee, you have to manage all the bills that come out of that committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Except that you weren't even on this committee. How did you come to be the point person for these bills?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess because I cared and made it a primary responsibility to see that they got through. I never do anything half-way. I was always going full-bore. I guess I decided, if you are going to be a legislator, you've got to look over the broad picture of everything. And obviously I missed out on some things, but not on anything that I cared about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were certainly zeroing in now more on social legislation. This was a development for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I had become more attached to that. Because women's legislation became social legislation.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** It helped women, so it was the big picture? You do weigh in on other things and, of course, you were on Ways and Means – the budget committee – which means everything in the end anyway. But we’ll look at those things as we go along.

Another package that the Democrats put together in this new method of grouping bills had to do with dealing with hazardous waste issues and environmental safety. Several senators were involved with that – Senator Goltz, Senator Williams, and others – it was a very big bill that took up a big chunk of the session: Senate Bill 4831, the “Worker Right-to-Know” bill about hazardous waste in the work place. Senator Talmadge took the lead on that. It was discussed over a period of quite a few days. It was brought up and deferred again and again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn’t have the votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was going on behind the scenes? It was a sort of testing of the waters?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lobbying. More education; that’s when you bring in your lobbyists. We didn’t have the votes. You defer until you have the votes, then you bring it up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would there be more hearings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not particularly; there could be mostly caucus discussions. And then we found where the weak spots were and we would either lobby that person or send the lobbyist who was supporting – if it was requested by a lobbyist or if it had been requested by an agency – to bring them in to help. And twisting arms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If a bill is brought forward like this and then kind of dragged back a lot, does that mean it was premature? That it was poorly conceived in the first place, or what?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not necessarily, but there might have been ripple effects that we hadn’t anticipated. When anyone raises a red flag, you don’t run the risk of trying to pass the bill with that red flag still out there. You get it neutralized, find out what the problem is, correct it if necessary. Normally, it means that a

bill gets loose out of committee before it’s ready.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly looked like it was getting hauled back on a regular basis.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn’t ready and committee members, apparently, not at fault, didn’t recognize the problems with it. It isn’t the fault of the chair or the committee members; it’s just the fact that sometimes there are ripple effects that they are not aware of, but the attention is called to the chair by someone who’s not on the committee who is knowledgeable about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Republicans offered more than thirty amendments to this bill. A lot of which were ruled outside the scope and object of the bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were trying to kill it. Anything with the “right to know” seemed to send up a red flag with Republicans, because we were interfering with business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Farmers were having a problem with this, too. They deal with a lot of hazardous substances. Pesticides, and what not.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the farmers refused to acknowledge it; they never wanted to outlaw anything that helped them to grow their crops and sell them, even if it poisoned the people. And that’s a cruel thing to say, but...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a continuous issue, with, especially, migrant farm workers being poisoned.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. Working with the crops.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At one point, Senator Quigg – well, more than one point – had amendments that were outside the scope, but there was one that seems particularly interesting. He tried to introduce the idea of three-way insurance plan during this discussion. Was he just seizing the opportunity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which was way outside the scope and object.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That idea just has a life of its own; it has been around for decades.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the way it seems that bad things happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That did get shot down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, any old port in a storm. Where there are that many amendments offered, it's always an attempt to kill a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At one point Senator Talmadge had this rather plaintive sounding remark where he said, "It doesn't sound like you have read the bill." And he just sounds so frustrated because the amendments are somewhat beside the point and sometimes kind of silly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He usually got what he wanted because he was so bright and able to respond to everything they could throw at him. And that was a frustration: "You probably haven't read the bill." It didn't do what they were saying it did. He knew it didn't do what they were saying it did; they were simply making an effort to kill the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could just see that lawyer's mind offended by people not reading the fine print.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because of the inadequacies of the opposing side in offering these amendments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you did pass it...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was on the strength of his vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then it was vetoed by Governor Spellman – not the entire thing, but basically the heart of it. And left it only as a study, although it had been studied for years. Was that a bitter disappointment? That looked like it took up a lot of time and energy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** These bills do. And if it ever gets on the floor, with all the amendments, sometimes it's just a matter of putting it aside because there isn't time to continue, and while it's being discussed, good bills are dying on the calendar. And you need to get them off the calendar and then go back at it with some free time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess you just have to be patient and persistent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Be patient and stick to you guns. I guess that's my best characteristic – persistence. If it doesn't happen the first year, it can happen next year, or next year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's one of the joys of a thirty-two year career?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had the time to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, did you ever realize that you would be a legislator for thirty-two years?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I was going to quit after about four years. I thought I didn't want to do it anymore and then I was persuaded to continue. No, I didn't plan to stay for over thirty years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many times did you waiver?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, during the first few years, I wavered all the time. Because I couldn't make anything happen. You know, you're there and you're voting and you're trying to persuade people that these bills were good, and you couldn't make things happen and I wanted to make things happen before I left. Well, I was making things happen when I left...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were certainly making things happen this session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So I just decided after awhile that it was time to go. That I was tired of trying to make things happen. I wish I'd stayed because some bad things did happen. You can persuade people. You don't even have to talk. I didn't talk much; I was not a great debater. I did my work behind the scenes and I never tried to grab the limelight. I just wanted to get bills passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if great oratory makes any difference any more.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doesn't change many minds. Usually you know how you're going to vote before you walk on that floor. I don't think that I've ever changed my vote – ever! – based upon talk. The longer they talked, the madder I would get. They talk a bill to death. And some good

bills got talked to death. So I said what I needed to say, and sat down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's as effective as anything else. One thing that happened that session was that – again, Senator McDermott seems to be taking the lead on this – you were trying to increase your salaries. For some reason, that is an impossible task.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't the year. It wasn't the time to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It never seems to be the time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, but that's one time I didn't. There was one time I refused to go along, but normally I did go along. But I don't remember what the reason was that year, whether it was a recession, or what.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had three different plans and none of them worked. The Republicans refused to take a position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They always wanted to not vote and I think that angered me, too. They wanted us to vote for it, but they wanted to abstain or vote no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They would get the benefit without taking the heat?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that is right. And so I finally said, "No, I'm not going to vote unless you get the Republicans to vote yes."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if that's something like the Redistricting Commission, where it should not be something that you do for yourselves?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We don't do it for ourselves now. We now have a commission. It's better. You can never get the votes and if one side – the Democrats are always the ones that pass the bills and then the Republicans used their yes vote against them in the next election. You voted to raise salaries. And I just got tired of that. You know, you get tired of listening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some economic-impact bills, too. One of them, Senator Tub Hansen's bill, for the B&O tax rollback for the

meat processors, you spoke out in favor of that idea. I think, for you, it was a jobs issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I think it failed. I was the one who moved to reconsider that bill. I moved to reconsider because I was the last one to vote and it was going down the tube so I voted on the prevailing side, which was no, and then got up and moved to reconsider. I thought eventually it passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it didn't. But I think it does come up again, it seems to me.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know I did that one for Tub because I was so persuaded that was the right way to go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a few meat packing plants had closed. What was going on in that industry? Why was the meat packing industry in such trouble?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had a big one in my district. I don't know. Economic downturn, probably. And the whole economy was bad and also, maybe it was because health was being considered more. Beef was not as fashionable. I was very familiar with the meat packing industry because I had changed the bacon packaging my first bill in the Legislature. I think probably it was because of the decline in the sale of beef because of the health hazards. I think that was the beginning of the problem. That's when pork came out and they said that pork is...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "The other white meat."

**Sen. Wojahn:** The other white meat, yes. And it's during this whole time. I think it started probably at that time and the meat packers were having problems and I was trying to save Carstin Packing Company.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, for you it was economics, and a job and a community issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tacoma has always had to work to keep its economy up because it's competing with Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another very hot economic issue was the tax break for the forest products industry. They wanted to reduce it from six-point-five to five percent over the course of

several years. Why was that so contentious? Was it because it was a giant industry and you were going to lose a lot of revenue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. And they were contending that they were losing – well, between the spotted owl and the lack of chemicals for spraying to protect them from some of the avaricious insects that were destroying timber – they were making a pretty good case that they needed that break.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this lumber? Or is this whole logs? It wasn't clear to me about what kind of industry this was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had passed legislation that permitted big logging companies to send their logs to Japan. That was if they cut off their own lands and then used the public lands to mill into lumber.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More finished products for more jobs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and there was a big argument over that, too. And also, the sale of Red Cedar got involved. I remember that Senator Gary Odegaard was still in the Senate and he had fought to retain the right to...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he for shipping whole logs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was with the timber industry and I was too, because we have a lot of timber in Pierce County, plus the St. Regis pulp mill is located in my district, the Twenty-seventh.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Weyerhaeuser?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they had moved to Federal Way by that time. But it was still a big concession in our area and I always supported the timber people, as I remember it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would be in support of this lowering of the taxes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, temporarily.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this to give the industry a boost? But how would you make up the revenue share?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know; we had to do it some other way. But I think, at the same time, they were complaining about not being able to cut in the deep forest because of the spotted owl. Wasn't that the spotted owl at that time?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The spotted owl controversy became public in 1986 when environmentalists petitioned to list the owl as an endangered species – that took four years to achieve.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But also the use of chemical sprays which weren't permitted – they were being denied the use because of the danger to the environment. And all of those things entered into it, making it more difficult for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of a crunch time for them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a crunch time for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was no trade-off to make them keep their mills going, or do more finishing of the lumber in-state?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it had something to do with the shipment of raw logs. And I can't remember what it was. Weyerhaeuser was doing it and we finally got the Japanese to concede that they would let us mill some of their logs to the different lengths – they used different lengths for their buildings. And so, we got a concession through our trade and economic department in some way, where they would buy the finished timber. They were cutting short from what we used for our building of homes and other buildings – homes mostly. I don't know when that all happened, but it's all a part of the whole. I really was not with the industry all the time, but if they were right – if I felt they were right – I supported them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for you, it's not ideological, more situational?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whatever!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were taking care of another interest group on another occasion when you helped pass a tuition waiver for the unemployed. A whole group of Tacoma-area legislators got together on this. The idea seemed to come from the Tacoma Community College

and the business community who came to you and asked for some help so that unemployed people could go to community college, if there was space.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Space-available – free.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was not bumping a paying student; it was just giving unemployed people a chance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was on a space-available basis. They could go. And we expanded that to seniors then, after that. So, they can always go on space-available. They audit; they don't get credit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people do you think that would help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Quite a few. I don't know about the unemployed, but from that came some of the programs that we have now, where we set up special programs for the unemployed. But that's through the Work Force Training Act, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that to help people retrain?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but this is the forerunner of that. And then, eventually, I know we often opened it up for seniors. And quite a few seniors – friends of mine – do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You might as well fill up the room.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. Because they are going to give the course, anyway. They have to have so many to have a course and if they have that, then they can fill in with others, providing they aren't disruptive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine seniors would be pretty well behaved!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember I always fought the idea of letting people who hadn't gotten their GED, or their high school graduation, to go to community colleges free. I fought that because we had had night schools before that, where they got a lot better education than they did in the community colleges. So I fought that – it's called the Barefoot Boy Bill, and I hated that bill. And I fought it. I lost eventually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another issue that you led part of the charge on, which was working to ban firecrackers. Or severely regulate them. Making it more of a community option.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I hate them! Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently, the law had been relaxed in 1981 so then everybody, I guess, went a little wild with their firecrackers that year and then...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were shooting them off in June!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then people came back and said, "This isn't okay." Is that what happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We wanted a local option so they could do what they wanted to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Each community could set its own level of what was okay?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then we finally did some regulation, because it wasn't working. And we stated that they couldn't start shooting firecrackers off until a certain number of days before or after or a certain time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a kind of window around the Fourth of July.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A window around it so they were limited to the times that they could do it. What I preferred to do was to eliminate all fireworks except for public displays, because people were getting their hands and shoulders shot off, losing their eyes. They are still doing it! Emergency doctors and hospitals are saying, "Do something, because we are so swamped at that time." We were living on the eastside then and I remember one time hearing some noise outside about two o'clock in the morning on the day before the Fourth of July and children were putting firecrackers under cars that were parked on the street. I called the Police Department three times to get them to stop because they could blow up a car.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be quite a bang.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they never did come out and the next day, which was the Fourth of July,

I was out on an errand and I came home and there were fire engines all around the house and all over the area. They had burned up a garage, the same kids. But the night before they were lighting firecrackers and throwing them under the cars. Right under the cars – oh! The garage burned down and I said to the fire fighter, “I called the police last night twice” The kids who were doing it lived in the house where the garage was burned. “But,” I said, “Nobody ever came.” And I said, “This could probably have been avoided if the police had responded last night.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a little beyond mischief.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was way beyond mischief. Oh yes, so I was adamant, but it didn’t work. The only time I got adamant, I lost!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another thing that didn’t pan out, because, as they say, “time ran out,” was trying to get some help for injured athletes. You had some star athletes come in for your hearings. I was wondering if that got the attention a lot of people, if the hearings were well attended.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One of the athletes was an Olympic athlete and he’d been blinded. He’d lost his eye boxing. “Sugar Ray” Seals. He worked in my district. Seals came up to the Boys Club too, in Tacoma. And I felt as long as we permitted this to be done, that we needed to help them if they got in trouble. That we were authorizing something that was dangerous and I had always fought boxing, because I think it’s very dangerous. So when I finally got a chance to speak up, I did. Something had gone wrong with his eyes; he’d been battered so badly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds pretty awful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it seemed appropriate and it wasn’t on the bill. But it came into Ways and Means, I remember, and I supported him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was in one of your newsletters.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don’t remember if the bill passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn’t, actually. The clock ran out on you, unfortunately. Another hot-button issue that year had to do with education. I think this is something that we’re going to be hearing again and again, the idea of “educational excellence.” There had been quite a few national reports, the most famous one being A Nation At Risk, that were coming out saying that public education was mediocre, it just wasn’t producing...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we’d been trying to change that ever since then, still haven’t gotten the answer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Bauer seemed to take the lead on that. He established a committee called the Temporary Committee on Educational Policy Structure and Management. It was an attempt to look at the issue comprehensively. Forty-one or forty-two states were doing this, but only two, Washington and Maine, were looking at the whole picture. Everybody else was apparently looking at it piecemeal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, you need to look at it from kindergarten through to the four-year college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed useful. There were a couple of different things that were pushing this besides these reports, like the coming “Information Age,” as it was called, and how that was going to impact schools. The notion that teachers should look at themselves differently and people should look at teachers differently, seemed to be what you could boil it down to was that if teachers were going to be considered professionals, like doctors and lawyers, they had to act in a different way. And they had to take on different things and be more accountable for what happened in the classroom, which is a pretty tough issue. The other piece was to get parents more involved, the partnership idea – that it takes everybody. I don’t know what happened to this, but all through the eighties, especially in the Gardner administration, you are going to be wrestling with this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** At the same time that this was going on, I had tried to make the community colleges a part of the common school system. They were at one time. Then when they went statewide, there were nine community colleges at that time that were supported by local school districts, including voc-techs which were also part of the local school district. Our state Constitution states that kindergarten through grade twelve and two-year schools are under the aegis of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that mean that community colleges would be tax supported and non-tuition charging?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they would still be charging tuition. I wanted them to be placed back under the local school districts for control because community colleges were supposed to be built for local community kids. They are not for out-of-staters; they are not for out-of-country people. You don't go from here to eastern Washington to go to a community college; you stay in your own back yard because you don't build dormitories for them. So it was my idea that it should be a K-through-Fourteen. The state Constitution states that they are under the SPI and local school districts. I wanted to revert back to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been a bit of an uphill battle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, it was an uphill battle! It was a knock-down, drag-out. And I still stuck by my guns because I said that the policy people – the board of directors at the community colleges – had come from the people of the district and should be elected by the people of the district, not appointed by the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like a school board?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. See, the Governor appoints every community college trustee, which is crazy! And so I said it should be locally supported by the K-through-Twelve; it should be locally elected by the local people, and we wouldn't have all this trauma going on out there. I couldn't get it! The community colleges

thought it was a good idea. The overall community college board said, "This makes more sense." I talked to them. I put in a bill, but nothing happened. I had that bill in and out for about six or eight years but nothing ever happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who was on the opposing side?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The educators didn't want it. The community college people didn't want it; they liked it the way it was. Rubber-stamp everything – their board of directors often just rubber-stamped what the school administrators wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the Superintendent of Public Instruction; where did they stand?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They liked it. It would put the community colleges under the SPI – the community colleges would come under the SPI as the voc-tech schools were at that time. And the community colleges should have been under there, too. And I'll tell you, others who wanted it were the four-year college presidents because they were getting shafted by the community colleges. Dan Evans, who was one of the promoters of the community colleges – I stated at public meetings with four-year college presidents that it was done during one administration and I thought it was wrong and never should have been done – and he appeared to agree! Community colleges were siphoning money away from the four-year colleges and he was the president of Evergreen College at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are they in competition for the same state dollars?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would they be in competition with K-through-Twelve?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they're not; they would not be in competition with K-through-Twelve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where does their money stream come from?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The colleges? It comes from the state and also from tuition. But we could have rearranged that to come to the SPI and local school districts, and still charge tuition for the community colleges. It didn't matter; they were located in local communities anyway. And when we voted for a local community college in Tacoma, we voted the money to support it. We had tried for two bond issues for a community college that year in Tacoma and lost them both. We went back and on the primary election of that year we passed the bond issue for Tacoma Community College, which meant that we had to pay for it in one year. When the state took over the community college system several years later it is my understanding that they did not reimburse Tacoma. We had built all classrooms, because we needed classrooms for kids. We didn't build a public auditorium, a student center or other desirable buildings. I tried to get money to build a student facility, a student center, which all the other community colleges had, and I couldn't get the money because they said, "We don't give money for anything but classrooms."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were caught in the middle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was clobbered. My history is one of a Johnny-Come-Lately. They did it to me

and I couldn't stop it. The community college in Tacoma raised its own money for a student facility, they raised their own money to put in a day care center. We paid for everything on that campus. Got no help from the state. We're finally getting some money this year to redo the roofs, only the amount is being now reduced because of the economy. You see, the other colleges were all built with state money. And when they started satelliting – we went from nine community colleges to twenty-seven – and then they all satellited. So we are paying for the satellites also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain what that means?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Pierce College has two campuses, one in Steilacoom and one at Puyallup – two campuses and also a downtown school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is that duplication? Or is it a good thing for local people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it's a good thing for local people to be able to go but it still costs a lot more money. And almost every one of them has established satellites now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about all these branch campuses? The University of Washington is in Tacoma; you have a branch of Evergreen in



*Working closely with other Pierce County legislators, Senators Ted Bottiger and Marc Gaspard*



Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Evergreen had never been here. They did that when Dan Evans was president; we didn't even know they were doing it. We had stopped line-itemizing things in the college budgets and we weren't aware that a second Evergreen College was being established in Tacoma. We didn't even know it! Ted Bottiger and Marc Gaspard and I were all in the Senate and we were invited to the opening of Evergreen College Campus, downtown Tacoma and we didn't even know that it had happened. Because with no line item, dollars with no strings attached went to the college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems kind of big.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I was furious! We were all angry. And then they were impinging upon UPS and PLU, which further angered us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the thinking there, with the branch campuses of the universities? UW now is in Bothell, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It started in Vancouver – that's where it all started, because students had to go into Portland and pay out-of-state tuition because there was no campus within close proximity in Washington. So we authorized a brand new campus in Vancouver; it seemed right to me. After I lost the battle on the community colleges, I thought, "To hell with it." Our people can't get to Seattle to the University of Washington because of the traffic. They are working full time and they can't get there for the evening classes. So I supported it and fought for a branch campus of the University of Washington in Tacoma. I have never believed that we had a population base big enough to support all of the additions in education. Especially without an income tax. The first year that we took all the community colleges under the state system our budget increased substantially. The people couldn't understand why their taxes were going up. Well, naturally they are going up – we don't have an income tax, so they are going to have to come out some other way. So we took more money from the property tax. We were taking ten percent, now we're taking twenty percent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though community colleges serve a lot of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they are. But then I was offended when they put the voc-tech under the community college system and the voc-tech presidents gave themselves a hundred percent raise. Because they were "college presidents!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, I see.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, tell me about it! You can't control the budget unless you control the people. And you can't control the people when there are non-thinking legislators not paying attention. You've have to pick and choose. And if you aren't willing to pick and choose, then you are going to be in trouble. And we've had our bouts with trouble.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So tell me about the budget process that year. How did you manage to pass a budget with no tax increase for the first time in ages, in sixty days? That was an achievement! Was Jim McDermott a total whiz? What happened here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that what we had to do was to cut out – eliminate programs – that were less than essential. And I remember the DSHS Secretary was a person who had been with the Pentagon and was familiar with huge budgets. He was able to cut back the DSHS budget in areas which hurt the least number of people. His name was Allen Gibbs. He was phenomenal! And it was budget wizardry, but the legislative Ways and Means staff and Senator McDermott were able to do it. Senator McDermott credited much of it to Gibbs. Allen Gibbs was the Secretary who stepped aside when we were establishing the Department of Health and we were taking Health away from him. And he finally agreed that it was a good idea. He didn't say it was a good idea; he said he didn't oppose it. That was the best he'd do! Anyway, he was a very fine Secretary and he was able to cut the budget without hurting a lot of people. He was later fired by the Governor. Politics again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a sort of rare consensus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All I was trying to do was to save the programs that I felt were important and we were able to keep the Displaced Homemakers program. There were no increases in the program but I don't think there was a decrease in funds, because the program was so minimal anyway. I didn't fight the budget because I was able to save necessary programs – at least keep them going with some money. We eliminated some programs in which we just had the staffing but no money for the program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The budget is worked on all through the session, of course, but I don't know what the process was. Was it fairly tight? How did you do the supplemental budget?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We adjust budgets; some agencies haven't spent up to what they could spend, so we can re-allocate a portion of that to an agency that is over-budget because of an emergency, like fire fighting within Natural Resources – we had to have more money. So we adjust the budget to give some to those who need it and take away from those who haven't spent it. And what they were doing was saving the money to the last – to the second year of the budget so that they would have more and they didn't even know if they were going to need it. But they were trying to save it. So we eliminated that. And took it away from them and gave to those who needed it. That always goes on with a Supplemental.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you enjoy the process? Putting your finger on the heart beat, so to speak?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but you don't interfere as long as it's going well. The only time you speak up is when one of your programs is being spiked. But I didn't offer any protest, usually. Unless it was absolutely essential.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's how you saw your role in the budget process – protecting certain programs? About how much of your time would be spent on the budget, compared to your other duties? Was that your most important committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. It was. We spent more time in that committee, meeting. More time listening to lobbyists who had complaints about their budget being cut.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those would be agency lobbyists?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, agency or outside lobbyists. And if it were worthwhile, then I would contact Ways and Means and suggest that maybe we should not cut as much there. I called when I thought it was necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you pay attention to this section of the budget and somebody over here knows, say, Natural Resources?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every section of the budget is controlled by a staff person. And so you contact the staff person who controls the Higher Education or the social program area or the K-through-Twelve. And you contact that person with your reason that you feel it would be imprudent to cut in that area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But are you expected to know every area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, you only know the areas that people come and talk to you about. They didn't come and talk to me about energy or not too much on education, mostly on social programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is Ways and Means made up of different people who specialize in each area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think so. If they were doing that they would try to have the chairman of every committee on the Ways and Means and there isn't enough room. But the more important committees we do try to have...the Health Committee, there is someone from Health always on Ways and Means, I believe. And when I had DSHS...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you moving into that area of expertise at that time? The social and health issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think when I chaired Social and Health Services I was on Ways and Means. I wasn't on Rules, because I couldn't hold a

chairmanship and be on the Rules Committee. If you weren't on Rules, you could try to get on Ways and Means, because you needed to be on Ways and Means since DSHS occupied about forty percent of our budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Big, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Education, fifty percent of the budget, and then ten percent for general government. So we needed to be on the budget committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And certainly every time there was going to be a cut, they voted DSHS first.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They try. And you have to fight it and preserve it. And you don't always win.

## CHAPTER 15: "THE EYES OF WOJAHN," 1985



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's move on in our discussion to the 1985 session. You were re-elected that fall to your third term in the Senate and you had now been serving for, I think, it was sixteen years. So you are getting to be quite a veteran. It was also the election year for Booth Gardner as Governor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had been the Pierce County Executive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He ran in the primary against Jim McDermott, who was a good friend of yours.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but I stayed out of that race. I was not involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a predominance of Tacoma people in leadership positions in both House and Senate and then, of course, the Governorship, which seemed a little unprecedented. It was kind of a convergence of geography and power.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. Ted Bottiger was Majority Leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if that helped you in any way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had always been supportive of Booth Gardner and I helped him when he was running for County Exec. I had a

fund-raiser for him in Olympia and supported him financially. But when it came time for him to run for Governor, he had committed to staying the full time in Pierce County and then he broke his word and ran for Governor. And I stayed out of it. I wasn't even invited to be a part of his election campaign. They had Senator Bottiger and Senator Gaspard, and some Pierce County people as a nucleus of help for him. But I was not invited; I was left out. Which I thought was rather a cruel phenomenon because I probably would not have gone anyway, but I wasn't even invited.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you perceived as a McDermott supporter, perhaps?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Apparently, because we had been rather close and we worked together because he was interested in social programs, as I was, and we'd always worked together. But I didn't commit at all to him during that race. I stayed out of it. They claimed I did, but I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe – not according to yourself – but according to other people, you were in a somewhat ambiguous position?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. But by remaining neutral, they should have known. And that's the reason I didn't get the Liquor Board appointment, I'm sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you think it actually hurt you, in a way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It hurt me. It hurt my ability in leadership and it hurt me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So those things can go both ways.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. This is your fourth Governor that you served with. What did you think of Booth Gardner as a Governor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd always respected him. I had witnessed both sides and I think that he was more like Governor Evans than either Dixy Lee Ray or Spellman. And I accepted him.

I loved what McDermott did when he lost the primary, because I had told McDermott, “You need to go back to general practice so people know that you’re a medical doctor. They think you’re a psychologist.” And I said, “You are a medical doctor and you need to use that.” That’s the only advice I ever gave him, but I said, “I will not endorse.” And so on election night, when he knew that he had lost, he went to Booth Gardner’s campaign headquarters and presented him with an apple and said, “They say an apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he has a good sense of humor!

**Sen. Wojahn:** He’s humorous and he accepted it – in good faith – and gave Booth all of the help he needed. In fact, much of the new legislation that McDermott was prepared to do, he gave to Booth Gardner. These were not Booth’s ideas; these were McDermott’s ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The emphasis on health care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Health care. And also I think that they were just pursuing – had just passed the bill on – to provide funding for major infrastructure in the state for bridges and county health needs, county sewers, anything that was publicly oriented that needed attention. McDermott had started that and McDermott was the one who presented the idea of a basic health plan. And he gave them to Booth and helped him to get them. And I consider him a genuine friend of Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a statesman-like thing to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he wasn’t hard-nosed about it. Booth was hard-nosed. In other words, saying, “If you are not totally with me, you’re against me.” And I think that’s wrong. Because I had gotten along with all of the Governors. Some I liked better than others, but I served under four of them – or three at that time – and there was no controversy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What qualities do you think make a good Governor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The ability to develop ideas. The ability to be straight in your approach to people

and admit what you want to do. And integrity – absolutely important! The ability to maintain the steadfast approach, and a caring for people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a great deal of positive press when Booth Gardner won. Partly because it was a surprise, it seemed. But there also an uneasiness that his message was not very clear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn’t clear. It was not clear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People didn’t really know what he was going to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. Until he had someone step forward to help him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that was the next round of press – of which there seemed to be a great deal – was who was he going to have work with him? Because he didn’t seem to have a team in place. I was wondering how that looked from the legislator’s point of view.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think a lot of legislators were willing just to excuse that as the new person coming in. But he had been County Executive and had been in politics long enough to have developed some thoughts and some ideas. He brought Jules Sugarman on, of course. But he didn’t – to me – he didn’t appear to know where he was going or what he wanted to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not right off?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not right off. And he was ill prepared; let’s put it as bluntly as that. But he managed to get his feet on the ground fairly fast and I’m told that he had more staff people working for him than anyone in the history of the state of Washington. And that’s true. But you have to remember that a lot of the tax burden, the Legislature had heaped on the shoulders of Governors when they took over the whole community college system – on the state shoulders, instead of letting local governments help to pay for that. And, then we took on the responsibility of providing a tax cushion for major infrastructures. And, of course, we had to then increase the intake – the amount of money that we were accumulating for the property tax – because it started out at ten percent and had gradually kept creeping up, taking more and

more percentage of the property tax from local government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If the state government is taking on more responsibilities, somehow it has to find the money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then they have to have the money to cover it. And so a lot of these things were happening. And at the same time, community colleges were expanding and satelliting which cost more money and no one had the courage to stop them. And so the state was taking on more and more responsibilities for payrolls. I think that Governors Ray and, well actually, Spellman and Booth were caught in that bind. Where the people were complaining about the heavy tax burden at the state level. Well, it was to be expected, especially when we had no third leg of that stool – an income tax. Everything having to come out of the B&O tax and the retail sales tax. And a little portion of the property tax. So that all makes it difficult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These were still difficult economic years. You were coming out of the recession, but not very quickly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right, but we needed to give tax credits, I believe, to help businesses stay in business, to keep jobs floating. So there was that element that entered into the picture. So he did not have an easy job when he took over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes you wonder why anyone would want to do it! His first appointments seem to create a great sense of relief that he was going to go in a certain direction. He appointed Dean Foster as his Chief of Staff, for instance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Dean was very versed; he'd been the Clerk of the House and knew what he was doing. Politically, he was very good. But he didn't always listen to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another facet of Gardner's appointment schedule that raised some concern was how many Spellman appointees he kept on. Did that make people nervous or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that made people very nervous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He said it was for competence reasons and had nothing to do with politics.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But it has everything to do with politics. And I don't know how he sold that to the people of Washington State. And I think that made a lot of us uncomfortable. He seemingly was okay, but you never knew when the next shoe was going to fall.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly who you surround yourself with has an impact.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! But then he later appointed Jules Sugarman and the Republicans didn't trust him, you see. We couldn't even get him confirmed, ever. He was never confirmed by the Senate. Then he appointed Ted Bottiger to the Northwest Power Planning Council, and he was not confirmed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it at this time that Bud Shinpoch was the Revenue Director?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was the Revenue Director for about six months and then he became DSHS Director, then he got fired by Booth. Bud was really going in and cleaning house. He hired Don Sloma as his aide. Don is one of the most brilliant people in Olympia, as far as I'm concerned and I thought it was a great team. The Governor did not have the confidence to stay with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll have to track this as we come to it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I think that everybody breathed a sigh of relief because they thought that there was going to be some real, realistic looks at DSHS because it was a super-agency spending all kinds – beaucoup money – but no one knew where it was going. It was hard to track. And we felt that with Bud Shinpoch there, who had been Revenue Director and was always economically stable as a state senator and as a House member that things were going to be righted. And then he pulled the rug out from under that.

And then we thought that Sugarman would be fine. But he tried to establish a program in which they were going to send the recipients of public assistance into nursing homes and child care to work and I said, “No, you can’t do that because some people are not equipped to handle older people or children and they could be abusive.” And so I pulled the rug out from under that, which didn’t make the Governor happy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The people on the receiving end have needs, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. I said, “You can hire them to hold up signs for highway construction where they made good money, or anything else, but you can’t put them in these two areas – straight-jacket areas – and expect them to produce and not to create problems.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are vulnerable populations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The most vulnerable of our society. Sloma was working for me at that time and I was chair of the committee and that’s where we drew the line. And Jean Soliz – it was a wonderful combination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that sounds more of a mixed review than what the press wrote about him. It was quite a love-fest in the press. Booth Gardner vowed that one of his chief goals was better communication with the Legislature, especially compared to John Spellman. Do you think he achieved that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don’t. Firstly, he ignored legislators and I think that Ted Bottiger was in a difficult spot there to try to get the legislators to accept the Governor’s proposals and to sell them to the Senate. And I think there was a great sense of doubt that things were going to happen. There were expectations that things would turn out better, but there was no serious approach given to that until he started adopting some of the policies that we had established prior to his coming in office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wanted to reorganize government. He wanted to combine various smaller groups into, say, community

development, something every Governor wanted to do, it seems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Wants to do that and how do you do that without destroying necessary programs? We never, ever like that. They think they can consolidate and save money, but actually, in consolidation it actually costs money and you can’t follow the dollar as carefully as you can with smaller agencies and so the Legislature never, never likes that. Bigger is not better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does seem like there a pattern of Governors trying to create bigger agencies and certainly to be the one who appoints the directors.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there’s always this tension. Dan Evans was always trying to get a Department of Transportation, get DSHS, get various things, and then the Legislature started to break off pieces and make them smaller.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had enough of that with the Department of Social and Health Services. It didn’t work. And we knew it didn’t work; we’d watched it falling apart. So we finally pulled out various elements of it. We pulled out about five of them within a four or five-year span.

And there was a merging of two agencies, what had been Commerce and Economic Development. And that didn’t work. Somebody gets short-shifted – when there’s not enough money, the weakest part gets short-shifted and that might be a social agency and the people suffer. It just isn’t a good idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was this constant tension between these two ideals of so-called efficiency and accountability.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. Government cannot be efficient, cannot be run like a business, because it is not a business. It has too many traps where people can be hurt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that take courage, to say, “No.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** But it is not responsible, in my opinion. Every Governor tries it and every

Governor – Governor Evans did succeed in DSHS, but I remember when we took out Veteran Affairs – one of the early ones we took out – and we took out the Blind Commission. We started separating it; we took out the Corrections.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like the income tax. Every year there was a new version of the reorganization.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And it all comes back to the same stage. More money out of people's pockets.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When Governor Gardner gave his inaugural speech he came in with a whole list, as Governors do, of things that he wanted to do. Cleaning up Puget Sound. The water of Puget Sound was very high on that list and that is something that is fought over during this whole session. He seemed to bring a new emphasis to education. I don't recall that in these very first years he was calling himself the "Educational Governor" but that does come a little bit later.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was during that time that we increased the number of teachers for the primary grades.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, you did that this year. He, like everyone else, was concerned with the employment situation, with the slow recovery from the recession. There were still huge pockets of unemployment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We granted a tax credit to a firm in Puyallup and I think also one in Vancouver. Both proved to be unsuccessful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the time it was held as the great shining light.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The only tax credit that's worked is the one that's working right now with Economic Development, with housing. It's working!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The budget was still very tight. He would have liked to have a reserve fund for those big swings up and down, which seems like a sensible thing. The odd thing, of course, with the budget is that the out-going

Governor creates the budget that the in-coming Governor then has to deal with and he's only got a few weeks to do anything, which is probably not enough time to really put your stamp on anything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gardner was very upset that Governor Spellman had wanted to decrease the sales tax by, I think, half a percent. And he said, "Well, he's not going to have to deal with what happens when we do that." Gardner seemed to put that back, that half percent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which we would agree with – the Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The pension liability – the unfunded pensions – were coming into play again. He wanted to reorganize Labor and Industries; and the idea of informing workers about hazardous wastes on the worksite was still very much alive. There was a lot of talk about Hanford as a nuclear waste dump for the nation and what are we going to do about that. And one thing that seems a little different is that he comes out very strongly for paying his top administrators, and also elected officials, more money, which is usually wildly unpopular. But eventually you have to do it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was due because they were underpaid and it wasn't fair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wanted to attract good people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And good quality to run for office, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That takes money, so he seemed a little out-front on that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He held onto that and that was good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The first thing he did was hire Orin Smith as director of OFM, who had been the budget director under Dixy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Orin was one of the great directors. I was really not instrumental, but I know that I put in a strong plug, because I felt



that he was an outstanding employee. Both he and his wife were great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you have to pay people like that. They don't come free.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! We were all pleased with that appointment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed to get a lot of positive response.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Didn't Gary Locke bring back Orin? He had Joe, who was Labor and Industries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Joe Dear. He rose to the forefront in the Locke administration. But Orin Smith was back in the private sector by then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You know, at first Joe Dear applied for a job with the Association of Washington Business and they didn't hire him. So he went to Labor and Industries and they hired him and he was one of the best employees we've ever had. And I guess business is really kicking itself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that was the real beginning of his career.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just out of school. Brilliant young man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democrats had a majority: there were twenty-seven Democrats in the Senate against twenty-two Republicans. You had a gain of one during the election.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Comfortable majority. Fairly comfortable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More comfortable than you had been.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Still wasn't totally comfortable, but...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little room to breathe. The House had fifty-three Democrats and forty-five Republicans, which was the same number as they'd had before the election – kind of unusual that the number didn't change. Wayne Ehlers was again the Speaker of the House. As you said, Ted Bottiger was your Majority Leader. You retained the Caucus Vice-Chair position, so

you were still in leadership. What kind of voice did you have in the group?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just behind the scenes. If I had something to say, I said it. We met frequently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let's see, in 1985, there was Ted Bottiger, George Fleming, Larry Vognild, yourself, Rick Bender. It's a smaller number than the Republicans have given themselves; they had quite a big line-up. Were you a pretty tight group? Did you work well together this session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We worked well together. And they listened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were still the only woman in the Democratic leadership. Jeannette Hayner was still the Minority Leader for the Republicans; she had George Sellar, and Dan McDonald, who seemed to be a rising star in their group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sellar, we all liked. He was really a prince and he was very principled. His vote showed that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Peter von Reichbauer was the Republican Whip, so he had carved out a spot for himself there. And then they had Bob McCaslin, Alex Deccio and Hal Zimmerman.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Zimmerman was really fair; Deccio generally very fair, McCaslin was always fair. And also George Sellar. We had a chance, if we handled things right and were careful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you have characterized Jeannette Hayner at this point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, she was less tractable. And she couldn't be, I understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She had to keep them in line?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. But on some issues – I remember on the motorcycle helmets for children under sixteen, I insisted that no child under five could ride on a motorcycle because they didn't have any right to say no. And then from five to sixteen they had to wear a helmet and she was supportive of that and said as far as she was concerned,

everybody should wear a helmet, but if that's the best we could get... It was my bill – it was Senator Rasmussen's bill, but he didn't work it – I worked it. And we got it. And so in safety measures and some things she was very fair; on social issues, no. She didn't seem to understand them. She didn't understand why everybody couldn't have a job. Or couldn't work for minimum wage, even though they were starving to death at the same time, you know. But I understood that she had to hold her caucus together and she had some really conservative people there that she was straddling the fence all of the time. And she got more and more conservative as time went on. But I think that Sellar was able to get to her and then pretty soon she didn't want to listen to him any more. This is my impression. And I don't know whether I'm feeling that right or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were working with all these people and you can't help but form impressions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I knew there were things that I could go the other side for and there were things they absolutely wouldn't do. Because I always tested the water. When I had a bill that was slightly controversial that I wanted Republican support for, if it were a health or medical issue, I'd go to George Sellar and if he wouldn't go on the bill with me – politely refused – I knew: no hope.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Snowball in hell?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can sense it through other people and not directly with the person themselves. I only went to Jeannette Hayner once, I think. I don't remember what that was about, even.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine that your years of experience would help develop your intuition about who's going to be with you and who's not.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You find out those who will politely say no and those that will say yes and then try to kill a bill – and people do that. And you learn. And you don't offer to them anymore. In other words, you don't even go to

them if you know they are philosophically opposed to the idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or capable of saying yes, and then doing something else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that, to me, ends up with little integrity. And there are people down there like that. Then there are people who get on a bill and find out the bad parts and fight it and I've done that. I've gone on bad bills, thinking they were good bills, without thoroughly understanding or reading the bill and on occasion I've had to default. But that's an honest thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a different issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's a different thing to go on a bill with the intention of killing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The committees you were on in 1985 included Commerce and Labor, which seemed to be a real hotbed of all kinds of activity, with Frank Warnke as the Chair, and then you were with Ray Moore on Financial Institutions. Now, you have to tell me a little bit about Ray Moore and his relationship with you since he has that very famous nickname for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Norse Goddess of Terror!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're not even Norwegian, so that's fun.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. But I could be!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I couldn't comment on the rest of it. What was he like to work with?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He always listened and he didn't always agree. If he had a twinkle in his eye, you knew that you'd gotten to him; it was okay. But when he sort of – not growled, but got a grim look – you knew you didn't have him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least that was clear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I didn't force issues unless it was an issue that I was really close to and felt I was right. And that's where we growled at each other. But I'll never forget the year we passed the bill to provide for medical care for reconstructive surgery after a mastectomy. It was a big bill. He was chair of the committee when we passed the original bill. And I took it

to him and he sort of looked doubtful. But, I don't remember if he was on the bill or not, it was a health issue, but I was on Commerce. And it ended up in his committee. It was the fastest bill that ever went through the Legislature, and that was Ray Moore. And we developed a kind of camaraderie; we always sat close to each other on the floor. And when he didn't like something – like comparable worth bills, and bills in which women were given equal status with men – he used to cry about them. He hated them, but his wife was on my side. Virginia always told him I was right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you've got the wife with you! In this case, Virginia had a great deal of influence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was outstanding. And so after a bill would pass that I had sponsored – he was sitting in back of me at that time – and he would talk at me all the time during the time the bill was being passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sort of grumbling at you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, grumbling at me, saying, "Oh Wojahn, this is a lousy bill. I don't know why you sponsor these kinds of bills, Wojahn; it just doesn't bode well for you." And oh God, he was nasty, nasty! He didn't like it. But he was so innocent in his way, a cunning, innocent man.



*Working at her desk on the Senate floor while Senator Moore lines up his pencils and his thoughts on his colleague's "lousy legislation"*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your nickname for him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't call him anything. I just cringed when he called me the Norse Goddess. And he always voted yes. And after the vote came – then the grumbling started.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You paid dearly for that one?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I paid for every vote that he gave me on the issues that he didn't agree with. But Senator Talmadge agreed with me. And he was there. And Ted usually agreed with me and he couldn't win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had to go with it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So it was fine. We formed a kind of triumvirate, the three of us. We were really good friends. I trusted them, totally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, your names show up together on a lot of things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But neither Talmadge nor Ray would meet in the same room as Peter von Reichbauer. They couldn't stand him. I remember taking them to lunch a couple of times and saying, "Come on back guys." I was in charge of the lunchroom. I'd say, "Come on back, we need you." And they would never do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now that's really sticking to it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They never did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They never forgave him at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never forgave him. Never!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That kind of grudge is a bit unusual, isn't it? Was there something special about Peter von Reichbauer to call this forth?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some people hold grudges they never let show. There are two schools of thought in the Legislature. One is that you're happy and glad-hand with

everybody and you try to take them out in an underhanded way – sub rosa – beat them at their own game. And there are the other ones who forgive. And if it's a good bill, you let it go and don't fight it. And there are those who fight good bills because of a grudge. Oh, it's there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So who lasts longer? Who's more effective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they both – it depends. Ted Bottiger didn't hold grudges. He always glad-handed, but he killed people's bills. So they were both successful. And I know when Augie Mardesich was there, members – Republicans – always had to go home and "Mardesich" their bills, because they knew he'd find a flaw, if there was a flaw in them. And the same thing with Talmadge. They didn't fight him because he could always out-debate them. I didn't try to debate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some people inspired fear and awe?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Awe and fear. I never inspired that. They usually voted for my bills because they were good bills, I guess. But I would never debate a person on a bill unless – a few times I did in the House, on things that I felt were appropriate. I tried to kill the opening of the watersheds to the public. And I fought Newhouse on that and won. And so some things were too important to not debate, but normally you tried to accommodate within the structure. There is a certain level below which you won't go, but above that you can negotiate. And so, I guess I tried to do that mostly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking how fascinating working with this group of people must have been, with each style of getting things done. Negotiating through all the different personalities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** All the different people – Ted Bottiger was more industry oriented. He always said that between birds and boats, he would go with the boats, you see. And I was on

the fence, always. I never took a position except I had a level below which I would never go. George Fleming was always fair: blacks, minorities – he was there and I was always with him because I believed in that. Rick Bender was sort of *comme ce, comme ca*. And he was easy to get along with. He was labor. His dad was head of the Labor Council for King County. And so he always hung tight with labor. But he was nice about it and got things done. He always was able to get things for labor because he was kind of a happy-go-lucky guy who said, "You get what you deserve and you get what you earn." And so Rick was easy. Who else was in Leadership? Ted and George and me and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Larry Vognild.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Larry. Larry was very fair. He tended to be on Ted's side between birds and boats. But could negotiate. So it was really a good structure. Because we could all agree to respect each other's opinions and to debate them and to say, "You're crazy, it isn't that way at all," but never to get angry about it. And I remember when we came together, when Peter was talking about walking out and I had them all at my place for dinner and I said, "Let him walk. We'll never control him. He'll keep asking for more and more; you'll give more and more away. And eventually he's going to lose, anyway." And it happened.



*"We developed a kind of comraderie." Assisting Senator Moore with a chess move against Senator Kent Pullen on Senate floor while (L to R) Senators Lois Stratton, Eleanor Lee, Dan McDonald and Nita Rinehart look on*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** May as well cut it quick?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Two days later he walked. The night we had dinner, they didn't agree and Ted was still on the fence and for giving him something else he wanted and then the next day he walked. But we all remained friends, I think, and still are friends. I still respect George Fleming, what he tried to do. He did good things for people. He had lots of ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody comes to it with a different drive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you have to have ideas. And you have to have a position because of those ideas. And you can't deviate. And George never did; he was okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was there a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was there and he was good. And George and Ted didn't agree a lot of the time. They shared office space but I know that they didn't agree and they had problems, but they resolved them. Because they were two leaders, clashing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other committees you were on were also led by very different, but also strong individuals. Rules, of course, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Cherberg who was reaching, not quite the end of his career, but he was getting up there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You know what Cherberg said to me once when I challenged something that he really wanted? It was something that Bill Fritz, who had lobbied for the Boeing Company and then went on his own, wanted. He was married to Celia; they both lobbied together. And Cherberg didn't like him at all. It was a bill that he wanted and Cherberg was stepping in the way of it because he either didn't like the bill or he didn't like the lobbyist.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The messenger?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The messenger, right. It was a combination of both. And I liked the bill and so it became controversial. And when it got to Rules Committee, I voted for the bill and when it got to Cherberg, I think he broke the tie and he finally voted with the bill. And Gordon

Walgren said to him afterwards, "How come you voted for that bill?" and he said, "I'd rather fight with him than take on Wojahn." He said it! "I just didn't want to get on the wrong side of Wojahn."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had a certain amount of clout there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'll never forget that. It was the funniest thing. And I didn't know. I was not aware that he felt that way about me, that I had any clout at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe you had more of a glint in your eye than you knew.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had bought some political sign boards at a Boys and Girls Club auction. I didn't need them so I gave them to John Cherberg and said, "If you can use these, you get them." I think I had bought six. And that may have softened it; I don't know. I didn't do it for that reason. I did it because it was a statewide office and I couldn't use them. And I just said, "They're yours." And gave him the things and he used them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, every little bit helps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a Democrat and you do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other chair that you worked closely with is Jim McDermott from Ways and Means, just to round out the list.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I loved him. I never challenged him – ever. I got a few accommodations through him for City of Tacoma, I remember. I remember one time it was something we wanted – the City of Tacoma came there to testify for it – and then he gave me a right to say something after they testified. And I just said, "Well, I just want you to know that the eyes of Tacoma are on all you members of the Ways and Means Committee." And McDermott said, "No, the eyes of Wojahn are!" It brought down the house! That was funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's good! There was a kind of shadow expressed in the press over this session that perhaps was due to economics, I'm not really sure. But there was this constant

refrain, “Is this going to be like 1981? Is Booth Gardner going to be like John Spellman? Are we going to have these issues again?” And it just hangs there and it just seems to be on people’s minds. Do you recall feeling anything like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was always a worry that the Governor had the right to veto areas of the budget. The only veto right he had to go into a bill and veto – except for the whole bill – he could veto a whole section, but he couldn’t veto a line item. Except on the budget, he could exercise a line-item veto. He had to take out a whole section on other bills, but he could line-item on the budget. I think we were always careful to write a section to make it veto-proof as possible. There was always that worry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are some big issues that year. You had had a “year of the child” the year before; that focus continues in several areas. In education, I think you mentioned that you reduced the classroom size for the primary grades. But that you didn’t have enough money to do everything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. We wanted to do it for others, but we couldn’t, so it was the primary grades we did. And I remember Rick Bender was really supportive of that and pushing for that, although he was not on Ways and Means.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like if you couldn’t do everybody those would be the most crucial years you would concentrate on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But Senator Bender was the one who persuaded leadership that we needed to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe you can explain this for me. You wanted to change how school levies were calculated. Ordinarily, to pass a school levy you need forty percent turnout to validate the vote and you wanted to eliminate that requirement, which would take a constitutional amendment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. We’ve never gotten it on the ballot; it never passed both Houses.

Every year we’ve tried to do that; it still doesn’t work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had some school levies failed because not enough people had turned out to vote? Sixty percent have to vote yes, but forty percent have to turn out and vote in the first place. And that combination gets you one way or the other. So just simply not voting is also a way to kill it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. They can kill a bill by staying home from the polls.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The phrase, “educational excellence” was starting to become a very big theme for Governor Gardner. And the Legislature, at this point, tightened the requirements for high school graduation – that’s one area that you start to look at. This was the beginning wedge in this discussion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the whole thing is that we tried to do things – to please everybody – but when you reduce the class size in the primary grades then you put an extra burden on the others. And then you toss in all of the developmentally disabled into the regular classrooms – see, we don’t have special classes any more – and then you put an additional burden on the educational system. And by the time you’ve watered the system down so badly, when it gets to high school, the kid’s education has been watered down because of lack of funding that they don’t get the structure that they need to graduate. And I don’t know how you take care of that without additional funding. It doesn’t make sense. And nobody seems to understand that and it still doesn’t work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People want schools to do everything, fix every social problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And yet private schools do not have to take disabled kids. If they do, they have them in a separate classroom. They can do it, so people are sending their kids to private school. Well, it still doesn’t reduce the tax, but they are unwilling to pay the additional tax. That’s the reason levies fail. So, it’s a vicious circle and I don’t know how you take care of it. And it never will happen as long as you put

developmentally disabled kids in with a normal class load where the teacher's attention is drawn away from instructing the kids who can learn. And you give more money to primary grades, so kids can build their confidence and they get into the fourth grade and they are back. It doesn't work and I don't know how to explain that to people to make them understand. There isn't enough money to do it right. To reduce the class loads is what we need to do, if we're going to put the DD kids in with the other kids; you've got to have a reduction in class load to give the teacher a chance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or provide more teacher aides?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or more helpers in the classroom.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lately, there's been kind of a firestorm in the letters to the editor. Some person, for instance, wrote and said, "I'm a senior citizen. I don't have children in the schools right now and I don't want to pay for schools." A lot of people, I think, feel that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's been going on forever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But there was quite a response. At least some people understand that you may not have children yourself, but you want your society to be educated. You want the nurse that's maybe taking care of you as a senior citizen to have an education. It was a very interesting exchange. How do legislators respond to that kind of thinking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know that that comes out, but it's the whole thing of democracy. It's the whole basis of democracy. One person helping another. It's the responsibility to make the society work. It's a give and take. You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On the other end of the educational scale, the professors in Higher Ed. were trying to get the right to have collective bargaining for wages, hours, working conditions. They were not asking for the right to strike – or they were certainly not going to get it at any rate. But that didn't seem to get resolved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think that's ever passed. It's come up every year but I don't

know whether they ever got that right. I'm foggy on that. I always supported it although I questioned the need.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must have been rather desperate. It's a struggle for professionals to unionize.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The highly capable ones could always negotiate their own. I have mixed feelings. I always supported it because I support collective bargaining as a general principle. So I went along with it and in some cases it's needed because there can be gross unfairness. When they talk about paying more for teachers that are better teachers – merit pay – there could be improprieties there. So, because of that, I still went along with collective bargaining and hoping that reasonable people will be reasonable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it didn't go anywhere that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And merit pay never has either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Out of the field of education, but still dealing with children, you began work this year and into the next year about a whole package of bills having to do with child abuse and neglect. And there seems to be much clearer language, a much clearer idea of what that means.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Talmadge was the one who did that. He clarified the issue for a lot of members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What caused that to come to the Floor that year?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Was that the year that the child was murdered?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not the year of Eli Creekmore, but I don't know about other children.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Part of it, the clarification came about years before that when we talked about incest within a family. So it was a beginning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This did redefine incest.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And the whole thing with the equal rights amendment, a lot of

it dwelt with the issue of incest because it was the mother's word against the father; if she believed that he was creating incest with a child, her word was no good in the courts. And that was one of the big issues with the Equal Rights Amendment that no one ever talked about. But I remember it happening. That's all part of the whole picture that no one wants to talk about. So it was becoming clearer and clearer. And there may have been a number of child deaths that year throughout the state of Washington in which a family member was accused, because we were telling teachers and physicians they had to report such incidents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did change the reporting requirements. They had been given, previously, a week! And now it was forty-eight hours.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. They have to report it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Things were much tighter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, tighter. And that consequence created the need for additional legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a whole raft of bills. You had the Washington State Patrol develop a clearinghouse for missing children; there was a big discussion on street kids. Were you able to get more help for them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were able to do it because computers were coming in and we could find out. Before that it was impossible to do. We were able to begin to do it properly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So advances in technology...

**Sen. Wojahn:** ...assisted us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Helped with better tracking of children. That's fascinating.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And also finger printing for criminals who were applying for work in nursing homes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, previously, people didn't have the right to ask what people's criminal backgrounds were.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Considered a privacy issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They could ask about employment but they couldn't ask if they had ever murdered someone...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had to have been found guilty. This all comes down to the ability to track through technology. There wasn't much point in passing bills before that because if they couldn't be made effective; they were empty laws.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The whole notion of abuse was also expanding. It also includes neglect. For the first time that is criminalized.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lack of feeding...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Taking improper care of a dependent child.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, of a baby. It was abuse and neglect. Children were appearing in hospitals half starved and it was neglect. Or police were being called into homes that were filthy, where animals lived with the family...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were working on this with Senator Talmadge this year and into the next year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a huge raft of bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that was interesting is the Senate would often pass these bills and they would die in the House. I read a short article saying there was no explanation – saying that there was unfortunately a split in the Democratic Party between the more socially conscious Senate and the much more fiscally conservative House Democrats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything with some legislators has a dollar sign. Even though it is socially responsible and necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very interesting to me, they name one legislator, saying he was the leader of the fiscally conservative House Democrats: Dennis Braddock who is now, of course, the head of DSHS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm surprised at that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was, too. Do you remember what was happening to your bills in the House?



**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't realize that Dennis was killing them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if he was or not. It was this rather ambiguous article in the press and he was the only name that they used so I wanted to check that with you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It may have been one particular bill that the journalists liked that didn't get out that Dennis had found fault with, because I find him to be one of the most socially responsible people in the Legislature. If you remember, he's the one who helped me with the State Board of Health to retain it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, that's why it surprised me.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I would be surprised. I don't remember whether I found out that he was the one who was stopping it or whether I went over and talked to him and found out there was a reason for it. I don't know. Because normally, if someone were stopping a bill – if I wasn't the sponsor of it I didn't take it as my responsibility – but if I was the sponsor of a particular bill that I thought was important, I would go over. Was he chair of the committee? I would go over and talk to the chair, at least, about it. But I don't know why that occurred. I don't remember the bill even.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seemed to be focusing on taxes, according to this article. And they called him a neo-liberal and his watch-word, according to this article, was "fiscal realism," which meant, of course, not spending very much money. It was notable how many bills passed the Senate, went to the House and died in committee. And there were different committees and different people involved and it was difficult to tell...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd need to know who the chair of the committee was and if he were the chair and why? Probably not the chair, I don't know. You never know what happens to bills unless you're involved with them. Maybe there were too many bills that the committee had to consider that they didn't get around to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, this was a very quick session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That could be part of the reason. Because Dennis...Charlie Moon was always a very fine legislator and he was reasonably liberal. He was a veterinarian and I think people – professionals – who are self-employed tend to look at things a little bit more clearly than maybe somebody who never had to meet a payroll. But also responsibly. So I don't know what happened with Dennis; I have no idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was just a curious little thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I know that Charlie Moon was one of my very favorite legislators because he was very responsible. Always, even in watching the budget. If you remember, we introduced the two of them when we were trying to get the Board of Health sustained and Dennis and Charlie worked on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. This was the year that Jim McDermott brought out his Washington Basic Health Care Plan and you were a co-sponsor of that with him. Using several sources to fund – one of them being an increased cigarette tax. It doesn't pass but it seems to be a beginning of that discussion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It passed the next year I think, didn't it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It passed the Senate; again, it died in the House Social and Health Committee. Joanne Brekke was the chair of that committee. It was a really big bill and it seems that those do take more than one year to get through – was that part of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, it needed to be massaged. I remember I put an amendment on something. I don't remember what it was, but I remember it was accepted. It was an amendment in committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a lot of amendments, yes. And you had a bill, SB 3262, to prevent Medicaid discrimination against nursing home residents. From what I could read, non-Medicaid residents could be charged more in nursing homes for their care than Medicaid

patients. There was a lid on it, is that how that worked? So that nursing homes would prefer to take non-Medicaid persons?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of them wouldn't even take Medicaid people. We said, "You all need to take some." And this would be also geared to new nursing homes coming on. They couldn't be licensed if they didn't agree to take a portion of the Medicaid people. I remember fighting that issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were quite a few health bills. Health care costs are spiraling at this point. People were starting to really pay attention to this. But on a different note, trying to jump-start the economy still was a huge discussion. And, of course, being on Ways and Means, the whole budget issue was, as usual and quite properly, dominating the session. Governor Gardner had an idea that he called "Team Washington" of having a sales tax deferral program. Could you explain that? I understood it as, if you wanted to build up a new business, that you could defer your taxes so that you could get a running start. Is that a good description?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Defer your taxes for a number of years and when you are on your feet, then pay them, yes. I think Immunex wanted that, if I remember correctly, because they were starting up – all their money was going out. They were building and they were having to pay sales tax on supplies for building. All their money was going out, nothing coming in, and they needed a tax deferral. I think we granted them and I'm sure it was Immunex at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are right in Seattle, of course. But part of this had to do with depressed areas. Trying to start up businesses there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Puyallup and also Vancouver, I think. Deferring the tax rather than repealing it totally, on building supplies, for one thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this also have something to do with the RCA Sharp Company? Luring them to the state?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the lure. I think that was the one going into Puyallup and they gave them tax deferrals and I think, also, Vancouver,

Washington. Because this company that was going into Puyallup had to have a lot of water in order to run their business and there was water available and so it was given for that reason there, as I remember. I don't remember what the reason for the one in Vancouver, but they were all applying for the tax deferral. The Puyallup one went in, but I think it's now gone defunct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Earlier you seem to say that maybe this maybe wasn't such a good idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you have to try things, you know. Anything that is possible, you try to do in order to provide the impetus for business to come in. And so whether it's good or bad, you never know until you try it. So I believe you have to try things. Otherwise your ideas are thrown out; good ideas get thrown out with bad ideas and you never prove anything out. So I would support tax deferrals on a limited basis if they had the right approach and the right idea and followed the rules and regulations laid down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you decide how long the deferral should be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think normally they were ten years. That seems to be the magic number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So not at a certain amount of profit or something; it was just a time thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that when they showed a certain amount of profit, they would have to start paying, but I think there was a maximum of ten years usually. I know on the one that we did on the property tax, it was a ten-year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Something that you also pushed but didn't pass, you thought that companies that were going to close plants should have to give some kind of notification.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, when they knew they were in trouble, they needed to alert their people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because whole communities could be...

**Sen. Wojahn:** ...devastated by that and it happened in our state. And I felt there needed to be an alert to begin with before the bankruptcy

and the lay-offs started occurring. We didn't get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did pass the Senate but died in the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Eventually some bill did pass since then, I think. But I didn't pursue it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A really big initiative, part of the Governor's plan, was to clean up Puget Sound. Everyone seemed to agree that Puget Sound was in bad shape.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was going to do it; he was going to enforce it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the hang-up there – how were you going to pay for it? That was the question.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and how are we going to pay for it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Senate seemed to favor general obligation bonds. The House wanted to rely on individual property tax assessments. How would general obligation bonds impact an individual household as compared to property tax assessments?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think general obligation bonds should be less expensive, probably. Because it would be spread over a greater number of people and I would generally favor general obligation bonds, as long as we have not reached our bond limit. And there should be available sources of money for various communities through that and through the state based upon the limit. And I don't know that it isn't wise to even raise the limit. The constitutional limit is nine percent. But when Augie Mardesich was in the Senate – that was the first year I was there in 1977 – he got a bill through that reduced it in statute to seven percent. And we've never raised it above seven. Well, what we've done is take out some things from the general obligation bond responsibility to accommodate, rather than raising the limit to nine percent. But I don't see the danger of raising it to nine percent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What's the magic number? I mean, what happens? Does the state bond rating change?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The bond rating can change and then you run out of bonding authority, money. I think Augie believed that by reducing the bonding authority to seven percent our AA rating would always remain the same. Well, that didn't happen after the WPPSS affair. So it was kind of a superficial approach. So, as long as we remain within the bonding limit, and require local governments to bond up to their limit before they ask the state to come forward and help them that should be the approach.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did we compare with other states?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea what other states do. I don't know. And the federal government doesn't bond at all. They pay for one thing and that's the reason we're always in trouble. They pay for everything the first year. They need to establish a bonding authority, nationwide, I believe. And use it with discretion. Instead of paying for a whole hospital complex like Madigan Hospital in one year. That's the reason we're in trouble.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of spread it out a bit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Spread it out. And let future generations help to pay for it because it's going to be there for them. Why should one generation have to take the brunt of the whole thing? This is getting into a real precarious issue – federal bonding – but I think there should be that. We've talked about that in the Legislature but we can't do it. The other thing that needs to be done is the insurance companies need to be regulated like they regulate every industry in the United States – banking and autos and – everything is regulated except insurance and they get away with murder.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you certainly tried to regulate them in the following year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this issue of cleaning up Puget Sound, it does not pass then, but were you moving towards a solution?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, then the controversy was raised over whether it should be taken over by Natural Resources which is supposed to do it, or if Ecology should do it. And I think that Natural Resources was given the authority to do it. Because we tried to take that away the last year I was there, in 2000, and give it to Ecology, because they weren't doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some issues with failing sewer systems and then beginning public education on non-point pollution – pollution that comes from run-off from streets or animals – the waste matter seeping into the water.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether we ever resolved it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were still fighting about it, I think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The ability for local government to borrow at real reasonable rates from the state for superstructures should have taken care of the sewage problem. Because it would be up to a local government to ask for the assistance and it's very low interest. They have to pay it back but it's low, low interest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The population growth during these years was stressing every system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We expect local governments to help out. You cannot undertake the whole responsibility yourself. And I think that's something that we need to do. And if we have local governments that are responsible, it happens. If you have irresponsible local governments, you're never going to get it to happen. And that's where you need good candidates to run for office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the state's in the middle. It's not the federal government and it's not local counties.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody comes to the state to pick up the pieces.

**Sen. Wojahn:** To pick up the slack. And so every county expects the state to do it and yet they have county commissioners or county councils, and city government that should take

responsibility. But they do not, always. "Let John do it." And the last resort, I think the state often does pick up the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They appear to. There were some smaller bills that, to me, are like flags for issues that are just going to be there until they are solved. There was a bill to ban smoking in public places.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't support them at first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it didn't include the work place, which is very interesting. People have to go to work but that wasn't considered a public place at that point.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually...at the beginning an idea starts and it takes so long – it travels a long distance before it's finally accepted by all. It's a matter of educating people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1985, it's later than I would have thought, there it is. And it didn't pass.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No and they fought it. The Health Department always fought for it. And I didn't think it was their place to be doing it. You know, I was one of those who held out; I finally caved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because the issue of second-hand smoke was not well understood?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. No one realized that second-hand smoke could poison a person or could injure – no. And the research had never been done to prove it out. That as soon as it was proven that it could hurt, then I think we did take action.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a different issue altogether, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like passive smoking. You're not choosing to do it yourself.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, but it's getting the worst of it. I remember the issue well. Representative Charlie Savage from Shelton died of lung cancer – he was diagnosed early and died within two weeks – he was in the Legislature and he had never smoked a day in his life. And that's when the whole uprising – I guess it was 1975 –

the uprising came against Speaker Leonard Sawyer. Charlie had just died and wasn't there to vote to support Leonard Sawyer and the challengers were able to get to Leonard. I've never forgiven them for that. Charlie would have been with us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Small things add up to big things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Small things create hell! Yes, it was really bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another rather interesting bill – a Senate Joint Memorial – pushed through by George Fleming for reparations, to ask Congress to pay reparations to the interned Japanese Americans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I liked that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered why George Fleming brought that up this year. Did someone come to him with it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think maybe there was talk in Congress about doing it, because wasn't it Congressman Mike Lowry who sponsored the bill in Congress?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know about that one. You had some important bills. One that got a lot of attention was preventing employers from requiring polygraph tests. What led you to sponsor that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether it was the Civil Liberties Union or what. A constituent of mine had been falsely accused and fired because of a polygraph test. And so I felt polygraph tests were wrong. I didn't think I would get that bill because it was fought real hard and Governor Gardner didn't really like the bill and was getting great pressure to veto it if it did pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who wanted it? I mean, who wanted the right to conduct those tests?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Jewelry stores and retail stores. They fought against the bill. The Judicial Council of which I had been a member had attempted to pass a similar bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your old group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and I believed it was wrong. And I think that there had been enough abuses and apparently a constituent had a problem, but then I read about a lot of other problems that occurred. And the fact that it wasn't a true test, they couldn't really tell. Amoral people could pass it with no problems and it wasn't fair. And so I fought it through the Senate – got it through finally – and then it had trouble in the House and I was ill or something, because I know that Senator Al Williams testified before the House for me on the bill. He was very good; I might have floundered. I don't know. But I wasn't there and he testified in support of the bill for me and it passed. The Governor was talking about vetoing it because one of the people who wanted a veto was a jeweler – his daughter-in-law is now a judge in Seattle – and I understand he had been Booth Gardner's finance chairman. He didn't want the bill and he contacted the Governor and I found out about it. So I contacted the Governor's office. I don't remember with whom I spoke, but he didn't veto it and that became law. I softened toward the Governor after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a bit of an olive branch to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a good bill, a very good bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another bill that you were successful on that year was the Mastectomy Insurance Bill, SB 3989, which closed some loop holes that denied health care insurance to breast cancer survivors. It seemed of a piece with the bill that you had previously passed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They were fighting it; they were trying to get out from under it. So we made some adjustments that weren't substantial and we won. They can still get the reconstructive work done. But they have to have insurance, of course. Insurance lobbyists were trying to get it repealed. It didn't get repealed. I don't remember what adjustments we made – I believe the reconstructive surgery had to be done within a certain number of years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A five-year benchmark.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that was it, and what else? I don't remember. We did accommodate them with that, but it was reasonable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I'm sure you helped a lot of people with this bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems scientifically based. If you have been free of cancer for five years, that's generally considered the passing grade and you're considered a survivor at that point.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I think our counsel was they had to have had the surgery – there was a time limit of five years to the point where they have it. So they could have it right away, I'm sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, it was covered at any rate. So it seemed to be kind of a matching bill to your reconstructive surgery bill. Finishing the job.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, sometimes you don't catch all the ripple effects on a bill when it first passes so you need to go back and correct those if it's appropriate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You do seem to be getting some bills through – or at least getting some attention – to help Tacoma that session. I understand that Tacoma, at this point, had a higher unemployment rate than many other places in the state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We've always had a fairly high rate because it's a timber area and timber people always controlled the employment here for a number of years and actually kept the city from growing because they wanted to keep their labor force intact. And be able to pick and choose. Tacoma is kind of the back door of Seattle – the good jobs don't start here. We've only had about three actual industries in the City of Tacoma headed by a CEO. Weyerhaeuser was here until they moved to Federal Way. We had the National Bank of Washington; it was the major industry in which the head of the group lived here. The Weyerhaeusers lived in Tacoma and the aluminum company, Kaiser Aluminum, had a head office here, otherwise there were four, I think, in which the head of the company actually resided in Pierce County and could

make instant decisions. St. Regis was the other. Then St. Regis moved its corporate headquarters and only had a subordinate person overseeing. Subordinate employees are always trying to improve the bottom line by controlling costs; people lost their jobs. We became a city during this period of time without any major industry head who could make a decision on what was right and what was wrong. And so, we were being squeezed. St. Regis moved out and the National Bank of Washington CEO, Goodwin Chase, retired and then it became another banking company, and Weyerhaeuser moved to Federal Way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been a big blow.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a jolt. That's why we worked so hard to keep the Frank Russell Company here. But they were going to move. And so during that period of time it was a real problem with joblessness. And the fellows at the head were bottom-line people where they simply were not replacing those who retired and squeezing those at the bottom. And so something needed to be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you started to look at the things that Tacoma does have, which are some really wonderful historic buildings. And you began working to save the Tacoma Armory in these years. You were looking at the Union Street area. In the 1986 Supplemental Budget, you were able to get \$100,000 to assist Tacoma with a feasibility study for economic development in the Union Station area. And you previously had gotten \$1,000,000 to renovate the Armory that had been blocked in the courts. You accomplished quite a bit with all the different projects in Tacoma to revitalize the inner core.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Armory got done, finally. They never used that though for housing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then in 1985 or '86, the court ruled that the bond sale was legal, I guess was the issue. What did they finally do with the Armory?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They turned it into a prison.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that wasn't quite what you had in mind.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that was not what I had in mind. A temporary prison, I don't know if it's still being used for that or not. I think that one of the things that I used to get money for Pierce County always, or Tacoma – but Tacoma had never asked for any of that low-interest loan money for superstructures that we had. They had all these small towns putting in sewers and everything else and Tacoma never asked. So I always used that as a reason that they should – when they asked for something, it was because they desperately needed it. And, of course, the Armory is a state facility and a state building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be under the National Guard?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The National Guard, yes. And the county used that; it was a city jail and they were able to use that. And there was a bill that they could use it for housing for homeless people. But I don't think it was ever used for that. But I made that possible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they are certainly built like fortresses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And so, you were aware of what they needed to do and you asked for the funding and pushed it, but you never were absolutely sure what they did with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You saved the building at any rate. Those were usually pretty magnificent, those armories.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we did. Well, they were tearing them down. They tore down the city hall. Which they regret now. Because the one in Port Townsend is still standing and some of the others. The one in Olympia is still there; it got used as another building. They took out all of the asbestos and redid all of that. It pays to redo older, well-designed and -built buildings to hold onto those tax credits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also mention the Blair Waterway. Now, can you tell a non-Tacoma person where that is?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I could always visualize a better waterway as an area where we could put luxury condominiums. You know where Union Station is? Well, it's down around Union Station and West Coast Grocery, the Fiftieth Street Bridge – there used to be a little bridge that went across there – a little draw bridge that they finally took out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was something wrong with that drawbridge and you were going to replace it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It affected traffic through there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were boats coming through and they had to raise the bridge, like in Seattle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. So, we took out the bridge entirely. And so the waterway goes from about South Sixth, along the water clear down – all the way to the Puyallup River.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing I was wondering about, in these years, people were starting to talk about the state centennial and every little community started to work on some projects. Were you involved in any Tacoma projects? Did you weave these revitalization projects into that theme?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I was on the Bicentennial Commission, which occurred before that, but I was never involved with the Centennial Commission. I think that the Governor's wife was the honorary chair of that. I was never involved with any of the celebrations or anything. All I can remember ever being firm about was retaining the waterway and using it for a destination place and retaining the sanctity of it. And I always wanted that. And they wanted to bring over some old ship that was in Seattle and use it for a museum there and we didn't go for that. Because I didn't want any old thing down there. I wanted to see that all-developed with housing and shops and restaurants. And that's been a dream of mine, forever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of like what Baltimore did?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They did an incredible job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So even if you didn't use the Centennial as an opportunity, did Tacoma do anything particular for the Centennial?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember anything that we did that was outstanding. I should, but I don't. They were still trying to develop the Union Station and some projects that they had already started to work on, but they didn't, as far as I know, do anything outstanding for the Centennial. We needed an active vacation and recreation group in Tacoma to promote these things. And we were trying to promote, also at the same time, the new dome because that hadn't been up too long. And I think they were so busy trying to promote that and pay for these things that they had passed levies to cover the cost of, that I don't remember there being anything outstanding done for the Centennial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to round off the 1985 session, you did have a special session that year. And part of it, according to the newspapers, was due to a split within the Democratic Party itself, between the House and the Senate. You had different versions of how to pass the budget and that the House one was more conservative. But finally you did get out of there but without a couple of things, including the support for the Puget Sound clean-up. That must have had an impact on Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, Commencement Bay. And they are just now beginning to start it again. There's never any money and they had to find a way to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because it was so expensive and so overwhelming?

**Sen. Wojahn:** So expensive and a lot of the polluters had gone out of business. It had occurred way back at the turn of the century and there was a lot of hazardous substances and silt down on the waterway. And, first they had to figure out how to do it. Then they had to find the money to do it with and they were also seeking federal funds at the same time to help with that. It didn't get done. They're just now beginning to pick it up and redo it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If a proposal like that is just too complicated, is that part of what makes it fail?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They established a commission in Tacoma to work it out and they are the ones who have done the yeomen's work to plan and to work out the problems. And they're the ones who supported the retention of the Albers Mill. We went through a terrible period of time where the City of Tacoma wanted to destroy it and a lot of the citizens did not. I was among those who did not want to destroy it. I thought we should keep it and the Commission finally said yes, it will be kept. And they are still battling it. They are still battling it and trying to get rid of it. And it's not over yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it in pretty bad shape?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the economic development people – Ms. Wilkeson, the person in charge – contend that it would be too expensive and it can't be done. Besides that, it is an eyesore to the new Museum of Glass. And we say no, that it actually enhances the History Museum that looks right down on it. It's an old red brick building; it's a perfectly rectangular building. It's a good classic, architecturally-designed – there's nothing wrong with the design. They claim that there is; well, there isn't. It's just a rectangular building. And a group of developers from Alaska are the ones who have succeeded in getting the contract. But they've run into roadblocks along the way, thrown mostly by economic development people in the City of Tacoma – and they are determined to stop it. And the Commission is determined to keep it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's just different visions of how that should look down there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They want an all-new look down there and we said no. This is the first thing you saw – as I remember as a child – the first thing that you saw when you came into Tacoma on the railroad was the Albers Mill; it was a working mill. And to redevelop it now would put people to work here. Labor is here and carpenters and building trades people. Otherwise it would bring in a whole new group



of contractors, perhaps. Some non-union, which are deadly in the City of Tacoma because it's a strong union town. And they would tear down everything and put a brand new little modern city there and we don't want that. We think that's wrong. They need to keep the old with the new.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there are so many pieces to this. There's the sense of history, there's the union issue...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right! There's a tax credit issue that they are going to be able to get for the Albers Mill; because private industry is doing it they can sell the tax credits to help get the money to do it. They have it all figured out and they figure to put in some apartments and some shops and to do different things with it. And they've produced plans and they were all rejected by the Economic Development of the city, or have been. And the waterway group is saying, "No, it stays."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So does the public have any say?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they have input.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there a way to galvanize the community?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we have galvanized the community in support of saving Albers Mill and all the people serving on this commission are individuals and they have agreed that it needs to be retained. The fellow who heads the commission used to be with the Port of Tacoma; he was one of the promoters of the Port of Tacoma and was wonderful – Don Meyers. And they have decided it is going to stay. And it may, it may not. Nobody knows yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's worth fighting over.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and the new mayor is very supportive of it. And he's not viewed in the eyes of economic development people with favor with a lot of them, I'm sure. But he won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a lot of information on how historic preservation is actually good for the economy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And it seems to me that the jobs produced within the city and county are worth saving because they are bringing in new construction workers and everything and if a non-union contractor got it, there would be a war. And it would be bad!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like a lot of fodder for letters to the editor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I've done my share of those, too, but no more. I'm not doing any more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask you about a campaign finance bill, ESSB 3307 that passed that session. The gist of that was that it became illegal for candidates to accept more than \$5,000 during the last twenty-one days before an election and all contributions of more than \$500 had to be submitted to the PDC in those last twenty-one days. I'd heard that it had been common practice for legislators to get checks during legislative session and that that practice was stopped. Was this the next phase of tightening up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Someone's idea. There was no law that said that they couldn't and I don't know whether it was ever statutory or not that they couldn't, or whether it was just a rule and regulation of the Disclosure Commission. I don't know. The Republicans always fought that. They said they could. Remember, they had fund-raisers during, I think that the 1999 session, didn't they? They were sued over that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought that had been in place for quite a while.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think so. Well, accepting money so many days before an election, at the end of a campaign, that had been in effect. But the ethics of having fund-raisers during session had not been a factor. And I don't know whether that was statutory or whether it was a rule of the Disclosure Commission, I don't know. But it wasn't done. The Democrats adhered to it, I know that, and the Republicans got in trouble.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this impact you in any way? You weren't getting contributions of \$5,000?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I never had a contribution of more than – I don't think – \$500, ever! I had fund-raisers that made more than that, but not a single contribution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So these would be \$5,000 per individual, not per event?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Some of them got \$50,000, I'm told, I don't know. I took everything that I could get. I don't remember ever sending any contribution back, but I got a little bit from everybody. So then I could listen, but not a lot from any one group. One of my base supporters – labor – didn't give me much at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your basic feeling about campaign finance reform? Do you think it's made things better or do people just find new ways to get around it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that generally people found new ways to get around it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So do you think that the harder people try to reform this, the more futile it is? Are we making some progress?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think progress was steadily made. It wasn't very smart to oppose it publicly.

And why should anyone have to raise \$150,000 or \$200,000, \$300,000 or \$400,000 to run for a \$25,000 or \$30,000 a year job? It didn't make sense to me. And so, I was sort of ho-hum about it because I wasn't going to do it and I didn't have the opportunity, really, to do it. But if I had, I wouldn't have done it. I know I wouldn't have done it. And that's the difference between a lot of women legislators and men, too. I don't think women view themselves with as much pizzazz as men. I think that women are more practical in their approaches – at least as a woman, that's what I view it as. And I've seen men react differently. Not all men, but a lot. And, so I think it's a matter of the bigger the ego, the more money they need, or want, or choose to take.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about those certain races that are really hot, like the one in the last election where they were trying to get away from the split house and win the majority?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It doesn't take money, it takes votes. And if people would understand that – a person who's willing to get out and doorbell hard and keep their head above water as far as right and wrong is concerned and listen to their constituents, they can win. And people who pour a lot of money into the campaigns don't always win. It gives you an opportunity to get your name before the public a lot more, but I think the more you do, the more people begin to resent it because if they see your face on television every night, even for albeit a very short time, I think they begin to resent that. I think you can overdo anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do they begin to wonder where you got the money to do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where you got the money. Why was it was so important that you be elected. Were you going to use that to make more money on the job? I wonder about that. I never fought with anybody to see who I could get more contributions than they. That wasn't the thing that I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you won year after year, so it worked for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your campaigns stay pretty steady, I mean taking into account inflation and what not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lots of times I got more money than I needed. It was just flowing in and there was no way to stop it, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And people like to give, to support their candidate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I always gave it away at the end. I never left anything in my campaign chest. I would give it to charities. The family renewal shelter and the Humane Society and the AIDS group at Christ Church, where I'm a member, and the Historical Society

always got a large bundle. I never had any money left over after a campaign.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know it's a huge issue for some people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of them carry over their campaign money. And one year I made a lot more and I gave it away and all the people that I gave it to were all charitable cases within the district, and it came back in votes. I had one big fundraiser my whole career and the money left over went out to the charities and forever on I didn't have to raise much. I got a lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People remembered you. Well, that's an unintended consequence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Remember, I have three little "Romes" in my district. I'm not a Roman Catholic but I've always listened, you know, and cared about their charities. Catholic Community Services has been a wonderful charity! The lobbyist for that, Margaret Casey was asked when she was retiring what legislator was the most important and revered as far as she was concerned and she chose me. It was nice! We had our picture taken together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is really a compliment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was nice. But it was done because I wanted to, not because I had to or was forced into it or anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They can tell the difference.

## CHAPTER 16: CHAIR OF HUMAN SERVICES AND CORRECTIONS, 1986

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's discuss the 1986 session now, which turns out to be a pretty big one for you. It was a short session. I think you said in one of your newsletters, "It was the fastest session in sixty-one years." You actually get out in fifty-nine days, one day before the end of your allotted period, which is highly unusual. I was wondering, how did the legislators do that? Did they meet beforehand and have a very clear plan? Or limit their desires?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We limited the agenda, I'm sure. And everyone was assigned a job to do and everybody did their job. I think that's as simple as that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Gardner was in his second year; was the honeymoon still in effect?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. He had his challenges, like Locke is challenged. Lowry wasn't challenged much; he created his own problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The economy was said to be improving a bit but there were still a lot of problems and the state revenues were down. But maybe things were easing a bit. One of the biggest decisions you had to make at the beginning of that session was whether to take the Human Services and Corrections chair. To do that, you had to let go of some other positions.

Senator Barbara Granlund had been the chair and then she retired.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and then didn't run again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the position was open. You were said to have seniority and interest. Mike Kreidler and Lois Stratton, who were already on the committee, were both interested but were you given first priority?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I got it because of seniority. I didn't know that I wanted it because I had to give up my Rules spot. I was encouraged to take it by the charities in the district and friends of mine who knew where my

interests were. But I'd never really worked in that area, particularly. I had chaired the Commerce Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, this was new for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I understand that Kreidler wanted it; I understand that he had practically announced that he had it. And I understand – but I can't prove it, and I don't know whether it's true – that he already had stationery printed. And I don't know that that's true. And I probably shouldn't say it, but I'm quite sure that it was true. And he was shocked, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much time did you have to decide?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not very long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like a few days, or a week?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no because we knew that Barbara wasn't going to run again. I don't think she resigned; she just didn't run. So the election was a new person. I had probably the rest of the year to make up my mind whether I wanted to do it or not and I know that several doctor friends advised me to take it. It wasn't just me making my own decision; it was with encouragement from others. And I really wasn't that familiar with the program because I hadn't served on the committee. But I know Ted Bottiger said – I understand that he said, "Lorraine has seniority and if Lorraine wants, it Lorraine gets it." And it was as simple as that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So early on, did you put out the word that you were thinking about it, and then had some time to decide?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then committees met and I said that I wanted it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you finally make up your mind?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Encouragement from others. It was kind of a split decision. I'd been mulling it over for a long time, but I knew that Kreidler and I did not agree – we had real severe differences on the rights of optometrists versus

ophthalmologists and that was a big issue. That was our big battle. And I felt always it was a conflict of interest with him. Because he's an optometrist. And as I say, several physicians encouraged me to take it. Not ophthalmologists, incidentally – other friends.

But then we had our big knock-down, drag-out hearing after that occurred, you know. We had the big meeting in which there was standing room only, people were literally hanging from the chandeliers in the big hearing room over the right of optometrists to have further rights to give medication. They already had the right to diagnose and treat eye disease; that was done four years before and I fought that. And this was one that would further broaden their scope. We had a meeting of the two sides and there were two lobbyists: Martin Durkan was one of the lobbyists for the optometrists; the lobbyist for the ophthalmologists was Ron Wagner. And Dr. Richard Bowe from Tacoma came down and helped by testifying at the hearing. We had the big hearing room and it was absolutely jam-packed. It was an evening hearing and one of our committee members was absent, a Republican. Senator Lowell Peterson, a Democrat, wasn't there, either. Peterson was a 'yes' vote for the optometrists. And every time any of the members of the committee got up to go to the restroom, the two lobbyists would follow them out, to be sure that they came back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh my!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Depending upon which side they were on. Because both lobbyists had counted their votes. It was awful! The meeting went on for about two and a half hours. And I remember one ophthalmologist, who was also an attorney, laid out all of these medications that they could give for a particular eye disease. And he said that there is an eye disease called iritis and it's a very serious disease and there are two medicines you can give for it, but he said – as I remember – if it's a certain kind of iritis you give this medication and if it's another type of iritis, you give this other application. But, he said, the danger is if you give the wrong medication for this, it will burn up the eye ball. And that

happened with a constituent of mine. It had happened! And that was enough for me!

I was on the ophthalmologists' side – the medical doctors. Because I didn't think that optometrists, who are refraction specialists, should be treating eye disease. They have not had the clinical training that an ophthalmologist has. They are not medical doctors. An ophthalmologist goes through four years of college for a baccalaureate degree, four years of medical school, and at least seven years of clinical training before practicing. So they have hours and hours of clinical training, in addition to medical studies. An optometrist does not have the hours of clinical training or medical school; they are refraction specialists. And I contend they should stay with refractions and not try to be medical doctors. They do a very good job at what they are trained for. Both should stay within their own specialty and I think there would be less of a problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are they always trying to encroach on each other's specialty?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, ophthalmologists do refractions, too. But they do it in conjunction with the testing for eye disease. So you don't go to an eye doctor just for a refraction. You go to them to be sure that you don't have a serious eye disease. During the course of the examination they do a refraction and then they prescribe lenses through an optician. Opticians provide the eye glasses. An ophthalmologist and an optometrist can both test for vision.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how many people on the street would be able to tell you what those three specialist groups are.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My favorite joke is, "Define an optometrist, an oculist, an optician, and an ophthalmologist and an optimist."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you lost me on a couple of those.

**Sen. Wojahn:** "An optimist thinks he knows the difference." People think that an optometrist is an eye doctor because they call themselves 'doctor.' So now the doctors are having to call themselves eye doctors or eye physicians and

surgeons. And a good optometrist, if he recognizes an eye disease can refer the patient to an eye doctor for treatment. Another example of my reason for being so adamant about it, a friend of ours was having trouble with his eyes. He could hardly see. He'd gone to an optometrist and was diagnosed as legally blind and even had a blind concession in a public building. Later he made an appointment with an ophthalmologist; he went and the ophthalmologist said, "Your cataracts are about ready to be operated on. The cataract in this one eye is about ready to be about operated, the other one is not quite that bad." And he had the operation and he could see!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he even know he had cataracts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn't know! Another friend who worked for St. Regis, his vision got so bad – and these are two people that I personally know – he had been going to an optometrist, but changed to an ophthalmologist – and an ophthalmologist can diagnosis a lot of things in the eye – the ophthalmologist referred him to a neurosurgeon. He said, "You have a problem that I can't treat." He had discovered a tumor in the guy's eye. And the guy had had the tumor for some time. And so he went to the neurosurgeon and he was operated and he was fine. It was not malignant; it was removed, and he went back to his job at St. Regis. And then he died several years later of a heart disease.

And then another very close friend of mine was having problems with her eyes. She worked for the Boeing Company – in fact, she was the oldest employee at the company when she retired – and she was covered by a Boeing medical plan, the best insurance there is. She was having double vision and seeing terrible things and she'd been going to an optometrist. I saw her, she came to dinner one night and she said, "I am really having trouble with my eyes." And she said, "I finally got an appointment with an ophthalmologist next month." She explained that other people's faces looked like they were all puffed up when she looked at them. Her eyes were not right. And I said, "Well, let me call the Medical Society and see if we can't get you an

earlier appointment." Because I was really worried. I called the ophthalmologist representative, Ron Wagner, and he had her call a doctor in Seattle – she lived in Seattle. She got an appointment for a week later. In the meantime, Wagner had called the ophthalmologist and explained the problem. The doctor called her back and said, "If you'll come in at eight in the morning, I will see you before I see any patients. Senator Wojahn is seriously concerned about you." She went in and he found a tumor behind her eye and he found another tumor in another area which he said was inoperable. She died about a month later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But she would have been waiting for her appointment that whole month!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Still waiting for her appointment. These are things that actually had happened and this one happened after I chaired the committee. And so these are all true stories and I cannot abide an optometrist who thinks he knows enough to treat eye disease.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it sounds like, one way or another, you knew a lot about this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I learned about it because I was interested.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to mention that you received an award from the Washington State Academy of Ophthalmology about 1985 or so. It was a Distinguished Career Award for your advocacy in health care. So you were recognized for your efforts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was nice. I've received them from the Hospital Association, also from the Medical Association, and the pharmacists and also the aides, the State Board of Health. I've gotten awards, a whole pile of them. I've gotten them from all the health care people. From the nursing homes, from the home health care.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you get an award like that, what does it do for you, as a legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It makes me glad I'm a legislator. Happy to be there and not afraid to take up their cause. And, you know, any time

I've taken up a cause, I've done battle with them to get what we wanted. And we tried to be fair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the recognition helps? To get an award like this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. It's a thank you. But it's part of the job. And that's what I really said, "It's part of my job."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's nice to get a pat on the back on occasion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Nice to be recognized. The Medical Association, when I retired, had a dinner in my honor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The ophthalmologists certainly appreciated your work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I always believed that the Legislature took too lightly the true professions and were granting licensing to para-professionals who shouldn't be licensed without further education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This doesn't seem like it should be a political issue. It seems like it should be a medical issue, within the profession.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It never should be political! What I stated before – and I spoke before ophthalmology groups – that the optometrists were coming to us to achieve through legislation what they have not achieved through education. And they should never be permitted to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's amazing that the medical community even looked to the Legislature for this sort of thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they didn't pay much attention until it began to get in the way of the profession. And a lot of medical doctors did not support ophthalmologists who were also medical doctors, in their battle to stop the practice. Because they could have done it! And they now are beginning to do it and I think it's maybe is part of the result of my being down there. I don't know. But I had been so hard-headed over the whole thing that I erupt when anyone brings up the subject to me. I still do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, all this gets into the area – all these specialties – how can legislators know?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We can't. And that's the reason we need to let the professions regulate themselves. That's one of the reasons I went for the separation of the Department of Health from DSHS. Because I didn't think they knew what they were doing. And we moved all the licensing on health over to the Department of Health so they would know what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wonder if people don't know the difference and don't have the information to make these distinctions? I mean, you have to be something of an expert in these things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It could be true. You have to know your own body, you have to know the functions of the various professions and para-professions and if you don't, you're at the mercy of whatever professional you go to. They may or may not know what they are doing. That's the reason, in the family, we've always found out who the Board Certified doctors were. I will not go to a physician that's not Board Certified. Now, maybe there are some really great ones out there, but it seems to me if they want to be the best in their profession they need to be Board Certified.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think very few people even understand that that's a question. Or what you mean by that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. Maybe so. And you know, they finally opened up the profession of architecture. An architect can take a national examination so that they can be licensed in other states. It's called reciprocity. And it's worthwhile. And people don't understand that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, because it's a very specialized thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because an architect has to guarantee his work. So there's a lot of difference.

And it's the same thing with dentists. I don't think that dental hygienists should have their

own practice. Because I think the minute they get their own practice, the prices are going to go up. It seems to me that they need to work under the supervision of dentists while they are in the chair; if they have a problem the dentist is there to check it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it makes sense. So there's even more decisions than I realized.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the reason. If you study every issue before you carefully, you couldn't possibly support some issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A tremendous undertaking in the press of a legislative session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You couldn't handle the job. So you have to rely on the people you trust on the committees that you can't serve on. They don't always have time to tell you and that's the reason we have caucuses. And that's the reason we ask penetrating questions in caucus. To find out what we don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Since you hadn't served on this committee, did you meet with Barbara Granlund to talk about it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just already knew these things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you've heard just about everything that happened. We had Corrections at that time. But eventually it was moved out, because it became too much for the committee. We couldn't cover enough subjects.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly Human Services is a very large subject. There were the reasons to take it on and then there were the reasons why you might hesitate, one of them that you had been on the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee for quite awhile and had probably built up a certain amount of expertise and interest in that. And that was one of the things that you dropped when you took this chairmanship.

I want to backtrack a little bit on that one. In 1983 you had worked with Ray Moore on the Interstate Banking Bill that involved Seafirst

Bank and Old National Bank of Spokane. Do you recall what that involved?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. There was something about that banks could not branch into other counties.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Other states.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Other states. That they were controlled by state banks and international banks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I think these banks wanted to be bought by other banks because they were failing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But they couldn't be bought.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this bill, I think, allowed it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was something that they couldn't do because they were bound by some strictures in state law that they were not constricted by federal law. So we removed those – whatever they were – to permit them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seafirst, apparently, was in pretty deep with some bad loans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seafirst, they were in trouble. They were broke. We had to change the law to accommodate them and to make it possible for them to not seek bankruptcy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Old National Bank was having problems with its holding company, which was a slightly different issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Old National Bank was one of the most well-run banks in the state. We all recognized that. They really knew what they were doing. And I think that was based upon what they were able to do; we removed some of the barriers for both Old National and Seafirst. But I was ready to do it for Old National, as I remember it, but not for Seafirst. Because Seafirst had gotten into it knowingly; they got into it and they did it anyway. And I didn't like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ray Moore tells this story in his oral history. He felt pretty strongly that if you save one bank, you need to save them all. And that you might save Seafirst, not because



you love Seafirst, but because of the people who worked there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right. That's right! You don't let a bank go under and people lose their life savings. You don't let that happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were you a supporter of this "big picture" approach?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I didn't like it. And I told them I didn't like it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** According to Senator Moore, again, one of the strikes against Seafirst was their lobbyist, Joe Brennan. Ray maintained that he didn't get along with Democrats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I knew Joe. I'd lobbied with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much does an issue like that make a difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Personality. He was a lobbyist, he took over from Joe Gould who had been with Seafirst for years. He was revered in the banking industry and in the Legislature. Joe Brennan had started lobbying at the same time as me, in 1965. And Brennan was a good guy and but he wasn't as smooth as Joe Gould. And because they liked Gould so much, Brennan was just sort of accepted. I started lobbying with Brennan. There were about four others that I started lobbying with. Marty Sangster was another that I liked and had worked with. I don't remember what the beef was with Joe Brennan. But I think he distorted the truth or didn't tell the whole story.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The cardinal sin of a lobbyist?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had misrepresented. He didn't out-and-out lie, he misrepresented the truth. Because I look back on it and Ray was unhappy about that. And I was too because I told lobbyists, "Don't ever misrepresent the truth to me because I will find out and will never trust you again." And I found out that Seafirst was deeply in debt. They had to be bought out or they were going to go under. I think that was when the Bank of America bought them out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, it was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember all the details. But I remember the trauma that everybody went through. I remember sitting in Lieutenant Governor John Cherberg's office. I had just heard that this had occurred. I think it was in John Cherberg's office because Adele Ferguson came in and I had heard it and I exploded and said that Seafirst was going under. And she wrote the story. I'll never forget that. And I think I was one of the first to know. There wasn't anything secretly told to me – it just happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it had to be public knowledge, pretty quickly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we all learned it at the same time and then Ray had to bring them out of it. And it was through his efforts and work that it was brought out. It wasn't me; it was Ray. And he did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I wanted to get your position on how involved you were in all this. Just to see what was at stake in giving up this committee. A couple of years after that there was another bill that authorized interstate banking. Previously, interstate banking had only worked for failing banks and then someone pointed out that that wasn't fair.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that's what we did with Seafirst. We let another bank pick them up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But later, in 1985, you broadened that. So interstate banking really came to the fore then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, when the precedent is established, you can't really backtrack. Remember that I was only chairman of that committee for about six weeks because that's when von Reichbauer took a walk. And Senator Sellar took over. But I had all these bills in committee that I really didn't want. That is when Rainier Bank wanted the right to exceed the twelve percent interest rate and they had bought this full-page ad in some newspapers in the state that said, "If you want to help Rainier Bank with its retail credit, call Senator Lorraine Wojahn." It was in the Seattle Times, the P-I, the Tribune, oh, it was all over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get a lot of calls?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It happened that Peter DeLaunay, my legislative aide's son was working at that time for the advertising firm who wrote the ad. And he said, "Wojahn isn't going to like this!" Myra DeLaunay agreed. Oh, it was really funny!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a small world.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I clipped it and put it on my bulletin board in my office. Anyone came in could read it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it made you look powerful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It sure did. I should have saved that. I think I have it down in my files somewhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Philosophically, what is your take on interstate banking and banks gobbling each other up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't like it but I don't know how to stop it. It's got to be stopped at the national level, I think. And I don't want to ever end up like Britain with only a couple or three banks in the whole United States.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does seem a little precarious.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No competition. And that's the reason I'm so supportive of community banks and they are happening. There are community banks opening all the time. And they are coming up and they are still able to loan money and people who can't get a loan from a major bank, because their credit is not that good, can get loans. And small business depends on small corporate structures to do it for them. And so, we're in good shape and I hope to God it always stays that way because I don't want to ever see major banks take over everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Banking seems to be a very volatile industry.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It depends on the interest rate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every time you look around, they've got a new name because they are getting taken over by somebody else. But the other thing is that some functions of what was traditional banking are being taken over by other entities. You can get credit cards now from lots of different groups.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We broadened all that. They can sell insurance. They can sell stocks and bonds. So they can do almost anything. They start interfering with one another.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The walls that used to exist between all these different institutions...

**Sen. Wojahn:** All stopped. It all started with credit cards when the bank took over for the department stores and the retail stores and the bank card became prevalent. And then people could use a bank card and buy anywhere, where before they were limited to the one institution that they had the card with. And that was the thing that started the whole ball rolling. And now airlines can sell credit cards... The University of Washington sells credit cards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They use it as a fund-raising opportunity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So anybody can do it and that opened a whole new world. And it opened a whole new world of debt. That we may never get out from under.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the dark side of credit is debt, of course.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that's the reason I'm so adamant – knock on wood – I pay my credit card fully every month. I owe nothing, except my current bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In all these arguments that you get involved in with Financial Institutions, were you still wearing your consumer protection hat?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the lens you saw these issues through? "How is this going to affect the little guy?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always that, always that. And that was the reason for the Patients' Bill of

Rights – the little guy. The fact that big insurance companies were telling doctors what to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would other people be looking at what's good for banks? It would be nice to know there was a legislator saying, "What's good for the consumer?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they're getting into it in Congress right now. I listened to a program yesterday about the Banking Committee of the U.S. Senate that had taken on mortgage brokers. And we regulated them in our state and they are controlled tightly and they do a good job. But nationally, there are no rules and they encourage people to refinance and then they collect an additional maybe \$10,000 on top of that. It's very bad. The stories that came out yesterday were just very revealing. The chairman of the Banking Committee in the Senate is the senator from Maryland and he was outstanding. It was on C-Span and so they are in the throes of it right now, nationally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's nice to know that Washington State has something in place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Washington State has regulated that. Mortgage brokers in the state of Washington are very tightly controlled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a whole other area where if you don't have the expertise you can get really in over your head.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I don't have all the expertise I need but I know enough to be assured that the little guy has got to be protected. The people who save and save and save and offer a down payment and then refinance and have another big second mortgage to pay off or assessed added to their loan – more money added; it's very bad. One lady had bought a house for \$22,000 way, way, way back in 1940 and then refinanced it and she was into it for \$88,000 because she did some remodeling and through the mortgage broker, they assessed greater interest rates and were collecting more money, something like \$3,000 here, \$4,000 there, because of the refinancing that she was

doing. It was awful! So she went from almost a paid-off house, to an \$88,000 debt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On a different subject, but also to do with finance dealings, the mid to the late eighties saw the huge discussion on disinvestment in South Africa. Did the state take a position on that? Would that have gone through this committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it went through Ways and Means. And we voted to not buy any Krugerrands. The University of Washington didn't buy Krugerrands. We encouraged state agencies not to – I think we said, "You shouldn't do it." So no one could buy Krugerrands in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know pension funds and different things were involved in investments where this might have been a factor. Trying to pull out of South Africa got complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We could not invest in Krugerrands. I remember when they were talking about buying them, they passed out gold dollars to everybody on the committee. And then the speaker said, "Be sure and give them back to me."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "This is just for show and tell." Did you have an opinion on this yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I thought we shouldn't buy them. So it got to the point people could only buy the gold Maple Leaf of Canada. Or the one for – was it Austria? And also a Mexican gold piece. And I don't know whether we actually outlawed their sale or whether we just discouraged their purchase. I don't think there was ever a law that said they couldn't be sold in the state of Washington. I don't remember. But I know the University of Washington didn't buy them and a lot of other investors did not buy the Krugerrands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It became a pretty hot issue. More on banking: you passed a bill allowing savings banks to invest up to five percent of their funds in what was called the Africa Development Bank, which is still in existence. That was a bank that worked right with African communities on development issues and was

more “on the ground.” Was this unusual, banking legislation for social justice? That’s not the norm when you think of banking legislation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess not, but in the Legislature you can do anything as long as it’s constitutional.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t really recall any other times when banking became tied in with social justice issues in quite the same way as these things coming together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the whole agenda and the whole idea probably started – I don’t know, I’m just assuming – during the John F. Kennedy administration. It seems to me that it was a good Democratic principle and it may have started because the state of Washington took a look at social problems, as did other states, as a method to achieve social justice through monetary policy. And now it even appears that people don’t buy stocks that cheat people, or they don’t buy consumer products that cheat people, like the campaign against buying baby formula because the workers were abused or not treated properly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nestle baby formula?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember they were discouraging women in third-world countries from breast feeding and wanted them to buy their baby formula, but because the women didn’t have pure water supplies that was killing – literally – the babies. And people thought that was pretty nefarious.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that is a new wrinkle on politics. But I have a feeling that it was kind of initiated during the administration of John F. Kennedy. And it may have risen out of the Truth in Lending and the Truth in Packaging Bill. All that had started in Congress when I was lobbying; I lobbied the Truth in Lending Bill. And that was part of the social justice area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be instructive to trace the roots back and find the connections.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so, too. It all erupted at the same time; I guess that was during the

Johnson Administration that followed up with Kennedy. It probably started with the Democrats because they would do that kind of thing, I believe. But they do seem to care more about social justice, because they are not out to help the big conglomerates make more money. We have to have them but we have to control them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what exactly was going on? There were a lot of issues to do with banking and insurance in these years. Tort reform was another thing that was just on the horizon. There were a lot of issues to do with insurance of day care workers and places that couldn’t get liability insurance. Doctors were having problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Midwives. That was another one, they could not get insurance. You can’t resolve these issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it difficult for you to step away from these issues that you had been tracking and that were coming to a head?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really, because it became insurmountable and there were no answers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to give up this committee right in the thick of all these things. Did you feel like you could help solve some of these issues, coming at them from a different direction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it never bothered me; I never quite gave up consumerism because I believed in it. But you have to step aside or you burn-out on some issues. You take another issue, that is a totally different issue, and pick it up because you’re not burned-out on that issue. But when you can’t win, you step aside and get out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe it was time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Time to get out. Let someone else pick it up and work it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You talked about your decision to the press. You remarked that you might have to give up a trade delegation trip to the Far East for twenty-one days if you were to take this new committee. Did you get to go?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I went. I went! That was with John Cherberg. And I don't remember what it was that I was facing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a Tacoma trade issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would that trip have been connected with the Financial Institutions Committee? I couldn't see why you would be going on this trip or not going on it based on your committee membership if you were going off the committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they always took along business people. We were trying to open trade with the various countries and were able to start the trade with Thailand because there had been no trade there before. As a matter of fact, I had left some things at one of the hotels and I had written to every hotel that we'd stayed in after we left Taiwan. I wrote to Singapore and Thailand because I knew that I hadn't left them in Taiwan, I had them when I left there. And, I wrote to the various hotels and eventually I got them. So I went to Lieutenant Governor Cherberg and I said, "I need to find out what bank I should go to, to send money to the hotel staff who were good enough to send my clothes to me as a thank you. And he said, "Don't bother, because we do not have the trade agreement set up yet and the hotel staff won't get the money; it will just be taken in by the corporate structure, and the employees will never see the money." And so he said, "Don't bother." Later that year, Nordstrom had a promotion selling all Thai things. Now we have trade relations and a banking system worked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you went to Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan – where else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We went to Japan, Korea and the other China – Taiwan, and Thailand. And we were in Bangkok and also to a resort on the Gulf of Thailand called Pattaya.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had you been to any of those places before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that was my first trip. I had been to Hong Kong about two years before that, but I'd only been to Hong Kong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Any favorite stories you want to relate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I loved that trip! I know that Gordon and Sue Walgren were with us and they got off in Hong Kong and then met us again in Thailand. He had some business there. We were in Taiwan for about five days. The longest we stayed anywhere. And in Korea – oh yes – we went out to the demilitarized zone. And the President had been there – Nixon had been there – but he wasn't permitted to go beyond one outpost, not up to the border, which was about twenty miles farther. But we were able – the ambassador set it up for us to go up to the border. They couldn't take everybody, but a small group of us went. The name of the Outpost was Camp Kitty Hawk and that was right at the border where we could look down into North Korea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what could you see?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We could see the buildings across the DMZ, but we were told they were just hollow buildings, that no one lived in them. The North Koreans would play loud music at night – all night – so people couldn't sleep in Camp Kitty Hawk. And they also had built another building right on the border on higher ground that overlooked the building where the Peace Accords were signed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't understand. What would that achieve?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's their idea of keeping people awake so they couldn't do their job and also to disorient the soldiers. They didn't do it every night. But they did it frequently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Randomly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Randomly. And we went into a small house and were told to not lay anything on the table. It's where the Peace Accords were signed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so they were keeping it kind of like sacred space, or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't know. Apparently any move in the wrong direction – we could look out the window and see North Korean soldiers with guns over their shoulders, pacing back and forth. And then we could see a building that was right on the border, right beside us and they told us the building was only twelve feet wide. But it was about 150 feet long. This great big huge building was no building, it was fake. They could tell by flying over it. And we were told to not make any startling moves, not to pay any attention to the guards outside because anything could cause an incident and we were totally forewarned and kind of scared.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, yes!

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then we were taken over to a building occupied by the Swedish government officials; Sweden was the neutral country established to oversee that everything remained neutral. The building had a big tower; we went up in the top of the tower and could look over and look down on another area of North Korea. And there was a bridge over a river and which was called the River of No-Return. There had been an incident the week before we got there in which a small group of U.S. soldiers had been threatened by North Koreans and one of the U.S. soldiers was shot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, my!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think he was killed but he was shot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You never hear this stuff.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, so everything was kind of up-tight when we were there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little dangerous!

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we were told we probably shouldn't be there because anything could cause an incident. And then we were able to read in a little book the remarks of people coming across from North Korea, across this River of No-Return.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be the escapees?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. One person wrote – it almost brought tears to my eyes – he wrote,

“I'm looking at my homeland and I know I can never return.” It was really sad. And then I met the officer in charge, his name was Major Kendall and I said to him, “My brother was with the Army of Occupation in North Korea and his name was Major Kendall.” And the fellow said, “More than that,” he said, “my wife's father lives in Tacoma, Washington.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, small world!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought that was incredible. This is all fact. So, I looked him up when I got home. He was a divorced father. His daughter lived with the mother. So there was not too much connection. I did call his father-in-law when I came home and told him that I had seen his son-in-law and he was pleased. The encampment for all of the army of occupation was not right at Camp Kitty Hawk. All that was there was a social recreation hall. And then maybe a mile away was the village where the army encampment was located. But it was different!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something to see.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Something to see and something to remember and to know that even the U.S. President could not get that close. Then as we left Korea, a group of agitators, who didn't like the United States, bombarded the hotel where we'd stayed. We had just arrived at the airport when Lieutenant Governor Cherberg got a call from the hotel telling him of the incident.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you aware of any ill feeling while you were there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were not aware of any hostility when we were there. We were shocked to find out that it occurred. But let me tell you what did occur. We were invited to a bank meeting through Rainier Bank, which had an economic relationship with the Rainier Bank in Korea. And this was in Seoul and that's where the Olympic Games are going to take place next year. I was with the lady I was traveling with, who was not a legislator, a business woman, and Adele Ferguson, who covered the Legislature for the Bremerton Sun. For the record, I was the second-highest ranking official with the group –

the Lieutenant Governor was first and I was second-ranking. I was the only Senator at the meeting and I was supposed to meet the President of the Senate of Korea there. I walked in and nobody paid any attention to me. They had a name card for me just laying on a desk. I picked it up and Adele picked up her name card and the lady with us, and we saw all the other women – Betty Cherberg and Bette Snyder were standing over with a group of women and we went over and said, “What’s up?” Betty Cherberg said, “Women are not permitted to get involved with the men.” And I said, “Well, we’ll see about that.” They didn’t offer me anything. So I went over to where the men had collected and was pouring myself a drink and someone came over and took the glass from me and poured me some wine. Then I went over and joined the men and they ignored me. So I said something and nobody paid any attention to me. I said something else. Nothing. So I walked over, put my glass down, and walked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, the men in your own group, were they not noticing that this was happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn’t know what to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, certainly it was pretty awkward.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So then Senator Kim, President of the Korean Senate came in and said, “Where is Senator Wojahn?” And he kept yelling, “Where’s Senator Wojahn.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he not know that Senator Wojahn was a woman?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And the women said, “She left because she was not included in the banking group.” And then the s-h-i-t hit the fan. But I left and took a cab back to the hotel. I wasn’t going to put up with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they not know who you were? Oh, you never went back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never went back. Oh, no! And I wanted Adele to go with me, but she said no, she was going to stay and see what happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She’s got a story to write.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so then we left Korea for Singapore and the bank put on another open house for us and they couldn’t do enough for me. It was incredible!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe the word got out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was embarrassed. And Lee Fisher was embarrassed; it was really tough on him. Because he had opened the door to the lobby group with Rainier Bank, with Korea and also Taiwan and there wasn’t anything he could do. You see, they were guests. And I don’t know if it’s ever changed. The women are second-class citizens in Korea. Maybe not anymore, but they were at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you were chosen to go on this, was it understood that you being woman was going to be an issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not that I was aware.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess no one else knew it either.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anybody could go and I paid my own way. Everybody paid their own way; nobody went free. And so it was not an official trip, it was an informal trip. But we did have the vice-president of Rainier Bank, and he helped make the arrangements with the banks in the various areas we visited. I don’t remember seeing any bankers in Singapore or Thailand. But we were there because we had established a cultural relationship and also a banking relationship with those countries. But apparently it was just in its infancy. I suppose with women bankers going over there now, they would have to accept women. But those are some of the experiences that I had.

And I remember going into Singapore and we met with the officials of the country and we met with some business people there in order to establish trade relations. Then we went on to Thailand and there wasn’t too much excitement there, except that when we got to the airport in Bangkok we had a hostess on the bus going to the hotel and it was so slow. The traffic was just an abomination. It took us about two hours to go about five miles because the traffic was so bad and the tour guide on the bus with us, a Thai

gal, said that the communists were really knocking at the door of Thailand and they were threatening the people but she said, “We don’t worry because the traffic is so bad, they’ll never get in!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that’s one bright side.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were laughing and laughing! I have a picture taken there on the bus and it was a fun trip and we did a lot of good, I’m quite sure. It was probably the beginning of the opening of the Thai community.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get a chance to see unofficial things? Did you get to wander the streets at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. We did go to the silk factory that was owned by Thompson who started the silk trade in Thailand. He’s a very well-known person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Cherberg was considered kind of the unofficial ambassador of Washington State, wasn’t he? So he was practiced at this sort of thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was very adept at it and he had connections with the airlines so that we were able to travel as a group and get good accommodations. We stayed in first-class hotels and the trip was not expensive. It was twenty-one days but it was only about \$2,700, which you’d never be able to do now. We were going to stay at the Oriental Hotel but the hotel couldn’t guarantee enough rooms. That’s the number-one hotel, but we stayed at the hotel next door, the Royal Orchid, which was an equally beautiful hotel. But the one we were going to stay in, the Oriental, is ranked the number-one hotel in the world. We had dinner there. But our hotel was much more beautiful, I thought.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, staying in the number-two is hardly bad.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got to see the village and go into the Palace of the Jade Buddha. We saw a lot of things, like they have those weird looking heads that they have all over Thailand. You have to see the movie; it will be in the King and I. And it’s a different world entirely. And they

worship snakes there, of course. We didn’t see any snakes, although I understand they are in the temples. We didn’t see any snakes in the Jade Palace. You have to take off your shoes to go to the Jade Palace. And we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had this wonderful experience. What a fascinating opportunity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a good experience. At the same time – that same year – we had a problem with methadone clinics. And that’s a big deal. That’s a whole other story. But it’s involved and I was challenged. I was chairing the committee at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you do decide, in the end, to chair the Human Services Committee. You dropped Financial Institutions and Rules.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That may have been the reason I took the committee because I was getting off of Financial Institutions and I could go on the trip to the Orient because I would no longer be connected with Financial Institutions where we were opening banks. It could have been a slight accusation, but since I was paying my own way and since I had no connection with the Banking Committee anymore that may be the reason I made that statement. Because I was still on the committee until the end of the year, but I wasn’t chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were pretty much a lame duck?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a lame duck.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as far as power goes, is it better to be on Rules or to be chair of a committee? Isn’t it an either/or thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think Rules is usually better because you can get your bills on the calendar and help other members with their bills. You have clout in the other committees on which you serve but being on Rules and Ways and Means are important also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re on the inside?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Your bills and their bills, too. And you get them out of Ways and Means.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is this a calculation where you want your power to lie?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I wanted my power to lie with the bills I needed for Tacoma. And I gave that up when I took the committee chairmanship. The next year we lost the majority and Jim West became chair of the committee. That's when we needed AIDS money and we came close to not getting the necessary money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you couldn't see that far into the future. You couldn't know that would happen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is such a weighty decision. You are going in a certain direction and it precluded some other choices.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So you have to do what you have to do. The thought of giving up Rules so that my bills would not be available was a consideration. And I don't think many good things happened for Tacoma that year either, as I remember. It's after I got out and back on Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were still on Ways and Means so you had a little...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had a little clout. But you see there was never any money so...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that does make a difference. When you were considering going on Human Services, you said that several things interested you: Western State Hospital, prison issues and the Rainier School for the Mentally Handicapped.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And also the removal of the Department of Health from the Department of Social and Health Services.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were already thinking about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Several of these institutions are in your district or the Tacoma area. Is that part of what interested you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they're not in the district. Western State's not in my district but it abuts my district. What I was angry about was that we had closed down Northern State and brought to Western State and we had dropped the support mechanism when they got out. We used to have a social worker working with them. That was the one reason given to merge the agencies and make it a part of DSHS so that the mental health people could monitor those mentally ill people when they got out of Western State Hospital. They could monitor people when they got out of prison. Well, that didn't happen. So what happened was that when they got out of Western State, they'd settled in Tacoma and my district, in the Twenty-seventh District, because it was a low-income district where they could find housing cheap. Instead of going back to the community from which they came, they settled in the Twenty-seventh, although the community from which they had come was given money to take care of them. Everybody got quite a bit per capita – a certain amount of money to take care of the mentally ill problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it stayed with the community instead of following the person?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It didn't follow the person; it went back to the community from which they came. Eventually we changed this but it took four years to do it and in the meantime we were getting them all in Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you feel that you were getting a disproportionate impact?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! Not only disproportionate that way, but Pierce County had the majority of social agencies in the area. We had McNeil Island, which was just being developed at that time. We had the women's prison, we had the Rainier School in Buckley, and we had Western State Hospital, the largest mental hospital in the state. Pierce County was the core of all of the ills and devastation problems in the state. And that was one reason I took the committee because it seemed to me that we needed help and that was a different area than economic development, which I'd been involved with before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it would be a kind of drag on your community?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very! Always had been. And, also, we found out that the state was being cheated by the county. The campus for Western State Hospital had been granted to Pierce County for the mentally ill and to be used for no other purpose. And the state had leased a portion of Western State Hospital to the county for which the county only had to pay \$1,500 a year, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not much.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't much. It wasn't enough. Three-hundred and sixty acres. And they were supposed to, at the same time, build a storage facility for the hospital on part of that land. They didn't do that. They built a caretaker's place instead. They had the golf course, which was part of Western State Hospital; they said the inmates could play golf there. Then they built a fence around it so that inmates couldn't get in. And the country was using the water because Western State owned the water system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were stripping off all the resources?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were stripping the resources and paying little or no money for them. And when there was a dearth of water in the wells, Western State had to buy city water and we were paying to water the golf course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would hurt.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Finally, Western State officials went down and cut the water line into the golf course. So I tried to get the land back. I never did. It's still in flux. I said, "We're trying to adopt what Massachusetts did; they traded a lot of their facilities of their vacant properties for properties to house mentally ill patients." They traded vacant land for places to house their mentally ill and their youth who had committed crimes. They used it to benefit the social programs, which we are not doing. I wanted to build some apartments on part of that land so that people who were mentally ill, could have them when they had to come back – where they

needed help – but we didn't have facilities in local communities because they weren't doing their job. We didn't give them enough money to do their job. We had more people than we could handle. This way would give them a place to go when they had an episode, they could house them there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sort of like an out-patient facility?

**Sen. Wojahn:** An out-patient place. And then we could rent it to the public when they weren't there. We could rent a portion of that out to raise money. Or sell the land for the highest and best offer to generate money to flow into Western State to take care of the mentally ill. We didn't get that.

They were also supposed to maintain the cemetery. The cemetery is a disgrace. There are only a few tombstones there that families have put up. There were markers, but most of the markers are gone. They know where the graves are because they have a map in the hospital but when people came to visit the grave of their loved ones, they had to go to the hospital and then have someone – the caretaker – go over and show them where the grave was. The grave had no fence around it, dogs were using it for potties; it's a disgrace. And that's what I kept telling people, but the Lakewood people didn't like that. They wanted to retain it for dog runs and everything else.

There's a little lake there and I wanted to move the community college out of there that had only been put there – you had to have six signatures at that time and Newschwander refused to sign unless he could get a community college in his district. And so they gave him the land for what was Fort Steilacoom College, now renamed Pierce College after they had bought one-hundred and fourteen acres in Puyallup for the community college. So, we have two community colleges in Pierce County. We don't need that. They had only two facilities out there. One was a day care facility for their program and the other was a student facility that had been built with state money. Instead of building classrooms, they built a student facility. The

story is involved. So I said we can move them. The rest of them were re-locatable – they were portables. They could move off the land and then use the student facility for a public building for Western State and sell the land around the lake for lovely homes for a lot of money. Or lease the land for condominiums with one-hundred year ownership where we get it back, and generate funds for Western State Hospital patients, for the mentally ill.

It didn't happen! I had a bill in to do that. It didn't happen! And the head of the community college system believed it was a great idea. He advocated for it but it didn't happen. At the same time there was something else that entered this whole picture that just still annoys the hell out of me, that isn't done, and they are still building buildings at the campus in Puyallup but they don't have the number they need. They built some buildings now out at Fort Steilacoom – they are taking over more and more land. The lake has not been made passable. They need to redo the lake and build condos and get the college out of there and use that money for the mentally ill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they are certainly always under-funded.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and they were losing part of Western State Hospital grounds for a park-and-ride for people at the prison at McNeil Island. We haven't been a very good as fiduciary officers of Western State Hospital. Jean Soliz eventually fired the person who was opposing me on that, when she later became the Secretary of DSHS. She was working with me during this whole time and she then had the opportunity later to get rid of him and now he's back working somewhere in the state. He was battling my doing this whole thing during the time Jean was my aide. I hired her as my staff attorney and Don Sloma as the chief of staff for the committee. And there's something else that's a part of this whole thing that's not being done. I solved it at one point. It's a minor point, but it's very important. And mind you, at the same time we had loaded the place with a bunch of Northern State patients. Now, we're going to close part of the facility out. I don't know what

they are going to do with these people. The Governor's budget removes one whole section of the program so I don't know what's going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if they are going to be on the street?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In Tacoma. In my district! I guess I don't have to worry about it anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bet you still worry about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I worry and then I don't know what's going to happen and it still could happen because it has to take an act of Congress to ever get that removed and I haven't got the courage – didn't have the courage to try Congress because it was a Republican-controlled Congress part of that time and none of the Democrats had enough clout. Slade Gorton was chair of the committee that handled that and I knew what he would do, he would give it to the county. You know, you didn't take a chance. I went back to D.C. and talked to the attorney for General Administration. It was during the Republican administration – in 1999, I guess. His wife had worked for me as a secretary when he was going to law school at UPS, believe it or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Small world again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was having dinner with them and I told Gordon, her husband, at dinner, "I need to talk to you about this." So he said, "Come to my office tomorrow," and I walked into this huge office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There you go – a well-placed person.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So he got the people in that handled the issue. It's under the Department of Interior, of which Slade Gorton was chair. And Ray Moore's protégé was there with him and he wanted to know what to do. I've forgotten his name. And he came along with the fellow that was an aide to the Secretary of the Department of Interior, to find out what I wanted. So I told him and he said we really could do it through an act of Congress, remove the right of the state to have the land and take it back to the federal government; they could do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be drastic, but...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then we'd have to go and get it back. I don't know how to handle it. Politically, I don't know how to handle it. I was worried that U.S. Senator Slade Gorton would agree with Representative Carrell, with whom I never agreed. So I said, "I don't know what to do about this." And Gordon said, "Well, let me know if you ever find out."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you planted some seeds and who knows what could happen. Somebody might pick it up and do something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody will pick it up because it's too painful. The Senate was with me. The Senate was with me the whole time. But the House I could never jar loose. I almost got the bill through to get the county out of there, but the Senate was wonderful, they listened and I know Senator Sellar was just great. And Dan McDonald. So I didn't have any problem with them. But they couldn't move their people in the House. So that's still an on-going problem. And now with the City of Lakewood taking over the whole area, it still belongs to the state and the state is still holding firm that it belongs to them. But in the meantime, the county is moving in and putting more and more recreation facilities there and taking more and more of the land for the community college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It will end up sort of a done-deed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I still preach the gospel on it. It doesn't do any good. Well, we finally got the money to follow the people. And that is semi-done but there isn't enough money so they are still dumping them into Western State. But we're not supposed to get as many in the district. I don't know, they are still ending up here and when they let them all loose, they will all end up here. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a tough one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It breaks your heart, you know. Nobody seems to care about the mentally ill. They are talking about decriminalizing drugs now. We talked a little bit about it yesterday at the Rainier Institute and everyone seems to

agree that we need to do it but nobody's got the guts to push it. I don't know if we would get more drug addicts or we would correct the situation and get rid of the methadone treatment. I don't know. It's a conundrum and everybody agrees. I have a whole study that was done that I got yesterday to read if I ever get around to doing it, about this whole drug thing. I know that we passed a bill maybe ten years ago that was sponsored, I think, by Senator Gaspard, that made it a criminal offense if you were a drug dealer and sold a bad drug to another druggie.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how they would implement that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. You'd have to take it to court. I don't think that anyone has ever used it. They could impose civil penalties for it. I brought it up yesterday at a meeting and nobody seemed to remember it. And Gardner seemed to want to get away from it as far he could. I said, "Wasn't that done during your administration, Governor Gardner? And he didn't know. So apparently he wanted out from under it. Phil remembered it. Talmadge remembered the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to come back and talk more about the inner workings of the committee. How it worked with Mike Kreidler on that committee. He was your vice-chair. After all your battling, did it color your relationship?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got along fine. The undertow – the underlying issue there was the difference between the optometrists and the ophthalmologists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You seemed to be working at cross purposes on DSHS as well. He seemed more of a "centralizer" and you were... Was there tension in the committee that way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. No, that never really occurred, no. And Mike and I agreed on enough other things, that we could rise above that and I supported him always for Congress but I didn't support him for Insurance Commissioner at first because I'd already told John Conniff, who is an attorney and was the

deputy Insurance Commissioner, I was going to support him. I'd given him money. And I went to Mike and I said, "I can't support you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You know, and when the other person lost, then yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if he was a legislator with more perspective, who could say, "Well, that was a battle and now we're on to the next thing," did that help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. No, it was fine. No, we could both do that because we agreed on a lot of things, environmental issues – no, no, no, it was fine. The only thing we disagreed on was optometry and ophthalmologists. That was our major focus and if that was off the boards – I think he was depressed over losing the bill, but I'm sure he can see the sanity of it now in his position as Insurance Commissioner. No, he's fine. And I would say we're friends. And I respect him. You know, I disagree with him, but I respect him. And that's the thing, I don't think anybody ever held anything against anyone over this. We're both Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would some legislators not be able to agree to disagree?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very few. And they are people that shouldn't be legislators. Because you can't do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not supposed to be that personal. You also had Paul Conner as a member and Ellen Craswell – who I think, at that point, was still a fairly new senator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She'd been in the House, though. Once I insulted her by something that I said and I had to apologize. I really did apologize because it came out and quite unexpectedly. I shouldn't have said it. I knew that. And when McDonald hit me, I said, "I knew I shouldn't," and I apologized to her. She was a nice lady. I always liked her. We got along. We didn't agree on anything, but we got along.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering how you managed to work with all these people of such differing viewpoints.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We side-stepped them. And I had Kiskaddon, who was sort of with me. He was the one that Ken Bertrand – the lobbyist for Group Health, who had been the PR person for the Republican Party in the Senate before he became a lobbyist – he came up to me after one meeting and he said, "How do you keep from punching that guy in the nose is more than I can figure out." And I would just laugh it off. You know. He interrupted. He had his own ideas; he was very liberal on education issues and he had some really good ideas that he would pop out with every once in awhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he was a counselor himself, so perhaps he felt this was his field.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was okay and he voted with us on things when there was a split vote. He was good. And so it was a *comme ci, comme ca* committee. We did some good things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Win Granlund also served; was he the husband of the former chair?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was wonderful. He was Barbara's husband.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Stanley Johnson, Bill Kiskaddon as you mentioned, Dan McDonald, Lowell Peterson, and Lois Stratton.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a big committee. It was fine. You let them all talk. You let everybody talk. You let everybody ask questions. You follow up their questions with your own questions to help them along, if you think that the point has not been made that they are trying to make, and you cooperate with them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But are you the lead? Is it your vision that really sets the tone?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it isn't my vision; it's a vision of the collective bills that come in. You've got a conglomerate mess of bills and you try to organize them in such a way that they can be heard together or be heard singly if that's important, or they may not be heard at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What if one of your members – this is hypothetical, perhaps – wanted to bring forward a bill with which you violently disagreed? What would you do as a chair person?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I’ve done that; we’ve had to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you say, “Well, alright but I won’t really help you?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, you hear it and then you try to point out the flaws in it, nicely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what if it’s an ideological difference of pretty major proportions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we don’t hear those bills. We didn’t hear any bills that were anti-abortion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn’t hear them in the sense that people didn’t bring them forward or that you just didn’t acknowledge them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No one asked for them. They learned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would you have done if they did?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I’d have said no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the chair has that power?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would say, “No, it’s not going to pass out of committee. I know where the votes are; we can’t waste our time. We only have a limited number of hours to cover these millions of subjects and we just can’t take the time for that.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they would have to accept that? I’m trying to understand how the chair works.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They never did that, though. I don’t remember anyone ever asking for anything that was impossible. In the Senate it’s the art of the possible and if it’s impossible, it doesn’t happen. But let me tell you this, I’ve always believed that a senator could do anything he wanted, that he or she wanted to do. Unless it was subject to the state Constitution, that is, subject to a challenge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a big bill in 1986 that went through the Senate Judiciary Committee, but it seemed like it would have had some impact on your area. It was about child abuse and it created a new definition of what were “prohibited acts.” It was quite a contentious bill that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Is that Phil Talmadge’s bill?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think so. It surprised me that it didn’t go through your committee at all.

So, it was a criminal issue, rather than a social services issue? I would think it would have a lot of impact on the social services.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it probably did, but if it was a criminal act, it would go through Judiciary in order to get a good review. Because we could not review the legality of it as well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Maybe we could talk about it for a minute. It defined unlawful methods of restraining or disciplining a child and the list included: kicking, throwing, burning, shaking a child under three, or interfering with their breathing, or threatening a child with a deadly weapon. Even reading this list sort of gives you chills or thinking that you would even have to make such a list is a bit chilling to me. There seemed to be a lot of issues with it, though. Some senators seemed to be saying that the government had no right to interfere between a parent and child, that parental discipline was a private matter. Was that a familiar argument?

**Sen. Wojahn:** “You can beat your wife because you own her.” “You can beat your children because you own them.” I think you have to define the things that are no-no’s; otherwise they are acceptable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that kind of language used? Was that thinking still prevalent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that there are people out there that believe they do. I think some of the religious right people think they own their wife and they own their child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that’s actually what brought it to my attention because Kent Pullen

and Ellen Craswell, from your committee, tried to kill this bill procedurally and otherwise.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were against these corporate punishment clauses; they didn't want to legislate that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you don't legislate them, you can't find people guilty of them and you can't remove the abuse. You've got to be able to legislate it. And that's the reason it had to go through Judiciary, really. It would have never gotten out of our committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Pullen wanted to strike the corporal punishment language. He said, "It could be misconstrued to include innocent methods of discipline." I just had a hard time wondering how throwing, kicking, or burning a child could be "innocent."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's gross.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When one of your committee members wants to kill a bill like this, does that make it harder to work with them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they don't bring it up. In our committee we had a preponderance of people who would have agreed with the bill. It would just be a pouting session; no, they wouldn't do it. You can't get away with that on Judiciary. Of course, you could bring it up there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. There was a part of that bill, I'm not sure exactly what happened to it, but there was a lot of discussion and then an amendment concerning if you withheld medical care from, say, a child for religious reasons, if you were a Christian Scientist or something like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We always had to exclude Christian Science. I think there was an exclusionary clause to do that. We've done that with other bills. We have to. There's some wording that is used, some phraseology that is always used when we wish to exclude something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That session, you managed to get twenty-nine million dollars more in the Social Services budget because the case loads

were really going up substantially, the numbers of people that case workers were expected to work with. That seems to be a perennial issue, that case workers get huge loads of people, they can't take care of them, somebody falls through the cracks and something horrible hits the newspapers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then we get sued.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you get sued, which takes more money from the program, which seems a little counter-productive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like taking money out of DSHS is almost an ideological thing rather a rational thing. You read the paper and that's always where the money is going to come from whenever there's a shortfall.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the agency where there is the most money is, other than education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they're big.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But they are getting smaller all the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then you get these law suits, or unfunded mandates...But you did seem to get a chunk of money that year. Was that a difficult struggle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was because we had to increase the case worker load for case workers who were investigating child abuse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That issue was the focus this session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the focus. And the ideal would be about fifteen per case worker but ours was up to way over that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was something like forty-five.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we got it down to thirty and that was about the best we could do, which wasn't good enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Twice as many, instead of three times as many.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And it's still going on. And that was the result of the Eli Creekmore case. I was chairing the committee at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That happened mid-session or so. It hit the papers really hard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, yes and it hit the papers real hard and they took us on and then several years later Jean Soliz was attacked because she was trying to protect a child and the senator from the Everett area, Val Stevens – she's dead – she's still there. She called it "Soliz-gate" because after we had been through all this Creekmore thing, they were defending child abuse, these people! Oh yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There always seems to be that pendulum swing in DSHS, from protecting the child to keeping the family intact.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the people who are trying to keep families together, they think that this is the right way, "Let's keep the family together, no matter what." Because of that, we've been sued, because we've sent a child back into a family where they've been killed, like in the Creekmore case. And so, you have to have enough one-on-one, or fifteen-on-one, to be able to control that. Even though we had HOMEBUILDERS that had worked the Creekmore case – there are several groups that work with children and families, but the HOMEBUILDERS have been very successful. It's one of the very finest ideas that's ever been dropped in the state of Washington – in Tacoma, as a matter of fact. And it's spread nationwide and now it's international. [Institute for Family Development] Jill Kinney started the program with a \$150,000 budget item.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you say a little bit about how they operate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They charge \$2,500, a flat fee. They take a contract for a month and they actually almost live with that family. They are either there from the crack of dawn when they get up, or they live within the family.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very intense.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Intensive care. And they pick up things that annoy, like an eating practice that a

mother, or father, or child could be doing that's annoying until the point where they blow up. Little, tiny things, little annoying idiosyncrasies that they find, that they pick out and present to the family, "This seems to be causing the problem." And they discuss it and that has been an incredibly good program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they teach parenting skills and they go over things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Intensive parenting skills. And then a lot of these parents are required to take anger management training, which is a follow-up for that. And anyway, it was so successful that they were only in a few counties and now it's almost statewide, the HOMEBUILDERS Program. Only it's kind of floundering of late, I think. I don't know what happened. I started it. I got the first funding for it and then we were honored with a foundation grant from the Anne E. Casey Foundation, a national grant. Phil Talmadge and I were able to go to Key West, Florida for about a week for this intensive orientation. The nation-wide expansion started at the Indianapolis National Conference of State Legislators. The people who started it had gotten out of it but another person had taken it over and they presented the case to the national conference and as a result of that, it brought in a lot of inquiries. Almost every state in the union now has the HOMEBUILDER program, and it works.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's the difference between a band-aid approach and really getting in there and doing something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that has worked. Only that's when Ellen Craswell tried to change that and divert the money into Family Reconstruction Program, and that has not worked. And I remember when they did that, she got national attention. They had a Channel Nine broadcast. I was invited because I started the program but she was honored and the program flunked about two or three years ago. That's when another case occurred. They'd given children back to their families and it happened in Tacoma too, and that child's never been found. You remember that? But they were



trying to work within the Department of DSHS to monitor families and they couldn't do the job and didn't do the job. And they turned them back into the homes and they were ultimately killed. There have been several cases since then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the ultimate failure, of course.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and they were sued. But it's fuzzy. But I remember when they did that. I was kind of crushed because I didn't think it was going to work, and it didn't. But Ellen was always trying to improve upon the family by giving them more latitude. And that's something that they didn't have the right to. Because they had not had the intensive approach.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some families definitely seem to need that level of intervention, because they don't have the skills that they need. You read the stories printed after these events and it's been generation after generation in the same family of neglect, abuse, you know, one thing after another, so that by the time, say, you get to the third generation, those people have never known a healthy family situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A child abused will become a child abuser. And that's been proven true and that's, I think, what HOMEBUILDERS finally was able to impress upon the Legislature: that if it isn't stopped, it will continue generation after generation. That's the thing – it all started with incest that nobody recognized; they still don't recognize it in the South. You know, it's terrible!

We recognized it a long time ago with the Equal Rights Amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The woman is powerless, so therefore she doesn't do anything?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You don't talk about incest. Whatever happens within the family is okay. Well, it isn't okay! That's the reason we have a vengeful society. It's getting better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some programs that are coming on board then. The state was starting to recognize that people needed day

care. And, in fact, the state opened their own day care center.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and that was Jennifer Belcher's bill. I remember it. And I started a family wellness program, too. I mean, it was started for the state but the state didn't pick it up. They had to get some money to fund it and Labor and Industry did and some of the other agencies did it, but it went down the tube. No money. That was another bill of mine. It was really a great idea, but it didn't flow. It didn't work. What they were doing was encouraging people to eat lunch and then go for a walk, to eat a healthy lunch. Some of the schools even wanted to put showers in for people who went running, that didn't go over very well. It cost money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This year, Governor Gardner brought forward his idea for the Family Independence Program, commonly known as FIP. What did you think of that idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was a great idea, but what they wanted to do was to bring these people in and put them to work at jobs with children in day care centers and in nursing homes. And that was the whole thought behind it – at least that was what I got the impression of – and I said, "We can't do that."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean, just take any unemployed people and allow them to work in centers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There are always low income jobs in day care and you needed to increase day care and so the impression that I got from the whole bill was that they were going to put people to work in day care and nursing homes, and if any peripheral jobs occurred that was all fine, but we weren't going to go out and work at that as hard. And I said, "No, we can't do that. If you will give me a proposal that puts women to work holding up signs at construction sites, where they can make real good money and jobs in the trades for women where they can make decent money, that's fine. We need to open up the whole area. But we can't start a program in which we are going to rely upon nursing homes and day care to supply the employment, because

some of these people are not equipped to handle working with such a vulnerable population. They might not like kids; they would mistreat them.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, not just anyone can do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember a couple of different discussions on FIP. One of them was, how soon after having a child should a woman be forced back to work? And the answer ranged from almost immediately to two or three years, or whatever. As a legislator, did you have any say in that part of this discussion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought that the children should be able to bond with their parents and that they probably needed to be about three years old before we should ever force the woman out of the house into a job. Or both parents, at least have one parent at home. And we fought to keep that, and a lot of our community believed the same thing.

Senator Ann Anderson was the one who proposed that if a girl were pregnant, that she was to stay in school and we would still support her in order to stay in school until she got her graduation certificate because otherwise she would not be employable. And it was important. These are little things that really had to be talked about. It's the little things that we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a longer term vision instead of just “get a job” at a fast food place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, get a job and get them out. And we had to supply them with money during the period of time while these various people could get off of the dole and onto a job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought, besides the actual details of how it was going to work, that the whole thrust here was to provide training, provide enough support, like health care, day care...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were supposed to provide the health care and the day care, and transportation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, transportation, some counseling. Put the package together. I mean, you hear about people on welfare saying, “If I get a job at a minimum wage place, I won't have any health care and I have a sick child. I can't afford to do that.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! We took care of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was trying to at least look at the big picture?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we were to get federal help to do that. The state was willing to put in some money but where the crux of the thing came – and the thing that caused the whole thing to falter – was rather than selectively going into areas where there were lots of jobs, high employment, they wanted to go into the rural areas and they finally did it on a kind of a gamble – like drawing a number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like a lottery?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not really, by not selectively doing it, but sort of by lottery. That was the whole thing. And so we did not let DSHS make the ultimate decision where these areas should be sited. I said, “We have to go into areas where there is high employment.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do it where you can be successful?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where they can be successful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then branch out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then branch out, but legislators were all vying for it to go into their district, believe me! And so we got one down in southwest Washington where there was no hope, where there was high unemployment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This only works if there are family-wage jobs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** This is what we told them! There's got to be money to back it up. And it might even have worked in the areas of higher unemployment if we'd gotten the money and waivers that we needed from the Feds, but they wanted to get back out. The state of Washington agreed to go out, when the Republicans took

over the Legislature at that time. That's when the program went down the tube. It took the impetus right out of it. It took the heart out of it. We could have been self-sufficient by now if we had followed through on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Year after year, there are programs like this and then they just sort of disappear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They disappear because the money doesn't hold out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there's a fanfare for a new program with a new acronym.

**Sen. Wojahn:** About the time that Senator McDonald became Chairman of Ways and Means, and Craswell was the vice-chair, we lost the money. I mean, the Feds were balking; we should have sued them because they had agreed, but nothing was done and it went down the tube.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would think that this would be something Republicans would like, getting people off welfare.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They liked it but they didn't want to put any money in it. And they wanted it to go where they wanted it to go. They wanted it to happen overnight. Things don't happen overnight! It's a long-term program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's taken families years to get into those situations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Generations. That's right, generations. We tried it once before. Remember way back, before I was in the Legislature, the bill sponsored by Senator Goldwater for a negative income tax? Where you pay some people – I mean, they can't work or there are not enough jobs or they are incapable. There was a test case done in the state of Washington, in Seattle. They were one of three in the United States. It didn't work. They found out people were willing to take the money and not work. And I was part of that. I was appointed the representative from the State Labor Council, and I watched that go down the tube. Didn't work. They had one major national meeting at Orcas Island, and I remember when I was there they told us the reason it wasn't working, because the people would take the money – they

were given money and they were supposed to go out and work for additional money to help themselves out. And there were jobs – this was during the time when there were jobs – and people were not doing it. They lived on what they had and were happy. They could spend time watching TV, and doing the things they liked to do. Lazy! And so that proves that there are those out there that really didn't want to work. So, I forgot what they called that, but I'll never forget that program because we all had high hopes. I was lobbying and I thought maybe this is going to work this time. And it was a Republican, Senator Goldwater, who suggested that. And that program was adopted nationally. We became one of three areas in the United States to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, with great fanfare when FIP is introduced and then year after year different programs are tried, was it hard to keep the faith?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it is, because you know that ultimately it's going to fail because of lack of funding. And you believe it's going to because you've seen it happen twice before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But do you feel also that you have to try, because otherwise you would abandon these people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believe we will go on continuing to try, always. But I also recognize that there's some that will never be able to work. And that's what wasn't recognized, that there are the people who are developmentally disabled who will never be able to work, ever! And there are people who are mentally ill that will never be able to work. They will hold a job and then they will lose their job because of their impairment. And there are older people who will never be able to work; that "some people's fifty is another person's eighty." So they will never be able to work and those are people who are going to have to be taken care of. And we need to set aside a certain amount of money to take care of those people and then seek those who can work and encourage those that can.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If these programs were actually smaller and more intense, would they lift some people out of poverty, do you think?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. But the intense programs cost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At this same time that these programs were being started – and it was interesting that you brought up southwest Washington – that whole area was undergoing great change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Metamorphosis!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They experienced great waves of under-employment, unemployment, shifting from family-wage jobs to service jobs or no jobs. The whole economy there was changing, and disintegrating, actually. The Spotted Owl issue actually doesn't come for a couple of years, but already the timber industry was in trouble.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This area was very depressed. What do you do with whole areas of the state kind of going under? Do you encourage those people to move somewhere else, or do you try to bring industries to them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what the Republicans wanted to do, make them move. But you just crowd the cities where there are jobs so that there aren't enough jobs. I don't think you do that. I think you try to develop programs. You encourage industries to come in. You try to find industries that are clean, that would work in our state. People who need water, people who need electricity, which is not as prevalent as we used to know it to be. People who need a climate that is moderate year-round. Recreation areas we could develop, like over by Sun Mountain where there was once an attempt to do some ski areas. You have to find the key, or the many keys, that will work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think it would be more "many keys," than one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We've always known we needed to diversify. We should not have a one-industry state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are people always chasing the "magic bullet," rather than looking at all the little things that they could do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not glamorous to do little things but perhaps more effective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and also, it needed grubbing in the Legislature and nobody wants to grub; they want to do the big things: the big tax programs that reduce taxes or the big energy things. They want the big picture. They don't want to grub for small things and yet we have to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was FIP oversold; maybe it was too ambitious? Maybe it should have been a small program.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had our tongue-in-cheek, all of us working that program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even Governor Gardner?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He thought it could work. I was skeptical. He didn't like me very much over that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you take a position? Or did you just hold back to wait and see?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A very strong position. They wanted to amend some things in the House and I refused. I had positioned myself as chair of the committee. We had the House bill in our possession and we amended it with the things that we thought were absolutely essential. And this was with the good offices of all these senators; we all worked together on that, Democrats and Republicans. We had public meetings where we actually gnawed at each other over the whole thing and everybody watched it. It wasn't pretty. But it was there. And we came to a good bill and didn't want any changes. We had sent our bill to the House and they amended it. They wanted their bill and they sent over whole lists – a two legal-sized pages of single-spaced list of changes that they wanted in amendments to the FIP bill. I looked them over, our staff looked it over, and I said, "We won't do this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then you sent them a message, “The Senate will not concur.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, we sent them a message the bill was still in committee. It was in Rules. We sent them a message that we would not adopt their amendments, ever! It was getting close to the cut-off and if they wanted their bill, to drop it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who were the leaders of that movement in the House, do you remember?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Art Wang. It was my seat mate who wanted his amendments. He came over to my office with a list of amendments. And I read them over and I said, “No.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a little surprised?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he was a very close friend of Gardner. He was mad, they were both pissed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then what happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The bill passed. Our way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The House had to back down?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They backed down. It was their bill that we’d amended. And it wasn’t changed that much. Jean Soliz still contends that it would have worked – and she was my staff attorney – if it hadn’t been for the state backing down and letting the Feds off the hook. I still believe it would have worked.

But we had a couple of little poems – I can’t think of them – that Don Sloma and Jean and I had sort of written together, just laughing and doing it together to keep up our humor. It was funny. I will always believe that’s what made Gardner mad and was responsible for the reporter for the Seattle Times getting fired from covering the Legislature over this. He had used our poem in a headline: Welfare WPPSS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh my, that’s catchy. WPPSS was really melted down by then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s what we called it. We called it Welfare WPPSS. I’m trying to think of the guy that called it that in the paper. Gardner got pissed and called the editor and he got demoted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No more headline writing...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because he called me. I talked to someone in charge and I said, “He did not do it; we did it.” And it was a matter of public record and it didn’t help him. A lot of people don’t like me in the state! But “Welfare WPPSS” is what did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is a little bit cutting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was true. You could see it wasn’t going to work, that the Republicans were going to destroy it anyway. I guess it was kind of a relief.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting back to where we began, I guess: the Eli Creekmore case, when it blasted onto the stage, the Governor reacted pretty quickly and appointed a task force to study child abuse. Is that a good way to handle that sort of issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was good. I think it’s the only way you can handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Have a more in-depth treatment; don’t just scream and wring your hands?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We really upended the Department of Social and Health Services over that bill. And I tried to protect them as much as possible because you knew that they didn’t have enough help; you knew, the things that I contended that nobody wanted to talk about was that we had too many cases per case worker. That most of the people were doing this were entry-level people in Social and Health Services who didn’t have the background and didn’t like it, so they got out as soon as they could get enough merit awards to move up. So we were continually supplying it with new employees that didn’t know what they were doing, didn’t have enough help, and what could we expect? And the press didn’t like that. I tried to protect DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand one of the issues was that the cases were not tracked statewide. So that if a family had a terrible record in one community and then moved, their record didn’t move with them. It was county by county, or something like that. And when they moved to



*Investigating the Eli Creekmore tragedy; Lieutenant Governor Cherberg (seated to Sen. Wojahn's left) also attending out of concern for the gravity of the case.*

their new community, nobody knew anything about them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That could have been it. During the time, there was a change in administration and they hired former Senator Bud Shinpoch to take over DSHS. He became the Director. And Don Sloma was hired. Don is one of the most brilliant people in the state of Washington, as far as I'm concerned, on social and health programs. And they were slowly reorganizing the whole department and they got fired because the state employees were getting goosey about losing jobs. So Gardner got rid of them. These are all things that occurred and believe me, this is the beginning of the demise – that caused the Creekmore case. They organized things, and according to what I understand and having read the organization chart, it worked. It would have worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was just not kept?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Apparently there was a fear that there would be too many jobs lost. Well, there couldn't be jobs lost because we needed them in other areas. And as I look back on it, it was after a new administration – they had just hired Sugarman and Don and Bud had left – and everything was in limbo. And so they hadn't put

into effect a lot of these changes that were planned. So I think the whole idea was for them to reconstruct that and to get that in place and to reduce the number of cases where people were working with these children and families. And to bring in more experienced people. That's when the Children's Department was organized in the department, or a semblance of it. But I remember. They didn't put it together fast enough, but the plans were there to do it and

there weren't enough case workers. We were using the greenest case workers that we had available and no wonder things were not working.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems to me that you would have a fair amount of credibility, because you weren't always their champion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I'm sure the press didn't like me because of things that I said.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they want to blame somebody.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They want to blame somebody. They have to have someone to blame, they have to have a scalp in order to sell newspapers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So these sensational cases, as tragic as they are, do they serve any purpose to get the state to do certain things to reform?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we go very slowly. I think we move a portion of the mountain very slowly. Slowly things evolve. It happens through evolution, not revolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it throw light on a dark corner and then people run to that corner and try to fix it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they do, but at the same time they move another step for the better. I think it's improved a little bit every time, but it takes forever to have it happen. That's the reason these people now that are the liberals, the forward thinkers, are saying, "You don't go in and destroy a country like Iraq chasing a guy and kill a lot of people." I mean, you've got to take it easy. You can't change overnight. It can only be done by a step at a time and go slowly. "And don't abuse while you're doing it." And I guess that's the whole issue that I wish could be gotten across to the American people. It's slowly getting there. People are becoming more responsive, people are beginning to care, I think, because of the September 11 thing in New York. People are beginning to become more humanized. But is it going to last?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. That's what worries me; that's what bothers me. But I'm glad of all the progress we have made. People don't spank their kids anymore, particularly, and they don't spank them in schools any more. They don't slap them with rulers. Slapping doesn't work. Corporal punishment is not the answer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I hope not. Another bill for children dealt with child custody, after a divorce, sponsored by Representative Appelwick in the House. He wanted to create – I'm not sure how this would work exactly – the wherewithal so that parents could have their own plan?

**Sen. Wojahn:** For joint custody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, for how they were going to do custody and work it out in court. Have it be a little more amicable, I guess is the idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they are trying to work toward that. It never has passed. I think that inroads are being made in it but there's no law yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are mediation centers and some mechanisms. But Brad Owen opposed the bill that year. He maintained that if parents were allowed to create their own custody plans,

that those plans would favor mothers over fathers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought that courts were more likely to do that than parents, themselves?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was pretty sensitive on this issue, being a divorced father himself.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A divorced father of adopted children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That makes it even more complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was very complicated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed quite open that he was actually speaking from experience – his own.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what his reasoning was. I don't know why he was opposed to the bill; he never talked to me about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there was an odd newspaper story that I wanted to ask you about, again, about a bill, to get funding for methadone clinics. The story was that a lobbyist had to fly to Spokane to get Lois Stratton to sign a bill and that that was considered "not proper."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Let me tell you the whole damn story. Number one, all counties had to agree to have a methadone clinic. A lot of counties did not opt in. Snohomish County never would permit a methadone clinic to come in. One was established in Federal Way. There are several in the state. Pierce County did not oppose the program; Tacoma had a methadone clinic and they controlled it. They had a covey of doctors who took care of the methadone for people and it was very well controlled. But it was done through doctors' offices or through doctors at the Health Department – I don't remember how they worked it – but it was very carefully controlled. In King County, they had a methadone clinic that was operated by a fellow who was born and raised in Walla Walla. His father was a retired doctor in Walla Walla and he was trying to expand the clinic to give them

looser controls. The person was supposed to go to a doctor before they could even be admitted to the clinic. They would go through this program through the courts and a doctor would authorize whether they were entitled – if they were a Vietnam vet and they had gotten on drugs there, for instance – if there was hope for them. They were supposed to give counseling at the same time that they had the methadone, to try to get them off methadone. That is the history of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, methadone is a stop-gap treatment, right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. And that is the only reason they got it was because they would take counseling. This guy at the clinic in King County wasn't offering any counseling; it was just a scam and he was bringing people in from all over the state. They were driving up from southern Oregon to get their methadone there, bypassing several clinics all the way up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was really a drug center, in a way? Switching one drug for another?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a drug center. And the retired doctor in Walla Walla was giving people the okay to go in for methadone. He was promoting this with his son in King County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was really a business, not a medical service?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A business. And it was all over California. No one was getting off of methadone. And what made me angry was people were coming up – I ran into someone coming up from Woodland, Oregon, all the way from southern Oregon – passing methadone centers in Portland, southwest Washington, Tacoma – clear up here – because he got an okay from a doctor in Walla Walla. So I fought it because they wanted to expand the clinics in north King County to attract people from that part of the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Have satellite clinics so people wouldn't have to drive so far?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Within the state. But still the county had to accept it, but he wanted to open others. He wanted to put one up

at the north boundary of King County and Snohomish County. Snohomish County did not authorize it and they didn't want it; it was a senator from the Everett area in the Legislature and he didn't want it, Gary Nelson from Edmonds. A Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He understood the nature of this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Anyway, so this guy wanted to expand into north King County, right over the border to bring people in from, I think, Whatcom and Skagit and Snohomish, because I don't think they permitted it. They were coming over from Wenatchee, even, to get it. And I had letters from a woman telling me not to interfere. She wrote to me that she had gone off of methadone when she was pregnant with her children – can you believe it? And then went back on afterwards. Yes, she wasn't trying to get off. And that was my fear. And so they had passed the bill in the House to expand this. I was fighting the minority leader in the Senate from Walla Walla, who didn't understand what was happening, I don't believe. Senator Hayner. And so it got down to a knock-down, drag-out and I was trying to get the signatures on the bill to preclude this from happening because they had passed it in the House – it was a House bill. It was Joanne Brekke's bill. They passed it in the House under very difficult circumstances. They had a heck of a time getting it passed. And I didn't have the votes in my committee because of the Republicans on the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jeannette Hayner had told them to support the bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I don't know whether she did or not. But I didn't have the signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you really needed Lois Stratton?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And she wouldn't come over. I pleaded with her to come over and I said, "Our caucus said we'll send someone to take care of your husband, if you'll just come over." She wouldn't come over.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was pretty deathly ill, though, wasn't he?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had to have someone with him all the time. The caucus offered to get an RN to go in and take care of him for a day for her to fly over and fly back. She refused. She was not very helpful; she was kind of Republican-oriented too. And we wanted the bill but no one could go. So I was really depressed. But there was a lobbyist, Jerry Farley who was working against the expansion of the methadone centers. He came to me after the committee meeting was over and said, "I'll fly that over and get her signature."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did you feel then that there was any impropriety in this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No! I said, "Okay." And all hell broke loose. Oh God! All hell broke loose over that. Ted Bottiger came me and said, "Did you send a staff person over to get that signature?" He and John Cherberg, and I said "No." And I could see them both relax. And so I said, "I sent a lobbyist." "No," I said, "A lobbyist went, he paid his own way."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so was that worse?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And so I said, "Forget it, I'll take it over myself."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So had the lobbyist had already left?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had come back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he get the signature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. He flew over the next day, got the signature and got back the same night. The press had picked it up. He had to creep into town to get to the Senate to give it to me. He called and said, "I think I'm being followed."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's funny.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was funny! Anyway, nobody was sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you then fly over yourself so that it didn't come out that this had actually happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Democrats knew it, but the Republicans hadn't got wind of it yet. So I said, "I will do it myself." I took the bill, called the airline, got the last seat on Alaska Airline, flew over there, got her signature, took the same plane back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you already had it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I already had it. And she came down and met me at the airport and re-signed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she find it a little bit odd?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She said, "This is stupid." I said, "Yes." But she called the Republicans or they called her. And she told them. So, she told them that the lobbyist had her sign it, but I could counteract that by saying, "I took it over."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it look even sillier that the two of you had made this trip?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody talked about it. But Peter Callaghan called me – that was the night that they were honoring the Republic of Korea. Their delegation was here and I was to escort the President of the Senate of Korea down the aisle, and I was not there; I was in Spokane getting the signature. It was a deadly time. Peter Callaghan called my aide, Evie, and told her if I didn't call him back that night he was going to write the story and it was going to be a terrible story. I got back and she was hysterical. I called him; I didn't get hold of him and he wrote the story anyway – hitting me. It was terrible. That's the reason the Tribune hates me. They never got the straight skinny on the whole thing. That needs to be cleared up because I saved the state of Washington from an abusive situation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I knew there was a story here!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what happened. The Republicans got up on the Floor of the Senate and told all this terrible thing I'd done. Jeannette Hayner said it and McDonald hit me and I got up and I told them just exactly what was happening, why I had done it. I practically had them in tears. I said "Senator Stratton refused to come over, her husband's on death's door. We offered to send a nurse over to take care of him

so she could fly over, to pay for a nurse to take care of him, out of our caucus. She refused. I said, "What did you want the poor woman to do? Did you want her to leave her dying husband to come over here and maybe lose him during that time? How gross!" I couldn't believe it.

Anyway, I got abused and Neil Modie of the P-I wanted to talk to me. I gave him the straight skinny and he wrote a real nice story in the P-I. And McDonald, after that, apologized. They both came and apologized to me afterward. The Tacoma News Tribune never did apologize for Peter Callaghan's story. So it was done and then one of the legislators – a woman, Nita Rinehart, said that if that had been a man it wouldn't have been any story. "Because it was a woman, they hit you." If a man had done it, it would have been okay. The chairman has unlimited authority. But I didn't want to go and I shouldn't have had to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the timing was rather difficult.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The timing was very bad. It screwed me up on a lot of things. I got really bad press. The P-I hadn't picked it up yet. But when they did, they did a good story.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, after all this, did you defeat this clinic?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We stopped them cold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So because there was so much heat behind this in these other ways, did that bring attention to this bill and actually help you defeat this expansion? Was there a silver lining?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, what happened was that Barney Goltz got into it too, because it was still hot. We had the signatures but the bill wasn't going anywhere. So he got in and negotiated because the gal that was fronting for the clinics was Marilyn Showalter, who had been the Chief Clerk of the House. She was lobbying against the bill. She wanted them to be able to expand. She was an attorney lobbyist at the time. We wanted the bill; we got the bill eventually to stop the expansion. They didn't want to stop it because if the bill had not passed, the

methadone clinic would have been established with an open invitation to all the northern counties to participate. The guy could sell more drugs and we'd get more methadone problems up there. Their theory was that it didn't matter; they weren't going to get off of it anyway. And my theory was that you were supposed to get off of it and you try everything you can to get them off of it. Now, it's gone crazy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's supposed to be a transition drug, I thought.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's supposed to be, but it was not. And apparently the Health Departments now are getting up on it, as long as a doctor okays it. But then it was controlled. But you know, Jean Marie Brough, a Republican House member, wanted the bill because the first clinic was in her district; all these hot-heads were coming into her district. It was so political that they appointed someone else to her seat when Peter von Reichbauer was appointed to the County Council. She was in the House and she was nominated to replace him and they brought out somebody else; she didn't get the job. She ran for it the next year as a Democrat and lost. And she had wanted the bill because it was in her district, Federal Way, this methadone clinic was located. Her constituents were complaining about it and they didn't want it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she could see it first-hand that this was not working?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She knew the problem, but she wasn't willing to help because the Republicans weren't helping her. Anyway, the issue probably played a role in her non-appointment to the Senate and then she didn't win re-election, so it's too bad. We lost a good legislator over that. These are the things that happen. But nobody talks about it. It's all sub rosa.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's pretty hard to connect the dots.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, it's impossible, but it happens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was a hot issue. You were also on other committees. That wasn't the only ballgame you had going. You were

working with Frank Warnke on the Commerce and Labor Committee. He was the chair. I think it was that year there was a big discussion about minimum wage.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Little Davis-Bacon Act.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the issues was whether to include farm workers and domestics. Here's a naïve question, why are they always excluded from minimum wage discussions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because of the clout of the farmers and their lobbying ability in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The minimum wage was very low, \$2.30 or something like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was terrible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you wanted to bring it up by quite a substantial amount, considering how tiny it was. What would be the pros and cons of doing that? Do you remember?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the cost to the employer. Farmers didn't want to pay higher wages; they were saying they were housing these people. Now, regardless of what kind of housing they were providing, it was pretty bad! And feeding them. Not really. But that they simply couldn't afford it and that prices of food would go up if that were to occur. In spite of the fact that most of our wheat is shipped overseas and a lot of the food they were talking about was surplus food that was shipped out, like the fruits and wheat. And they were getting their money anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were they claiming it would cause inflation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know that they claimed that. It put more money in the economy so it probably could be used as a cause of inflation, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the pros of raising it are simply humanitarian?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! If you remember at that time, these people were entitled to food stamps but they had to pay tax on their food stamps. You know, things were not right at that time. And up until several years later when we

removed the tax from food stamps, everybody that got them, paid the tax, but we were supposed to provide them with extra stamps. Whatever – that's supposed to make it fair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seems kind of convoluted.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then the other people were the domestics. Well, that's again, that is people who cannot afford it. And that they wouldn't be hired so they wouldn't have jobs anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the argument, that they needed to accept this or otherwise...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wouldn't have a job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was "this or nothing." Did the increase in the minimum wage pass, finally?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. Then the next time we tried to do it, we couldn't and we went to an initiative and then we got it. So we'd been able to pass minimum wage just either by hook or by crook in the state of Washington.

But that's the same time I sponsored a bill – that same year – which was not dealing with the minimum wage, but it was a bill that required newspapers to do their own collecting for their newspaper carriers because kids were going out at night and they were being attacked for their little bit of money. And I said that I felt that the newspaper should be responsible for their own collections. And they said they couldn't afford it – they killed the bill. The newspapers killed that bill. And that was one big bill; it didn't even get out of committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least some newspapers now bill. Our paperboy used to come around, but now the bill comes like any other.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's what we were trying to do. And it makes more sense. In the first place the kids couldn't always collect because people wouldn't pay. And they were too timid to enforce it. Other people would leave in the middle of the night with a several-month bill laying there; they couldn't pay for the paper. I said it was gross and the paper should do their own billing and they pled poverty. I remember that hearing. Frank Warnke gave me a hearing on the bill but he said, "It's not going out of

here.” I knew it wouldn’t, either. But you called attention to the problem. There was no publicity, obviously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at some point that seems to have worked. You’d make a lot of kids happy anyway.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, sure. They are still collecting. A lot of them. Some newspapers will bill. But I know that my grandsons used to deliver Tribunes and they collected. That’s only six years ago, so maybe they all bill now, I don’t know. I pay by the six-month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn’t see that you had any other big issues on the Commerce and Labor Committee for that session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you could get some state help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Public/private partnerships. That’s what opened the door for public/private partnerships and that was my bill. Way back, a long time ago.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can get a lot done that way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did. We’re still doing it and it hasn’t been challenged. If it’s ever challenged, it will be thrown out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people use it now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sometimes for the good of the whole, you do it.



*Conferring with Senator Jim McDermott on the Senate floor, a trusted colleague*

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I had no issues, I don’t think. But you know, we did sneak through something in 1977. We tried for years to get that tax increment financing bill to help with economic development. We couldn’t get it, so I sponsored a little bill that – how was that worded? If a project qualified for economic development, it could accept public monies. It was written in a way that we got it. It’s never been challenged in the courts and we’re doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s look now at possibly your most powerful committee; you were still on Ways and Means with Jim McDermott as the chair. The state was coming out of the economic recession, but was not fully recovered. There was still kind of a lid on things. It was not a creative time, shall we say. When you decided to take the chair of Human Services, you dropped Rules, but you got to stay on Ways and Means. Were you able to do what you needed

on Ways and Means or was dropping Rules a problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I got my bills out of Rules. I don't think I ever had many bills I cared about anyway at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your ability to do things was not diminished?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I liked to be on Rules because I could kill bad bills once in a while too, you know. And I could work at it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Gardner wanted to reorganize some state agencies and did manage to combine a few small agencies, especially under CTED. But with Senate Bill 4875 – that was the big one from that session – he wanted to be able to appoint the directors of Transportation, Game, and Parks and Recreation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought he should be able to do that. I was very supportive of that being the Governor's responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This caused a long fight. It seems like this issue's been around through many Governors.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He should be doing it, not a commission, ever. Dixy Lee Ray gave up the Transportation, gave up that right. I thought that wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why does this bill fail then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably because of politics, I would imagine, because I think the Republicans think they have more chance of controlling the appointments through a commission than through a Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently, one of the holdouts was a Democrat, 'Tub' Hansen, who was worried about getting things for eastern Washington.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn't want the Governor doing the appointing? Was he worried about farm-to-market roads?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't quite understand the reasoning, in fact neither did the reporter who wrote the article, but he maintained that the

commission was more likely to funnel money to eastern Washington for road projects than a Governor-appointed director. But the Governor appoints the commissioners who appoint the director, so I couldn't understand his train of thought.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But then you have a Republican Governor and they appoint Republicans generally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe your district would be in jeopardy somehow? It was also an east/west issue. I got the impression there was the idea that a western side-of-the-state Governor would not send money over the mountains.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, one of the big problems with the eastern Washington people is that they resent the ferries being able to use the gasoline money as part of the transportation system. Because it is considered an extension of the highways. They resent that because they don't have ferries over there and they don't see why they should have to help pay for them. And that is a big bitch right now. That is a big complaint with the problems of conservatives in eastern Washington, that if you slap a gas tax on them, they don't get the money. It's all political.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I did read that, dollar for dollar, eastern Washington gets more transportation money than the west. Is that true?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They don't see it that way. They've got a lot more land and they want roads to be able to get from farm to market, I guess. They don't think they're getting their fair share. I don't believe that. In the first place, how are they going to get their wares to market? How are they going to get their cherries and their apples and their wheat into the ports to be shipped out if they don't have westside highways? You know, they are not very realistic. And I suspect that that's the whole reason. It's the same old story about the ferries getting the money, "they shouldn't get it," and I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this fails by this one vote. And it just doesn't go anywhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tub Hansen's?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I believe so. One thing that does happen this session is that comparable worth is finally settled. I remember we talked about that issue several sessions back.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was on it forever and ever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to end up in the courts and was finally settled. I can imagine you and others breathing a sigh of relief.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, anything that was typically a woman's job was paid less: nurses, teachers, you name it – a woman's job, always less. So the courts did it. We couldn't do it. And the state employees were the ones – Bruce Hedrick was the one who took the issue to court. He's the one who evolved the theory that made sense. I remember when Dixy Lee Ray refused to put any money in and I challenged her and she still refused.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Another big issue that I wanted to talk about for that year was tort reform. It seems to have taken over the session at one point and generated a great deal of debate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it did. It became a real hot issue. And I thought it was good bill and then I backed away from it because I decided it was gross and that they were asking for the impossible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was reportedly a day-long conference before the session to open the discussion. Can you describe the thinking behind the bill and the different sides and what this issue is all about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The trial attorneys thought that if there was an award rather than a certain fee that that should be the amount, rather than setting fees for certain problems which occur. In other words, a person – like with Labor and Industries – if you lose an arm, you get so much money, if you lose a finger you get much less, if you lose a leg below the knee you get less than if you lose it above the knee, because it is more complicated with the knee joint. The insurance companies believed there should be some kind of control on the awards given. The trial lawyers said no, that they felt whatever was won by the

juries was fair. Well, juries are not the most sophisticated people in the world.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a Phil Talmadge bill? He spoke on the measure and appears to be taking the lead so I associated his name with it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was sponsored by the guy who later became the Chief Clerk of the House, a newspaper fellow from around Longview area, Alan Thompson. It wasn't a Phil Talmadge bill. He was against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It went through his Judicial Committee so maybe that is why he was so engaged.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Alan Thompson was the sponsor. Talmadge didn't like it. He's an attorney – so I think he walked the fence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was said he attempted to draft a bill that would be a compromise between the trial attorneys and the insurance interests.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, he was attempting to compromise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So even though you started as a sponsor, you pulled back? Did you actually take your name off the bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just stopped pushing it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I felt that it was too business-oriented and didn't take into consideration the problems of the small people. I've always fought that issue, fought it with the bill on the State Board of Health, the big guys against the little guys, you know. It was the same picture, the same deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, these were day care providers, local governments, doctors, different people who had to have insurance. Maybe you should lay out the issue a little more clearly for everyone. All these different kinds of people...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were unable to get insurance because of the liability.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just too high? The cost was too high?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The cost was too high. They couldn't afford it. That was the reason I had signed on the bill in the first place was an attempt to help them to get insurance. It seemed as though we needed tort reform in order to do that. And I generally was supportive of Senator Talmadge in his positions because I felt that he did care and some of the others didn't. But subsequently, I drew back from the bill after that, because it wasn't going to help the small people get insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was an odd line-up of people: the trial lawyers, the insurance companies, all these other people. The trial lawyers with the other people, because that is their business.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were to support the small people, the people who couldn't help themselves. When I had served as chairman of Human Services, there were people who assisted with birth...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Midwives?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Midwives. They couldn't get insurance. You know, it was very tough. And no matter what they did, and day cares could not get insurance. And small business could not get insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People who had to have it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who needed it, that's right. And yet it seemed to tend to help only the big businesses and the physicians. And the physicians got really angry with me over that bill – I know because I'd always been with them before and we had words over that bill. And I don't know how I voted in the very end. We may have gotten it compromised out, because Senator Talmadge tried to get a workable compromise out of the bill and what we got, I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does get through the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It passed both Houses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was one of the difficulties that some people had a thing about trial lawyers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was part of it. And you know they used that. The other caucus used that always because they generally don't like trial lawyers because they think we have a too-litigious society, anyway. But it wasn't just that; it was in order to try to provide insurance for everybody. And no matter who was right or wrong, what happened was the respondents always went for the deep pocket.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That certainly hurt local governments who were getting hit pretty hard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Local government needed the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were apparently being bankrupted by this. Well, it was a hard-fought measure. And it did actually go through. The insurance companies were kind of crying that they were going to be put out of business. Were they in real danger?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Their reserves take care of them and they don't let anyone touch those reserves, believe me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another bill that session had a real ripple effect, shall we say, was the WPPSS liability bill. It was a bill that became extremely controversial. It retroactively exempted members of local governments and PUDs from liability for default of public security bonds that were financing all the WPPSS power plants. I guess this was done to protect "the little guys" that made these decisions. But in the end it really came back to haunt everyone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was greed on their parts too, because they figured the more they could buy, the more they could sell. And it became a real strategy battle over who could buy the most power and sell the most power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of this growing WPPSS problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not much. It seemed to me that even the PUDs figured that the more they could acquire of an installation, the more power they could sell. And no one stopped to think that there could be a time and place where the demand would not be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they overreaching?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Overreaching, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No one seemed to understand what the cost would be, to build five plants at once.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they didn't. And the contractors building them were not careful – it was a cost-plus deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They could hardly lose.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They couldn't lose, no way. The stockholders were the ones that lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were measures then put into place, after the fact? To make sure that this would never happen again? Some safeguards?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not that I remember. I don't remember anything being done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is probably the Enron of the eighties.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Beyond tort reform, there were hundreds of bills, of course, to study. That session passed a mandatory seat belt law and the Mariners' Lease Law that would allow King County to use hotel/motel tax to renovate the Kingdome. You passed an eight-cent a pack tax on cigarettes to clean up Puget Sound. And there began some discussion about no smoking in the working place. It didn't pass this year or the next year. How would people defend that? Was it seen as a personal right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you remember, anyone could smoke anywhere in public buildings; they were smoking in the chambers and in our offices.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you still have the tradition of passing out cigars at every opportunity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That stopped. We had candy for the women members. But it was a tradition, in the Senate, particularly. The men all smoked cigars whether they never smoked cigars before in their life, they learned to smoke cigars when they came into the Senate, believe me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand when they cleaned the chambers, recently, that you could

see whole new decorations on the walls that nobody even knew they were there until they took off all the yellow nicotine grime.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You could see the veins of the marble, too. It was incredible. But that wasn't a prominent issue. It was a voice in the wilderness of people trying to stop smoking. I smoked and when it got to the point where it became bitter, I would invite the lobbyists to come to my office. I said, "You can smoke in my office." I remember that. And I remember one time Channel 13 was covering the Legislature, a committee meeting – I don't remember what committee meeting it was – but it was chaired by a friend of mine who smoked. We were polite and the sign said "Thank you for not smoking." A sign right behind the chair and he was smoking and they flashed the camera on the "Thank you for not smoking" and him with a cigarette in his hand. It was not very nice. The media was very ugly on that issue. That sort of polarized people. The people that would have perhaps been supportive became annoyed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And defensive, I'm sure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And defensive. And sure, so that stalled the law. It isn't until very recently that we've stopped smoking in public places.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know when people became aware of the dangers of second-hand smoke.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there was a point at which people began to listen, when it was defined as a problem. Before that, it was just an unpleasantness that some people didn't like to tolerate. There was no proof that second-hand smoke was a health hazard. We knew that smoking didn't help, it wasn't good for your health, but we didn't think it hurt other members or other people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was a personal choice, you could do it or not? And when it passed, was the air in the chambers clear of smoke, were things different?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, people sneaked around and smoked. And then pretty soon, you would see people standing outside buildings smoking as



you do now. Outside the Leg Building or outside the committee offices, smoking.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hanging out the windows?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not really. I didn't see that very often. But it could have happened. We kept the windows open. I would open the windows and shut the door to my inner office and let them smoke. And I remember some of the best people – the fellow who lobbied for the hospital association, Dave Broderick smoked and his wife, Linda did too, and they would come to my office. And maybe they still smoke, I don't know. But Linda and Dave, and Bill Fritz, who lobbied for the tobacco people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least that's consistent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Those are three people I remember, particularly. Although there were many.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting to note these little social changes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually – everything happens by evolution. It happens over a period of time; it's hard to change people and habits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislature did try to pass a curfew law for teens, but I don't think that it actually worked.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of the local governments adopted regulations and I don't know whether we actually did anything, but I know that Tacoma adopted a curfew law and enforced it and, as short a time as several months ago, they were still enforcing it. So it was effective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A rather difficult subject, some – not all – House Republicans tried to put in a bill to repeal all gay rights, any kind of protective law. The driver behind that effort seemed to be that they were worried about the AIDS epidemic and wanted to be able to quarantine people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't talk about it because that was the year that I was not chairman of the Health Committee; it was Senator Deccio. And they blamed AIDS on homosexuals. It was a moral issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't go through but it's an issue that we're going to see again and again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It became a moral issue and I think that that was the beginning of the time that the Moral Majority raised its head and were trying to influence elections.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were in full throttle; this was the mid-eighties, the Reagan years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But then they disappeared.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your committee work, there was a lot of discussion that year about how to deal with sex offenders. This seemed to be the beginning of that discussion. Previously, this issue had been treated more in the area of mental health, but many of them were reportedly escaping from hospitals, so there was a move to send them to the penitentiaries so they would be more confined. Was the idea of sex offenders changing from one of mental illness to one of punishment and criminality; do you remember this discussion, this shift?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we didn't do anything about putting them behind bars and throwing away the key until later. And that was challenged by Judge Dwyer and we had to reinitiate and redo that, but that's been more recent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Much more recent. The whole question was what do you do with these people after they serve their time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they're still abusive or diagnosed as subject to abuse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's almost unsolvable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some things you can't not legislate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You do have quite a few bills that pass that year. You got the sunset provisions for the State Board of Health repealed. Does that mean it's never again going to come up for sunset review?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it can't be sun-setted; the Board of Health is a constitutional office. They tried to dispose of it by statute and you can't dispose of it by statute. They needed to do it through a constitutional amendment. But that

didn't seem very practical or possible. And so they went the other way by denying them the tools they needed to function. And that's what angered me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So now, had you finally taken care of that issue? You had worked so hard to save it a few years before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's completely taken care of; it's safe now. We protected the hospices and those other programs because they were endangered and we retained the Board of Health. From that came the Department of Health, the removal from DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a battle of many years. Every year there's a little piece of this story. Were you watching it and thinking of the next step?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. What do we do next? After we preserved the Board of Health, we knew that there had to be a change because they would always be harassed. Even though we provided more funding for them, at one time they didn't even have telephone credit cards. It was terrible. They couldn't communicate among themselves except at the expense of local government and they were going to take that money away, with DSHS taking over the jurisdiction of local health departments. All the decisions were going to be made at the state level, removing it from local control. It was bad. They'd already reduced the jurisdictions to a degree when they merged with DSHS and they took away some of the money for local health departments. And they were struggling, especially mental health. It's still struggling; it never has been fully funded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Mental health is like an orphan. You did get provisions for chore services revised, another little piece. Now, is this one of those things where someone comes to you and says, "You know, this isn't really working," and then you look at it again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, what we used to do, when a person left the mental institution, they had groups that worked with them to see that they got settled with a community mental health

agency, that they had their medications and they checked up to be sure that they were taking their medications. Well, the state eliminated all those people to save money. And we also had a structured group – they were called homemakers – who went to the hospital when a baby was born and went home with the mother; these programs are for low income people and also if there was an abusive situation with the husband. The state paid for this to help them along the way. The mothers knew there was this home health worker they could talk to, because they were just "plain folks" and they weren't professionals. They wouldn't talk to professionals, but they would talk to a home health worker. So they would go home with the newborn and the mother and stay for awhile until the mother could be on her feet. And that was state-supported and then that was taken away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would be against these programs? It's a preventive program.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. It was a lack of money in the budget and when the Republicans were in charge of the budget they eliminated many of these good programs that saved money in the long run. A doctor called me once, an OB-GYN, and he was complaining because this family apparently had not paid his bill and yet they had someone taking care of the baby. And I said, "Well, you want that, because that child is endangered." The young mother did not know how to take care of it. Once he understood, he agreed and it was fine. But sometimes you needed to talk to constituents or physicians to explain things because they didn't understand. He felt he was being abused because he hadn't been paid and yet it seemed the family could afford to have someone in the home. But the state was paying for that. These are social programs that really worked to help people that we generally eliminated when there was a budget shortage. That's what is going to happen now. Everything is going down the tube. I hope the Displaced Homemaker Program doesn't. It could. It's a small program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, at this time, you still had those programs, at least. We'll watch out for

that. You also had a bill in to provide restitution by inmates.

**Sen. Wojahn:** For crimes they'd committed, they had to make restitution. We pay them a little bit, so much a day. They had work. They made furniture and license plates and they would get a few dollars a day and part of it was taken away from them and sent to their family.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This seems to have something to do with prisoners who damaged officers' clothing. I guess maybe they threw something at them...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Shit! Or a better term would be "body waste." I was at Walla Walla when they were doing that. It was awful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that the prisoner had his pay deducted and I guess there was some kind of fight about this in the courts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I was thinking of the families, too, but don't tell me that people in prison are not mentally ill!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they get there for a reason. Anyway, those are some of the things that you were dealing with that session. That shows the range of your activities!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Little bills. It's now bigger. Now we're taking care of people who have been abused by a hostile inmate who injures someone in a correctional institutional or mental hospital. We've had to provide funding for them. These are things that all came about as we became more sensitive to problems out there and as the unions began to scream and kick about "people being injured and no one's doing anything about it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So do you think the bar gets a little higher as people look into these situations?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. As people become sensitive to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a special session that year. Senator Sam Guess retired that year and before you started your special session that was the first order of business, to honor him. There was a little presentation of a certificate for his twenty-four years of service. He was called a

Washington General, an ambassador of good will, all kinds of nice things and you gave him a standing ovation. Various senators, including yourself, gave little speeches.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If we asked that the speeches be preserved in the Journal, otherwise they're never saved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems like the end of an era.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very conservative and we didn't agree on anything, hardly. Except that because my husband was an architect, the engineers asked me to sponsor their bill and Guess was very supportive of that. But he killed my noise pollution bill before that, when I was in the House; they sent it over to the Senate and it got killed in the Senate by Sam Guess. So my speech was probably directed at that, that we were not really very close. As a matter of fact, we debated back and forth quite often and there were a few scars left along the way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At these occasions, do you try to rise above that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you are a responsible legislator, you don't hold grudges, you can't. You can't afford to; you might need their vote. Sometime you are going to need their vote, so that is one thing you learn when you go to the Senate. In the House, it was different. There were so many votes there that you don't protect the members as much. But in the Senate you do, because you need every single vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And people stay there longer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that's the reason they stay there longer, because we negotiate. And for a four-year term. We negotiated everything, usually, and became friends over negotiations – often, though sometimes no. But when it's over, it's over.

I was probably so relieved to get rid of him, of course. Because I was really annoyed. I had been to a conference in Alaska for the Council of State Governments – the Western Conference for the Council of State Governments – which was a rather conservative one. The other one – the National Conference of Legislatures – is

liberal, but the Council of State Governments tended to be somewhat conservative because it was made up of members from the western region and a lot of the western states are conservative. Montana is conservative, Idaho is conservative, Nevada is conservative, the influence of Utah, Arizona not as bad, New Mexico, not more liberal but sort of more evenly balanced. I remember there was a bill before us in our subcommittee of the Council of State Governments on which I served and I made a recommendation – I think it was on acid rain – and the conservatives didn't like it, but we won. We won the point. But at the same meeting, before the meeting was over, another group of people came in later and said they were on our committee and they voted to reconsider the vote on the acid rain and I lost. And that all precipitated us leaving the Council of State Governments. California, Oregon and Washington were liberal and we were dealing with the Montana delegation and the Idaho delegation and Nevada and Utah. At this particular meeting Washington was well represented, but I think that California had only one person. They didn't have a full complement because they were still in session and Oregon was not there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many members were you allowed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. It was based upon per capita. And then from that you were assigned committees. And so at first we had won, and apparently it was a great idea, but some of those from the conservative states who weren't listening very closely later had these other groups come in and then they reconsidered it and voted against it. And I decided that we shouldn't belong to that group because it was our money – California, Oregon, and Washington had the largest membership and paid the most money based on per capita – and the other states were not paying as much; we were sustaining the whole thing. And we weren't getting anything we needed. We got nothing from that meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you describe more what the Council does and what influence they would

have on policy-making? They are a pretty old organization, aren't they? I think they've been around at least since the fifties.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was merged because there were too many organizations and the states couldn't afford to maintain all of them; they felt it was wrong. There were several legislative groups. I remember when John O'Brien was president of the National Council of State Legislatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So where there different clusters of states belonging to different coalitions across the country?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they formed coalitions. There were several conferences: a western and an eastern conference. Most everyone belonged to the Council of State Governments at one time. They lobbied Congress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So to give states a larger voice, to club together and have more power?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were organized for that purpose. The western states are a conservative group who decided there was too much land owned by the federal government in their states and they wanted states-rights to have that land back. Land ownership was one of the big issues with them. But they became more narrow and more narrow, and when the abortion issue came forward, you know, there was the cluster who did not believe in abortion, who fought that, and anything that could be controversial became controversial. And that was really the lightning rod that caused the problems. There's always an issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did Washington State pull out of the organization?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. We didn't, because when this was happening Sam Guess was going to be president the next year. That was the last thing he did before he retired. And I tried to talk them out of it but the Senate said, "Don't do it, because Sam Guess is going to be president." That's how conservative the group was. And so we couldn't do it then and I regretfully backed off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that issue stick around?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we eventually dropped out because the House decided it didn't like the Council. When the House Democrats were in control of the Legislature, before I left the Legislature, not too many years ago, they dropped out and I persuaded the Senate to drop out, too. I was on that committee, in the leadership. After this episode with the acid rain deal, the Council became weaker and weaker because a lot of us threatened to drop out. We said, "We don't think we should pay as much money for dues because we are supporting you and we need to readjust the arrangement." And I don't know whether some of the other states did or not, but it was in very bad shape. I know they sent their people around to attempt to interest the states into rejoining and we went back. And then we stayed in, but precariously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about California, did they stay?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They stayed in. But I think they and Oregon may have discussed it. I don't remember because I wasn't an officer for the Council. I was not involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's interesting. I didn't know this story. The issue that brings on the special one-day session, besides honoring Sam Guess, was that a high-level nuclear waste depository for the nation was being proposed and the Department of Energy had announced three possible sites. I'm not sure how these decisions were being made, but one of the sites was Hanford. The Governor decided that the people of Washington should have a voice here and not just have it happen to them. And so, from what I understand, Governor Gardner called you into session so that you could make this question into a referendum issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted to dump in the state of Washington. No, we won that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Al Williams and different senators were pretty exercised about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had selected several: Texas, Nevada and Washington for nuclear waste dumps. And we said no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was for the whole nation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We shipped the stuff across country from the Carolinas and New York and all that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is one way of putting the brakes on that, to have a referendum?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember the vote on that. All I know is the Legislature said no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did put it on as a referendum, the action requested by Governor Gardner.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then it stopped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did and then the people voted no.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Now they are going to do it to Nevada, you know. We said every state had to take care of its own waste, as I remember, unless they could get another state to take it. Everyone was responsible for their own. We said, "We'll take care of ours in Washington State."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington has certainly generated plenty at Hanford.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and we took care of it. We were able to send some of it to Oregon. Because they had established a dumpsite at Umatilla, Oregon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least it's close to the source.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That may have just been garbage, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that interested me about this bill, of which you were a sponsor, twenty-six other Democratic senators – you being the twenty-seventh – voted for this and no Republicans voted for this. It was totally a Democratic measure – the referendum bill. Was there no effort to get Republicans to sign onto this bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. The only sponsors of the bill were Democrats? And then it came up for a vote and no Republicans votes for it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans offered several amendments; they were all voted down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so they voted against it, okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of the issues were highly technical. But Senator Williams kept saying, “This is not a technical measure, this is a policy thing. The people should have a vote.” He wanted to keep it focused on that and not have it stray all over the place talking about things that were probably beyond your expertise. But all the sponsors were Democrats; that seems unusual for this sort of bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know either, except that usually eastern Washington is a Republican-controlled area and especially the Richland area, Pasco – the Tri-Cities, generally. And there may have been something that they did not agree with in the bill and when the Democrats didn’t pick up their amendments, the Republicans voted no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the end, only three voted against it: Senators Guess, Sellar and Benitz.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, Benitz was from Tri-Cities. And he must have influenced the point of view: “I’m not going on the bill,” and he wasn’t going on the bill. It might have been a caucus decision, I don’t know. And of course Guess is so conservative, he didn’t vote for much of anything right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, it goes through anyway. Usually, these things are more bi-partisan. Just asking people to vote...

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the Senate they usually were more bi-partisan, but I don’t know what happened there. I have no idea what that was. We were in control and I think Ted Bottiger was chairman of Energy. The Republicans didn’t like Ted Bottiger. When he was appointed to the Northwest Power Planning Council they never would allow him to be confirmed. Never. I don’t know why. You can suspect, but you don’t know. They just didn’t like him. He was a trial lawyer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was the end of the special session. You had a quick one-day meeting. And then you had to face another election.



## CHAPTER 17: LEADING WITH A ONE-VOTE MAJORITY, 1987

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1986, the Senate had twenty-seven Democrats and twenty-two Republicans and the House was heavily Democratic. But in 1987, after the election...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had only twenty-five Democrats to twenty-four; a one-vote majority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One-vote lead, okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That will be the biggest factor in the next session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Is that when I was chair of Human Services?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Okay, then we walked a tightrope.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little side issue that I want to talk about first, that I'm not quite clear about: in 1987 you were tempted away from the Senate to run for the Pierce County Council. You didn't actually do it, but you were thinking about it. One of the things you were weighing is how that would impact your work in the Senate; you would have had to resign.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes, that's right. We were doing the Family Independence bill and I couldn't walk away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jim Salatino had been on the Pierce County Council and had resigned and there was this vacancy. What was it that tempted you to switch venues here? What was it about the County Council that was appealing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just wanted to go back home. You know, I'd been down in Olympia for a long time and I really wanted to go home and I thought that would be an interesting job to have. And they told me they would appoint me but I had to resign right away. And that was the condition they put on it and I said, "I can't do it." Because we were right in the middle of writing the Family Independence bill and the way the bill was originally drafted by the

Secretary of DSHS was they would provide jobs for people on public assistance, but we were to provide jobs in nursing homes and day care centers. And I said, "No, you can't do that because people are taking care of the youngest and the oldest and the most sensitive and vulnerable part of our population and we can't have people working there that can't stand children or old people. That wouldn't work out; we can't do that." And I went to the Governor over that. I was scared to death that that was going to happen and so we got it turned around and insisted on our version of the bill. The bill that we presented was really well thought out, on both sides of the aisle. That committee was very good. Everything we did we agreed upon. We talked it out until we came to an agreement. I remember Senator Ann Anderson insisted that a pregnant girl, as long as she stayed in school, could get public assistance for her family. Her family could still have it, but she didn't have to go to work. We kept them in school as long as we could so they would be trainable. There were lots of issues in that whole bill. I refused to walk away and so I didn't get the appointment.

And of course, they asked me, "Why did I want the job as Pierce County Council? What had I done in the Legislature?" After working my heart out!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd done a lot for Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Displaced Homemaker Program and the Health Department, for God's sake. Yes. It was incredible. I'll never forget it – the interview.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least you had some answers. You were among a group of six Democrats being considered. At that time they were also changing the charter which called for a nine-member part-time council. Some of the news stories seemed to think that it was the salary that interested you. It was quite a lot more.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That really wasn't it. It meant that I could be home, because I lived in Olympia



during session. No matter, it proved that it wasn't the salary when I refused to do it. Because I could have had the appointment, I was told.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were considered the first among equals.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and I wouldn't take it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does this come up again, the lure to be more of a Tacoma-based person, or was this the last time you wavered on your commitment to the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never again, after that I didn't. I decided I didn't want it and I needed to stay where I was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were certainly getting senior positions in leadership.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I know that the county government wanted me to get it because they had persuaded me: "For God's sake, we need you on the County Council because we lost Salatino." He was a doer. Many of them are sitters and he was doer and they needed another doer. And so they were trying to persuade me to do it. Not hard lobbying, but they did indicate that it would great if I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would a county council position have allowed you the same ability to address the issues that really grabbed you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had already taken care of a lot of issues that the counties and cities had lost through legislation or rules and regs, so I don't think so. A lot of people said, "It's better if you stay where you are because you're needed there."



*Senator Wojahn with husband Gil, in later years*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wonder if you would have been bored?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so because there is a lot to do and no one was making any decisions. It really was a bad Council. They were just sitters. They studied everything and they did nothing, except Salatino was very, very good. There were two of them on the Council that were; he and Wendell Brown were very active.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if you would have been frustrated working with such a group of people, though?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. No, I think I'd have maybe jarred them up and caused them to... I think I would have made it interesting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you stayed in the Senate at any rate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I stayed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose it's healthy every once in awhile to be asked the question, "Do you want to do what you're doing?" Go through a little soul-searching.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I really wanted the Council seat; I thought I would enjoy it. I knew there were problems, but it appealed to me. I tried to go back to Tacoma when I ran for Mayor and I didn't make that either. I really wanted to go back home and my husband wanted me to come home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he getting a bit weary with you down in Olympia? I mean, sessions are long.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and so I would have been better if I'd gone home. I know that, but I couldn't. I couldn't leave

the FIP Program because it would have died. And then it only existed for two years, anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you didn't know that then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. The Republicans killed it. Just like the Health Bill. Well, if we'd done that we'd be of the woods and if we hadn't repealed the Health Bill we would be out of the woods on that, too. It's really awful the things that they have forced us to do. Believe it or not, this happened. We were making inroads with FIP, but the thing that they insisted on doing was having a lottery as to who got the FIP programs. And they went to areas where there was high unemployment so that the program couldn't possibly survive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it has to be matched with a job to function.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. We need them maintained in King County because that is where the jobs were and some of the areas, but you don't send it down to southwest Washington where there were no jobs. Or Skagit County where there's fifteen percent unemployment. And that's what created the problem. It happened. Because the legislators insisted on a lottery.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a really tough one. Before we begin our discussion of the work of the session, we should take note that in January of 1987 the dedication ceremony for the completion of the redecoration of the rotunda of the Capitol Building was held. Before, it had been quite plain. Did they do that work when you were not in session and then when you came back, there it was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did the chambers when we were not in session. And I think they were still working on the rotunda, as I remember. But it was such a joy to see it because it was so beautifully done. It was outstanding and it was so much better than putting more murals around. The colors that they used were joyful. They had to replace some of the marble in the chambers, also at the time. We have a piece of the marble. They gave us all a piece of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Commemorative little blocks of marble? I have seen one. Does yours have a state seal on it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and there's a little card and it sits on a little stand. Kind of neat. It says, "This is a piece of the original marble used in the construction of the Senate chambers, which were completed in 1927. The marble is Formosa Marble from Germany, one of three European marbles used in the construction of the State Capitol Building. The marble piece was salvaged during the repairs of the damaged marble column in the chambers."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you came back into session and there was this beautiful Capitol for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything was refurbished: the new carpeting, the new painting, the finishing work that had never been completed when the Capitol was done and it was really a joy. And we had the Rhododendron on our carpeting and I think, the Dogwood in the House. And it was really a revelation. The things had been being done intermittently in between sessions but nothing as comprehensive as this.

Now it's going to be dreadful again. They're going to be meeting in portables.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they are already there. The earthquake really shook up everything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No parking any more. What are they going to do for the members' parking?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know. You retired at the right time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this was all in preparation for the centennial, which at that time was still to come in two years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had thought that when it was completed that everything we ever needed to do would be done. And then the earthquake occurred and everything that was even slightly not copesetic fell apart. I don't know what they are doing now. They are still repairing the Capitol, but the part they are doing now is redesigning the whole Capitol?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the wiring, the plumbing – there are water pipes that have leaked, that kind of thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the air conditioning never worked. People either froze or suffocated. The heat came on in the summer and the air conditioning came on in winter. It seemed as though there was always a problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty drafty. Engineering, I'm sure, has come a long way since the twenties. Such a large, complex building.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I have a feeling that nobody knew what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It may have been state of the art then but, of course, with all the computers and wiring that they need nowadays, things are different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's probably what disrupted the whole make-up of the institution. So that when they got into that, they found the problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It could be, yes. And things wear out. You can't really expect a building to last forever without work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** True. Now we build for obsolescence, which I think is a mistake. We don't build for longevity. By simply replacing plumbing and electrical wiring, we could maintain our buildings as they used to do. And we have some historic buildings that are incredibly good, well built, well designed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're never going to get a building like the Capitol again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never! Well, it's too expensive in the first place. And there are too few craftsmen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are not going to get Ralph Munro's grandfather up there chiseling away. Even back then, they had to import people from all over the world to do the work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, no. A friend of mine's grandfather worked on the Capitol Building, also. And it's still a part of history. What are they going to do with the beautiful rug that is in

the Reception Room; are they going to keep that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I certainly think they would try to; that's irreplaceable. It's a building that has hundreds or thousands of people pass through it every year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, it's one of the few capitols in the whole country – probably the most outstanding in the country. It's patterned after the U.S. Capitol and it is historic and it should remain forever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly moments like when you came back and it was all painted and fresh, that would really bring it home again, its meaning.

In the 1987 session, you were again part of the same leadership group as caucus vice chair with Ted Bottiger as leader, George Fleming, Larry Vognild and Rick Bender.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We worked well together. I think we mostly came up with the same issues. Ted was more conservative than the rest of us, and he was chair. But George was liberal and I was liberal and Bender was fairly liberal; he was for labor. So we balanced and Larry was great. He was more conservative, but he was good. I became very fond of Larry Vognild. He was really decent. He was a former fire fighter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a quote from a caucus report that I'd like to have you comment on, which says, "Compromise became the watchword of the session in the Senate where a tight one-vote Democratic majority fostered a tense atmosphere and made consensus difficult." This actually sounds like very polite language...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In reading over all the different pieces, it seemed like the real issue was leadership or unity. The unity of your caucus, or lack of unity in your caucus. There was talk of people wishing for the old-style leadership days of Mardesich or Gordon Walgren where they could hammer things through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tight-fisted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But apparently there had been a caucus decision not to have that kind of leadership after their particular problems as leaders. They wanted a more, what was called democratic style, more shared. How did that feel? Was that an effective way to go?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. I think so. Actually, when you work with people of varying degrees of political persuasion, you have to talk. You have to talk things out, you have to negotiate. I think it worked better. The only thing that did happen occasionally, if someone wanted something for their district and couldn't get it, they would hold out on votes. And that did occur on a few occasions. We had to cave in a few times. But usually we brought them around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So previously, a smaller group made decisions and everybody fell into line, and now it was more negotiating, would you say?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And everybody had a chance of getting their bills heard. And I think the committee chairs were probably a little bit more caring and sensitive to issues that were important to various members, I think that showed. I know it showed. When I first started, it was almost impossible to get a bill in the Senate. It just didn't happen unless a light shone on the bill through the leadership. And I struggled with that. So it was a lot better. And usually we could persuade, or we would cave in and give something away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think, from what I've read, that the Republicans were operating in the same mode.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. When they took control, they handled it very tight-fisted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They denied having a bound caucus but, in fact, they all voted together. Bang, there they were.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They all voted the same. Even though they disagreed in principle on issues that were before them. We knew that because we would offer to give someone on our side. And we continued to, on occasion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that difficult to have caucuses acting in very different ways like that? With a different point of view altogether?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's tough. When you are in the minority and you have a tight-fisted caucus on the other side, what they don't want doesn't happen. It's almost impossible for the minority to ever get a bill passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you are the majority at this time, but in fact, because they could lock-up and your caucus did not, you became the minority, over and over in this session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had flakes in our caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there grumbling about this? It seemed like there were pretty fierce discussions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Disagreements – that usually happened in caucus. We had some rather knock-down drag-out caucuses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand from different press accounts that Jim McDermott as budget chief had a really tough time. Senator Owen, for instance, was not voting with the caucus.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We lost the budget that year because of that. McDermott had to do some things he didn't want to do. He finally caved in on the Convention Center and joined us because he couldn't win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wanted it? Or he didn't want it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was not supportive and he became supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did the maverick Democrats want? Did they say, pretty clearly, "You need to give us this or..."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Their philosophies were different. In Owen's case, he wanted support for his POPS organization on the payment of child support. [Parents Opposed to Punitive Support] He was active outside the purview of the caucus. Another one of the other things he wanted to do was to close Evergreen State College. Oh yes, but he was always against that

college. A different philosophy. He was difficult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This session, he seemed to want no new taxes. Governor Gardner had called for new taxes because he wanted all these new educational initiatives and there was in his mind no way around it and he was going to step out and call for taxes. Most of the Democratic caucus was prepared to go with that, except Senator Owen, Lois Stratton, and Slim Rasmussen, and a couple of others on different bills. The Democratic Party was a pretty big tent, in this case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were firm on that. Rasmussen had turned real conservative. He had been one of the liberals in our caucus and then when he became Mayor of Tacoma in the late sixties, he was working with a lot of conservative people and he made himself really obnoxious. He served only about one term as mayor. There had been other mayors before him, before that. Gordon Johnson was there. But we had also ousted the whole city council – that clique. And when Rasmussen came out of that he was very conservative when he came back to the Senate. I can remember when I was lobbying, when he was first here, he had been very liberal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People can really change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was weird. I don't know. He didn't want any more taxes. He didn't believe in abortion; he fought that issue. He fought women's issues. We couldn't get the Women's Council through him. I'll never forget when we had a bill in the House to provide for a Women's Council. Governor Evans had done a resolution, but it had to be statutory. We had a bill and we had about twenty-five members of the House and I was prime sponsor of the bill. We got through the House, came over to the Senate to the hearing and all twenty-five sponsors came over and sat in the hearing room and he took up all these other bills before us. We sat there for two hours waiting to be heard; gradually people were leaving and he finally took up the bill and he called on Mary Helen Roberts who was the CEO of the Women's

Council – a paid staff job – and he said to her, “Mrs. Roberts,” and she stood up. And he said, “I suppose you'd rather I called you Ms. Roberts.” He hated that word: “Ms.” Roberts. And she said, “Well, as a matter of fact, I'm a Miss but you can call me anything you want to, Senator.” She was great. That actually happened. This is going back. But he hated gays, so he was...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, obviously you remember all of these different things over the years. And it builds up. Did it make it hard to work with him, with all this history?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was furious with him most of the time.



*Checking in with Senator “Slim” Rasmussen*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And he was part of your delegation from Pierce County.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, I know. And finally, I was sitting right across from him, toward the end before he died, about 1993, and he used to ask me if it was alright if he voted a certain way – as if he would, but I don't know whether he meant it. But I remember when I sponsored the Board of Health bill, to remove the Board of Health from DSHS – he always quizzed people about bills, so he took me on and he wanted me to explain all about it. And I said something like, “I can't explain it,” and he said, “Well, I just wanted to ask you a question about it.” It was a complicated bill. It removed the whole issue of health from DSHS into a Department of Health. And he wanted to know exactly what it did and I don't know what I

answered him. And I never did explain the whole bill, but he just acted real upset and real meek and he said, "All I wanted to know is what the bill did." So I snapped at him. Well, we'd had him and towards the end of session it gets to be pretty snappish around the chambers. People snap at each other and when your own caucus is not backing you up on issues – you can't get their vote... He was an obstructionist, and Owen was an obstructionist and who was the other one?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, Lois Stratton voted against your bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lois Stratton, she was difficult. She was more Republican than Democrat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she come from a very conservative district? I mean, people are supposed to vote their districts as well as their Party.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Spokane. But on one or two issues you don't lose, if you provide the reasons. You have to reason with people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She and Owen voted pretty much down the line together, but there's no statement. What was her take on all of this? What did she say was her reasoning?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's get back to our discussion about the leadership that session. You had had Ted Bottiger as your leader for several years, and there were several articles printed during that session that indicated that he was getting weary, that he was, perhaps, looking around for something else to do. He apparently wanted to serve on the Utilities Commission. Could you tell if he was running out of steam in some way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that it was obvious to me, although he suffered several bouts of illness. I mean really bad, bad colds but he was always there. He never missed a session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seemed very present, but there is this undercurrent in the news stories about his growing weariness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that the opposing party was taking advantage of that, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Senate Democrats had a twenty-five, twenty-four split. A tight situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and that was one of the reasons for it. They were trying to bring opposition to our caucus and they were attempting everything to get one other vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actually they succeeded rather well appealing to more conservative Democrats. Certainly Brad Owen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And occasionally Lois Stratton.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And some others on occasion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So they were using that as a weapon to force their will, of the minority on the majority. I think that a lot of it was initiated by the opposing party, and the fact that Ted was fighting so hard to maintain his position and, as I mentioned, suffered serious bouts of bad, bad colds. I'll never forget how sick he appeared to be and yet he was always on the job. And there had been some friction in our caucus with the initial election of the leadership when Jim McDermott wanted it and Ted won. And so there was a little bit of hurt feelings, I think, that had spilled over from that.

And then as evidence of the fact that the opposing party was trying so hard, when he was appointed to the Northwest Power Planning Council, they refused to confirm him and he was never confirmed in that position. They were ugly about it. It seems small and ugly; it happened though, and so that just proves to me that the reason we had such a struggle was partly because of the forces that were against Democratic control. Jeannette Hayner stopped that, which wasn't fair. In other words, you usually confirm what a Governor wants and the Governor appointed Ted to the Council. It was a very big job when he left the Legislature and Jeannette Hayner would never permit him to be confirmed. We didn't have the votes and we didn't have the guts to go up against them and have them say dreadful things on the floor of the Senate to be published in the paper, which would have been done. This is vindictiveness

and I don't believe in it; you don't need to be vindictive. I think you have to be firm, but you don't have to be vindictive, and they never, never permitted Ted's name to come up for confirmation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it personal against him? Or just something that they could do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It seems to me that it became personal. He was a good leader. He was a good teacher; he taught a lot of things we needed to know about an issue, and he was just too powerful and good. I don't think they had anything against him except politically. They didn't like him because he won. He stood up for things he believed in. But, you see, the Democrats could never challenge the Republicans on the nomination because the press would print all the bad things they would have said. And we didn't want him to lose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't he an expert in that field? I mean, it wasn't at all a gratuitous type of appointment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, no, he was very knowledgeable. He had been a chair of the Energy Committee in the Senate and was very knowledgeable. And so, it was an appropriate appointment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can't remember the timing of it, but I think that his son had suffered a tragic accident about this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** His son, at that same time, was about twelve years old. His mother was a nurse at Elma Hospital and Teddy had gone home with his friend to his house and his mother was going to pick him up there when she got home from work. The boy's parents were not home and they found a gun in the bedroom and the boy picked it up and pointed it at Teddy and pulled the trigger, thinking it was empty, and shot him. So when Darlene got there, the coroner was there and that's the way she found him. That just almost killed Ted and yet we still could not get gun control. We brought it up that session but couldn't get it. Can you believe it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Doesn't get any closer to home.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it doesn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was really having a rough time of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a very bad session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He, unfortunately, also had a DWI arrest that year, for which he made a public apology. And it just seems like things were piling on...

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was not a good time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You look at his photographs and he just looks visibly aged and hard-pressed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. And it doesn't get any easier, every year you're the majority leader, especially when the vote is that close.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he called it a nightmare. His worst nightmare. And the Democrats, it's true, could not stick together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was not a good time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We might as well finish this story: when he does retire, it sets off a bit of a scramble within your caucus as to who should be the next leader. Jim McDermott was reputedly one of the hopefuls, George Fleming also, who had been the caucus leader, but the person who emerges is Larry Vognild.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he became majority leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been in the Senate since 1979. How did he arise as your next leader?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was very knowledgeable. He had been a fire fighter in Everett and was very much respected by the Council of Fire Fighters. He was very knowledgeable on labor issues, which were important to everyone. And was a genuinely nice fellow. I don't think that he really had too much of a problem. I think it went easily, I don't remember any battle. I had supported Augie Mardesich against him, I remember. And a lot of us had, but I don't know whether it was because of the challenge and the problems that Ted had had before, whether caucus members softened up and more sympathetic, I don't know, but the transition was easy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he had the right qualities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was genuinely liked and he was not pushy and he listened to what people wanted. But he was a stranger as far as not having been in the House. He'd never been in the House of Representatives before coming to the Senate and usually we don't take them too lightly coming directly from the outside into the Senate. But, he was very tactful and easy and thoughtful. And caring.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had had a series of leadership fiascoes or problems with Senators Greive, Mardesich, Walgren...Bottiger's DWI was a small thing in comparison.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very small!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But were you looking for a particular kind of leader?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just someone who was capable of handling a crowd of people. They had to be. And Jim McDermott didn't seek it, as I remember. He was Ways and Means Chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was happy with that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was happy. He didn't have a major challenge for leadership at that time. George Fleming, I think, was running shortly after that for Secretary of State.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lieutenant Governor, I believe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And so there were other opportunities out there. So that may be the reason there was no battle, because there wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, after your hard time, I'm sure it was almost a relief to have that type of transition.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always too, remember this, that I was supposed to be in leadership but I never really felt that I was. They only listened and did what they wanted to; sometimes they did as I wished them to do, but normally they just listened politely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that change under Larry Vognild? Did you feel more included?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Somewhat. I felt more comfortable with Larry. And I felt I wanted to help him and I was involved with labor and I think that in some instances I was able to help him with some of the issues, to give him a better understanding. Although he had a basic understanding. He was very bright. And, of course, he had the fire fighters behind him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That helps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you can't fight that, either. That's a big plus. Not the police officers, but the fire fighters. Everybody respects fire fighters and it's because of the way they've handled themselves through the years in Olympia, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they are genuine heroes, usually. I mean it would be pretty hard to be against them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, especially after September 11, but even so, they've always been very, very respected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of your committee assignments, you were still the chair of Human Services and Corrections. And you were on Commerce and Labor, and Ways and Means. So we'll look at some of those areas. First though, Governor Gardner was pushing very hard for his education programs, what he called "Schools for the Twenty-first Century," which kind of gets the ball rolling on the whole budget issue because he wanted to reduce class sizes, increase the starting pay of teachers, and provide more training money – a lot of initiatives in the education field.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did a few things right away and that was to reduce the number of kids in one-through-three, reduce the class load to try to help them. We couldn't do it all, but I know that was the big thing that we did do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if he was now calling himself the "Education Governor," he recognized that it would require a tax increase, a hefty one, I think. So he came into the session making pretty strong statements about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He appointed a commission to study the possibility of a new income tax. If you



remember, he appointed Ray Moore as chair. And it was a very well thought-out commission who recommended an income tax. It didn't go anywhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That does seem to be the perennial issue. Republicans, although often in favor of educational issues, were not supportive of this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They're more for Higher Ed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were not in favor of increased money going to reduce class sizes for schools. That was one of the first battles and one of the first times that Senator Brad Owen crossed the aisle and voted with the Republicans. It was one of those little "take note" issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I know. We knew it was going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The really big one, of course, was the state budget. As you were on Ways and Means, if you will, I'd like to go into that in a fair amount of detail. Governor Gardner came out wanting a pretty good tax increase and you set up the budget in such a way that the Senate was going to support that idea. The House was quite strongly Democratic. So, you had the Governor, and the House, but you had this pretty shaky situation in the Senate. The House proposed the budget and then the Senate employed a striking amendment and took out the entire House budget and plunked in the Senate budget, which represented an increase, but not as big an increase as the House had proposed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That happened all the time. We spread the money a little bit more evenly out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It went to the Floor, and was placed on second reading. And you had a maneuver that eventually got you into trouble, to by-pass the Rules Committee; can you remember why that would be a useful thing to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Apparently, there weren't enough votes on the Rules Committee to get the budget out because of the closeness of the vote and maybe they weren't sure how the

Lieutenant Governor was going to vote, even. And that would be the only reason I could see that they would try to immediately take it onto the Floor as it was read in, I don't know. I wasn't in Rules so I wasn't privy to that knowledge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it gets your caucus into trouble because then, by the rules, you can't amend the budget. I don't understand it, but there were two chances to amend and you had used up one of them right there, by doing the striking amendment on the House?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We couldn't amend it any more? It had come from the House, we slapped our amendment on and we hadn't gotten back to the House yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ed Seeberger's Sine Die book from 1989 really goes over this budget battle. That's what I'm working from here. He says, "Senate Democrats, mindful of criticism, that the Republicans had been excluded from meaningful participation in the budget process in committee, and hoping to force Senate Republicans to show their hand, moved to suspend the rules requiring sixty percent to approve floor amendments to the budget. On Friday afternoon, the majority party floor leader" – that would Ted Bottiger – "moved to suspend the sixty percent rule until midnight. The minority floor leader immediately moved to amend the amendment to drop the sixty percent requirement entirely for the rest of the legislative season. The Republican motion passed when one Democrat crossed over to vote with all twenty-four Republicans." Do you remember this? It says "Senate Democratic leaders were stunned. On the very first floor vote, related to the budget, they had come up short."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who went and crossed over?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't say. I'm assuming that it was Brad Owen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It could have been that gal from Spokane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lois Stratton? I didn't trace every blow by blow, because there were quite a few.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So we didn't get the budget?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. Seeberger says it was the beginning of the unraveling, but then he said, "Meanwhile, the leadership of the two caucuses, the Democrats and the Republicans in the Senate, moved behind closed doors to try to negotiate a compromise." Were you part of the group that worked on that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it would have been Jim McDermott and the leading Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, Jeannette Hayner?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If she was on Ways and Means.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ways and Means: McDermott was the chair, Gaspard the vice chair; Al Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Craswell, Deccio, Fleming, Hayner, Kreidler, Lee, McDonald. Was Dan McDonald coming to the forefront yet?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether he would have been. I don't know how many people would be on the sub-committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's more: Ray Moore, Owen, Rasmussen, Rinehart, Saling, Talmadge, Vognild, Warnke, Williams, yourself and Zimmerman.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know who would have been on that. It was just an informal committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it would be made up of at least some of these people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Only those people, I'm sure. So, it would have been McDermott and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Possibly Marc Gaspard?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think Gaspard, probably. And the Republican leaders would have been Jeannette and probably McDonald.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think he was getting pretty involved in budget issues by then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They weren't able to adjust, to come to any kind of conclusion?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, Seeberger says, "Negotiation lasted several days. The Democrats offered a compromise of a small tax increase, the Republicans, realizing they had the votes, didn't need to compromise." And that was that. The Republicans, with some Democrats, offered a coalition budget which had no tax increase.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Getting back to the explanation, there was a move to reduce from a sixty percent majority to a simple majority on that one time only. And they moved to do it for all the bills before us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently, they had the votes to carry it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** To do it. So everything was reduced to a simple majority on every vote taken after that time. Oh God! I can't remember that. I should. How did we get out of it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As budgets go, this was very hard fought and it shows the powers of the minority if they can stick together and peel off one or two from across the aisle. You don't get out of it, in fact.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We didn't adopt the House budget because that was more liberal than the Senate budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, it was even more of an increase. Seeberger says, "Now it became clear why the Republicans had agreed to reconsider the budget bill that had failed earlier. It was a brilliant parliamentary move. Reeds Rules, which govern situations not covered by the Senate rules, permit amendments only to the second-degree. That is amendments to amendments. The Democratic Ways and Means Budget had been offered as an amendment to the House bill. Since the coalition budget was offered as an amendment to the committee amendment to the bill, no further amendments could be considered."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that would be right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, does that make the budget into one sort of monolithic document? And nobody can do anything with it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's dead. You can start all over again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, that must have been pretty frustrating, I'm guessing, for you, the majority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we could start all over again with minute changes. But we had to contend with the Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You never seem to get control of it again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nope, nope, nope!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seeberger says, "It was a straight up-or-down vote for the coalition budget with no amendments." So then the coalition budget goes through the Senate and you can't stop it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the House?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then it has to go to the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** This is a House bill in the first place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. That's where things start to break down. The House would not accept it, of course. They would not concede. And then the Governor came out fighting. He still wanted his tax increase because he had a lot of programs he had really got on the soap box for.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He wanted things and we had the House and the Governor, even though we didn't have the Senate. And we should have been able to make it stick, but we didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They outfoxed you there. You were more or less deadlocked. And then Seeberger says, "All hope of passing a budget and finishing work during the regular session was lost." So you know you're going to go into a special session. We may as well just talk this all the way through, even though it gets us right out the session and into the special session. The Revenue Forecasting Council came out and said that there was actually a pretty good prognosis that the state would have twenty-million dollars more than they had at first thought. And

apparently that was just the last straw. There would be no tax increase now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a surplus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was money. But the Governor wasn't just taking that. He went all around the state talking to all the newspapers about how this was going to impact social programs. And he didn't want to back down. Now, did that cause some problems for the Legislature? You can't do much about this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, no. Governors can do anything they want to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you just ignore the Governor at this point? Or how does that work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think you ignore him, but you just let him talk. Because unless they are very, very persuasive, it rarely does much good. Dan Evans used that tactic all the time when he wanted something. And I don't think it changed very much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of hit the road and stir up the people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Stir up trouble, yes. Any legislator can do that too, but they only hit their own district usually, unless they're in a formalized leadership position. And even then, they don't always get coverage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would be hard...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's hard to combat. It's hard to win talking. And remember, I was chairing a committee and deeply involved with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering because the very thing the Governor's taking on here is not education, but the social and health services, which is your area. Now, did he talk to you in any way about all this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a little, but not a lot. He sent his staff person to come and talk to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it help your struggles within the committee, that the Governor was making such a public stand for social services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That wasn't when he was working for the work incentive program, FIP?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm not sure. One of the things, of course, was the Eli Creekmore situation. And they were trying to beef up the whole children's program in the face of that tragedy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had to strengthen some of the programs – the intake programs with child abuse. And there had been recommendations made that were actually on paper that had not been put into effect yet. And they'd been stalling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it takes money, I suppose.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Money, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That case would have added a certain emotional appeal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did, and we kept challenging and asking the Department of Social and Health Services why they hadn't implemented the program. Well, they didn't have the money. They were using HOMEBUILDERS, which was a program of social workers who went into homes and actually lived there on a twenty-four hour basis, or were on call, if there wasn't room to live in the home. Where they could find the things that were causing the problems within a home. It might be some little things that the family wouldn't even recognize. And they had been highly successful. They'd had about a ninety-five percent success rate. It was incredible! But that's when the home situation was not totally broken down, as it had been in the Creekmore case. They had been in to the Creekmore's and had gotten out; they said the family needed more intensive work. But they'd been there with the \$2,500 allowed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there's a lid on how much a family can access services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That they can spend. And they said there was an additional need to be met there. It was not met. The child was actually murdered and we were trying to get to the bottom of that. But everybody was attacking. And you can't solve a problem by attacking a

problem. You've got to get under, subliminally, and find out what happened and what you can do to stop it. Well, we realized that we had to provide more social workers per family and that it was about thirty-five families per worker. It needed to be down to about fifteen or less. And we got a little bit more money and got it down to thirty. Which wasn't much better.

But that was one of the things that did occur. We got enough money to hire on a thirty-to-one basis, when we knew that fifteen-to-one was necessary. Allowing some individual money for outside help. Now at this time, HOMEBUILDERS was only in about four counties in the state. We wanted to expand that into other counties. So there was money going to that also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand one of the issues with that family is that they kept moving and counties did not communicate with each other. So they would move into a new county that wouldn't realize they had this history. So it was like they were starting fresh with this family.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was no follow-through. No continuity of records, yes. Well, and Creekmore was part Indian, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that complicate things? Does that bring in a whole different set of issues and jurisdiction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, but the father already had a criminal record, I think. I think he had been cited. I don't know that. The family kept complaining, the grandmother kept complaining but nobody was responsible. One of the problems was that the social workers that were working on this case were the latest ones hired, barely out of college – inexperienced. They were green social workers. And nobody stayed working in that area. As soon as they could get out, they got out. Because there wasn't enough money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a really high turn-over.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A high turn-over and they were inexperienced and not knowledgeable. We needed our very best social workers there and

we didn't have them. So that was changed. And then we allocated a little bit more money – I think that HOMEBUILDERS got more money so that they could expand somewhat. As far as I know, it's all down the tube now; Ellen Craswell did that. You know so, what we did was only a band-aid. It wasn't going to solve the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And when you're working on these issues and you know it's a band-aid, how do you feel? How do you keep facing it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't do anything unless you've got the money. There's nothing you can do. You recognize it. It doesn't mean that you don't worry about it and fret over it. But, I don't know who you can get to move it unless you can get twenty-five votes in the Senate and fifty in the House, you can't change anything. It's very frustrating!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you wonder to yourself just how bad it has to get before people will recognize it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the only thing is that some people never recognize that. They recognize it when they can't get gasoline, or when they can't afford to pay for drugs, but they don't recognize it when a child is being hurt unless they have some experience with the problem. There aren't enough people out there that are exposed to it or know how serious or how bad it is. Unless you actually see it with your own eyes, you don't believe it. That is the one thing that the press can help with if they are willing, but they back down. They didn't go out on a horn and say, "Something has to be done and we expect the Legislature to do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The first headlines were replete with the horror of the situation and "How could this happen?" We should explain here that Eli Creekmore was a young boy about three years old who was murdered by his father. Besides the brutality of the case, what really stood out was the failure of society and the state in particular to protect him. His abuse had been reported several times by teachers, his doctor and grandmother, but the state returned him to his home – under the doctrine of keeping

families together – where he was then finally murdered. The story made headlines and rocked the state, leading to a re-evaluation of this policy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But then people forget. A lot of things have to take place. And we thought that with the new administration in DSHS – because it was still fairly new – that they'd come up with this whole new program. They had really done a commendable job of changing the way they worked – or had recommended that it be done – but it had not been put in place yet. But they didn't have the money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You say Senator Craswell undid this work? What would be her thinking here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She believed that the parents were always more capable of handling their children than social workers and she believed that the family was all-important and that the family would always solve their own problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even in these situations?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And later she came out with a bill that they did that very thing. Craswell handed over part of the money that we'd been giving to the homemakers back to Social and Health Services to handle. Well, they don't handle it very well. And she said that the safety of the child was important. What she didn't say is that the best interest of the child – that is a key word and that is what you have to go by. Not the safety; it's the best interest of the child, which would include safety. And we got into a jangle over that and the "safety" position prevailed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So "best interest" is actually a much bigger concept?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is a much bigger, broader concept, legally. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had used the "best interest" argument, who would decide what is the best?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A judge. You would have to take everything into consideration. It's a much higher standard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's stricter? And did this somehow threaten people's parental rights? Is that what the issue was there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and she claimed that parental rights are always being challenged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many people believe that corporal punishment is harmless, but it would be very difficult to imagine how somebody would defend what happened in the Creekmore case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't think she attempted to defend that. I don't think it was deliberate, in that sense. She just thought it was an aberration that didn't occur very often, although it was occurring quite often. And so, I can't explain, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered what it was like to work on these issues in such a tough situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they are always tough and the whole thing is when they went on and tried to do the Family Independence Program, they didn't take into consideration all the things that could occur. In other words, it was a great idea. It was Sugarman's idea and it was based on a program he did, I think he was the one who developed the program to bring children up to speed in kindergarten.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Head Start?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the Head Start Program. And so he figured that we would provide jobs for everybody, but providing the jobs – as I understood his program, and I'm sure it was true – that he intended to put unemployed people to work in retirement homes, nursing homes, and in child care centers, to provide the jobs. And I said, "We can't do that, it won't work. You can't put a person with an elderly person who can't work with people and who doesn't like elderly people and you can't put people working with children that have no sensitivity toward children. They've got to match." And I said, "If you want to go out and hire them on road crews to hold up signs or other jobs which pay a lot more money, then that's fine. But you can't put them in the lower job setting and expect them to work out and to be happy and to produce and not to be abusive."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not everyone is suited to that kind of work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So, that was where we clashed. So it was the same mentality apparently in which they talked about the people who abused children; it's out there, but they tried to impose the same standards on the Family Independence Program that they were doing with the foster care and the social programs for children. And it doesn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor appointed a task force on child abuse that year, growing out of the Creekmore case and similar cases. One of the intents, or one of the lessons, that came out of the task force was, as you say, to change legislative intent, to talk about the "best interest of the child" rather than some other lesser standards.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, the lesser standard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently, before that for a hearing on a bill that you had in, Senate Bill 5659, a lot of people came forward...

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Family Policy Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They gave harrowing public testimony about child abuse. What kind of impact does that have on legislators? I mean, were people very forthright, did they come forward?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes. We established a Family Policy Committee as a result of that, which actually laid the groundwork for the future programs for children and it's been very successful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that situation give you the arguments that you needed to push this forward when people came to testify? Would that, for instance, be followed by the press, given the emotional side?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know that. We just lobbied it harder, among our own members. And when it came out for a vote, they were all supportive, because it made sense. And I don't remember ever fighting anything or going to the press with anything. I just worked within my

own my caucus and the other caucus. You had to.

I remember one time on one bill, we learned there was a blood test that identified if a child was going to have Spinal Bifida, but most labs were not qualified to do that test. When a child was suspected of being born with the condition – if they were tested – they could immediately do surgery. They checked and if the spine was bad they did surgery and then the child was fine. So we decided that we should have several labs in the state that could do the test and I was accused of doing that in order to be able to terminate pregnancies. It was crazy! They tied that to termination of pregnancies because I was supportive of freedom of choice.

I finally got the physician at the University of Washington, who established the Spinal Bifida program and I got him to come to Olympia – our caucus was total on it – and so he go into the Republican caucus and he said, “Senator Hayner, your grandchild would not be alright if I had not operated on that child. It’s the same situation here.” That bill went flying through like gang busters. That’s what you have to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She had a grandchild with this condition?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, she had a grandchild who had apparently a similar situation. But I was not aware of any of this. I just needed help and knew where to find it. And the physician who was head of the program at the University of Washington, his wife lobbied for developmentally disabled children, as I remember. Cynthia Shurtleff. And she’s the one who told me that her husband was in charge of that program at the University of Washington, and it was through her that we were able to get him. He called and asked for an appointment and when they met in caucus, he recalled that case. There was something that had occurred with her grandchild. This is fact. And then I got it through the Senate easily.

I had another battle in the House, but eventually I got it because we convinced a male House member that it wasn’t an attempt to

terminate a pregnancy; it was an attempt to save children born with Spinal Bifida from a life of misery.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if they do this blood test early and know that the child has this, as soon as they’re born they can be ready to go in and fix it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They can be ready to go as soon as the child is born. Swedish Hospital is able to do it. There are only a few labs in the whole state that were capable of doing the test and diagnosing the problem. So we had to certify those that could do it, as I remember. And U.S. Senator Brock Adams got on the same issue and brought out the fact that there were labs qualified to do certain tests and he helped certify them. I’ll never forget that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you probably saved quite a few children.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were able to do it. I know that one of the priests at my church, Christ’s Church, had a Spinal Bifida child, but it wasn’t recognized.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it’s one of those conditions where time is of the essence?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, good work! Let’s get back to the budget for a minute. There were apparently several test votes that indicated that the Republicans had the upper hand. Several of them having to do with environmental issues, some to do with polluting Puget Sound, some to do with regulating septic systems and the votes went the other way. These were considered little notifications that the Republicans had seized control of the process.

One of the biggest issues that troubled that whole session was the lockout of Lockheed workers. Apparently the workers were willing to go back and accept pretty substantial pay cuts, but for whatever reason...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were locked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The company decided to lock them out and hire non-union workers. And so these workers were trapped in this sort of no-

man's land. The majority of the Democrats wanted to allow them to collect unemployment insurance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Unemployment compensation, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This issue tied up the session for weeks. People wore arm bands and there were demonstrations. It involved something like seven hundred workers, which is a pretty big group of people. The more conservative Democrats would not agree to the compensation bill. They wanted to limit it in substantial ways. Eventually, do you remember, did it pass?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember. I remember the incident of the locked-out workers. And it was, I'm sure, Lockheed in Seattle or Spokane. But I don't remember whatever happened with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that you were able to get them some help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we had to compromise to do that? Well, I would think that would affect the prevailing wage, also. That may have been an attempt to destroy the state Davis-Bacon Act which means that if it's a government contract, you have to pay the prevailing wage, which is an Act by the federal government. And then we have the state Davis-Bacon Act back in this state so the prevailing wage has to be paid.

It's still going on. They want to be able to use non-union contractors who do not pay prevailing wages – the prevailing wage throughout the U.S. – which would usually be higher than state wages. And I don't remember whether that's a part of this or not. Or whether it was just simply a lock-out issue. I suspect that it got resolved because I don't think that we hear about people being locked out any more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the aluminum company issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That one got resolved, finally. I don't know. What happens usually in a situation like that in which there's an impasse on wages, and there's a provision inserted in the budget saying they have to go into arbitration and mediation. Then eventually it becomes binding

and they have to accept. And so I don't know whether that ended up in a binding arbitration situation, I don't remember. The press never resolved that one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The articles that I have on it talked mostly about how it impacted the Legislature; I never quite caught the end of the story as to what happened to the workers themselves.

Another thing which certainly impacted your own district was the Puyallup Land Claims. These are all things that complicated the budget process as well as the struggle between the Republicans and the Democrats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That all got resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We've touched on the shifting river-bed issue, was that part of this settlement?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The river-bed changed its course and consequently changed all of the geography in the area. And people had bought property, not knowing they were living on land that used to be in the middle of the river. It eventually got solved with money. The Indians got – a lot of good things happened for them; they got some economic development areas, among them is the place where the new gambling boat sits. But the Indian claims problem in the Tacoma tide flats was resolved by an outside group of people working to come up with a program, which they eventually did. So it got resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, these are your constituents, did you have to take sides on this? Or did you stay out of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was totally out of it. I think Art Wang became a part of that negotiating team, who was also from the district. But how much he did or didn't do, I think that the major work was done by the attorneys who were hired, not the politicians.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's probably just as well, to make it a courtroom issue rather than a political issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had Norm Dicks sitting in as the congressman. And I think Wang, but as I say, it was the attorneys that resolved it.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that an issue that for you would be better not to get involved in, in the sense that you can't really contribute, you can't make people happy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wouldn't have had access to all the documents and knowledge or enough time to study all the issues. If we are hiring an attorney to do it, they are going to spend their full eight hours – or whatever – a day working the issue. And with us, with a million issues coming at us in the Legislature, you can't do it. You can do only the best you can with the things you know most about, or are most familiar with or have enough experience with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wondered if you'd be expected to take a stand, on one side or the other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It never came up. No one ever called me. "Do this or do that," or "Don't find this, or don't find that." No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In that case you'd probably be better off not getting involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You're kept clean. That's one thing, too. You never get so involved personally with your constituents. You know a lot of them and you listen to them, but you can't let it become personal. And it's easy, because you've already got so much to do, you just can't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though I'm sure certain stories would touch you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, an injured child, oh yes. Abuse, oh yes. And that gives you the impetus to really dig in and work, using examples. And people use such stories in lobbying the Legislature all the time. And it isn't just one person hearing it; it's a lot of people hearing the same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's the human impulse to use story as metaphor to talk about larger, deeper issues. I think that that is how you reach people. People can relate to that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It works!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It packages things in a way people can understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It works and that's the reason sometimes the Legislature has so much more knowledge than any press covering the issue, yet the press doesn't always get at the truth or tell it exactly like it is. Misunderstandings occur and people get angry when they really shouldn't, or should be angry with the other side. It happens.

Anything that occurred that was for the constituent, or something came to my ears that was so grossly unfair, I always dug my heels in and worked at, and talked to people about. And that's the way you make things happen. Because you don't make things happen very easily in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I mean, if there are certain stories with a lot of power behind them, can you take those stories and use that power itself to speak to an issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Stories carry it and if you're saying it, you know that probably every member of that committee, a broad cross-section, is telling their constituents the same thing. And that is the way you come to consensus on things, often. And if it's a highly emotional thing, it gets told. And I think, generally, legislative bodies come up with the right answers more than they come up with the wrong answers. And the only time they come up with wrong answers is because they want to and because it affects money, wealth, position, or power. So if you remain true to your own integrity, it doesn't happen unless you are misled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly sincere people can be on different sides of the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they can get misled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was reading about the budget battles. I was wondering how, within your caucus that was treated. The cross-over Democrats must have made a mess of a lot of people's plans on how that session was going to go. Ed Seeberger, in his account, said, "The highly developed facade of politeness in these citizen legislators was wearing thin. Persons passing the door of one of the caucuses could

hear shouts and cursing.” Was it pretty tense in there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would people be just so exasperated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I only heard McDermott actually swear once, and I think it was during this period of time. And I was shocked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He’s described in one newspaper article as “ashen faced,” with other signs of stress.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Controlling his emotions, yes. And I was usually on his side because I was dealing with social issues and there’s never enough money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, the budget went to a conference committee; the House version and the Senate version had to agree. And the House appointed their members and there was a real uproar when the Lieutenant Governor, who has the power to appoint members to conference committees, appointed, instead of two Republicans and a Democrat, as suggested by the leadership, he appointed a “regular” Democrat, you might say, a regular Republican, and Democratic Senator Tub Hansen who he thought represented the third point of view, the coalition point of view. Some people just flipped, I guess, when he did this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, a lot of us thought it was a good idea. I supported the choice. I knew him. We had worked together in caucus. Tub was a former cow-poke, a true western man who was a marshmallow at heart. I knew his wife. And he was a team player, even if more conservative. I loved him!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a pretty solid feet-on-the-ground kind of guy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was solid.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. There was this sense in Seeberger’s account that the Democrats thought this was their only chance and the Republicans felt double-crossed that he would do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the Democrats were supportive of it. As I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seeberger said, “Members sat stunned as the Lieutenant Governor read the names. It took a moment to sink in.” So, who did he speak for? He spoke for the Democrats who didn’t want a budget increase? Was that his position?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know. He would represent the eastern Washington perspective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans were apparently extremely suspicious of this; they did not trust this group at all. This was one of the last things done by Lieutenant Governor Cherberg. This was his last term.

One of the intentions in trying to push the budget through was that the United States Supreme Court was going to rule on the constitutionality of parts of the state’s Business and Occupation tax. And people were worried that this ruling would come down before you had a budget and it would rip the whole thing open. If the ruling went harshly, you would have a worse problem. As it happened, the ruling came later. But I guess it just hung over you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did, it hung. Whatever happens, he resolved the budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the end there was no tax increase. That’s how it came down. You did try. There was one opportunity for amendments and you, yourself, tried to put in some amendments. You tried to get some funds for inmates so they would return to their own communities of origin.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, rather than return them to one community – my district, which suffered a tremendous number. No. We thought they should go back to where they came from where they were getting support money from the state instead of being dumped into my district. You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would there be extra funding to provide some kind of program that would transition them back? Well, that didn’t pass.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, of course it didn't. See, Tacoma was getting all of them. And we had gotten no extra money for it. I think we eventually gave a little bit more money to Snohomish County because of the severity of some of the prisoners up there at Monroe, as I remember. And also the special sex offender unit, they got extra money. Which seemed fair. But they were dumping the mentally ill in Pierce County and I'd been observing that with Western State Hospital. I was really angry about it. I don't think I expected the amendment to pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I said other than that, we'd just have to give them money to leave the state. Put them on a bus. Give them a bus ticket. I remember the issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did get one amendment which helped your Displaced Homemaker Program. So you were successful there. I think there were some fifty amendments, and only a very few members got anything.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got it. Well, that program was proving itself to be highly successful, costing very little, because we used a lot of volunteers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was one of the very few little victories. The Journal said that at one o'clock, Monday, May 18, you began to debate the budget. You only debated it something like forty minutes, because it was kind of a done deal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was nothing you could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Senate passed a no-new taxes budget with an overwhelming vote of thirty to eight. You were one of the eight who voted against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a protest vote? You just couldn't go with it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Couldn't do anything about it. I couldn't even hold my nose and vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you wanted to be on record against it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Well, it didn't solve the problem of the Creekmere thing; it didn't solve the problem of enough additional homemaker workers to work with newborn children and their families or other programs in social and health services to solve problems of which I was aware. I wouldn't pass that, I wouldn't vote for that. I don't think I even signed it out of committee. Also, you know, if you vote no, you have a fifty-fifty chance of getting on a conference committee, if any.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was basically the Democratic leadership who voted against the budget. You were not going to go on record in support. And that is finally the end of the budget battle of 1987.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Terrible. The last big increase we ever got was through McDermott four years before that, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that takes up a lot of your energy. But you do, of course, have all your other committee work. One of the things that was a bit of a budget issue but which also touched your work on Human Services and Corrections was the firing of Lyle Quasim from the division of Mental Health.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was wrong and that he should not have been fired. He spoke up against the budget cuts. He was in charge of Mental Health, as I remember, which affected Western State Hospital. We were not providing enough money for mentally ill people and we believed it was wrong that he was fired for that reason. And we went on record as trying to prevent it. It didn't happen. You don't challenge OFM, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's unusual, isn't it, for somebody in that position to stand up and do what he did?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Challenge the DSHS Secretary, as he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was a pretty courageous stand on his part?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. He later became head of "Safe Streets," actually started Safe

Streets in Tacoma, which was a highly successful program. Still going. He was wonderful. Now, he's working as an aide to the Pierce County Executive. We later brought him back as the DSHS Secretary. Jean Soliz was working for me at that time of this battle as my staff attorney for Health and she was offended by his firing. We were all offended, Don Sloma, who worked for me, and Jean. And the first thing she did when she was appointed Secretary of DSHS was fire some of the people who had opposed some of the things that we were trying to do for Western State Hospital. Trying to save the land – they were on the other side – so they got fired. And the next thing she did was to call me and say, "How would you feel if I were to hire Lyle back?" And I said, "I would applaud you." And she did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you just hang around long enough, things work out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. If you're right – and he was right. There wasn't anything he could do about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's interesting. I didn't know what he did after that controversy, but I knew he eventually came back to DSHS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Even some Republicans were angry about that firing, but they were the ones who cut the budget in the first place which caused the problem. So, they didn't sit very well with me. But anyway, I know that Alex Deccio was really angry about that. I remember. And Shirley Winsley, but she was with us, usually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She's from that area, isn't she?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, she represents Fircrest and the area where the hospital is located.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the breaking issues for that committee, of course, was the AIDS crisis. AIDS had been increasingly in the news and that year the House created quite a list of bills to address the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing was being done about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, this is the first year you were really grappling with it. In fact, there was quite a raft of House bills. Only two make it over to the Senate and are referred to your committee. What kind of discussion do you remember having?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember that there was much discussion on AIDS at all. It was just sort of put it to rest till the next year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did people still not really understand what to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did not have any information on it. That's when I started hearing about AIDS and bought the book *As the Band Played On* and found out. Session was over, we were out of office and I knew something had to be done. But it had just come to light because the blood banks weren't recognizing it, no one was recognizing it, and President Reagan was just awful. If you remember that. There was nothing in the paper that would lead you to believe it could be an epidemic, that it was deadly serious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Looking back in time, when did people start to understand that there were more and more cases, that there was some kind of issue, some kind of crisis on the horizon? But there was also a lot of ignorance and not much science yet.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember anything in the press that impressed me it was urgent. I don't remember. And then as soon as it became urgent, we were out of power. By that time, I'd read the book *As the Band Played On* and it was becoming very evident that even the Center for Disease Control people were trying desperately to get money for research and were being denied. And then we found out how it all started, as I remember, in *As the Band Played On*, it was a Canada Air steward who flew world-wide, who was gay and he spread it. He had the Africa route.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly unknowingly. People didn't understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that's right. But it all came out that is where it all began, with one person,

and that it was not recognized. Even the Red Cross wouldn't recognize it in their blood banks. And they were giving it – giving blood to people. They would not test for AIDS, they thought it was a red herring.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was certainly a great tragedy; people didn't have enough science to understand the situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And what they were saying was "it was caused by homosexuals and they shouldn't be doing this," and it became a religious issue, which was deadly. And that's the reason, apparently, the President refused to acknowledge it. "They were getting what they deserved." God! But no, I don't remember reading much about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's just the beginning. It's really interesting to see how fast the Legislature goes, you know, from zero to sixty miles an hour on this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if it hadn't been for Alex Deccio we never would have gotten the bill, we never would have gotten any money for it. He was incredible!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, did he read the book too; is that what happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. I don't know. I talked to him about it but I don't know if he ever read it. But it was a well-known book and it had been written by this doctor who had discovered AIDS in Africa. He had come across it in a small hospital – everybody was dead, including the doctors. And he came back and went to work for the Disease Control people in Atlanta, but he couldn't get any money. He couldn't even get money to buy a new microscope to study it. He was on payroll to find a solution and he couldn't get any money and his employers wouldn't go to bat for him because of the President. You see, that agency is under the control of the U.S. Health Office. He couldn't get any money. And so it went on. It's an incredible book. Well, it's old hat now, but it's still an epidemic and we haven't totally stopped it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, no, in fact, it seems to be going through another phase.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, they're saying you can take medication to correct it; you can't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's pretty horrific.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But that battle, it kept zinging back and forth from the House. The House kept sending the bill back and we tried to get it and we couldn't get it; it would go back and it was really bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These very early bills addressing AIDS seem to have to do with how to report communicable diseases. There is one concerning how people can get insurance; there's one about dead bodies – actually, how to deal with people who had died of AIDS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing to stop the epidemic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was interested to see that the lone Senate bill having to do with making sure that people had health insurance was sponsored by five senators all from Seattle. Seattle seemed to be a little ahead of some other communities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, McDermott was the prime, wasn't he? I remember the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. And Ray Moore, Williams, Rinehart, and Talmadge. All from Seattle. It went to the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee and didn't come back out. So that year nothing passed, but the discussion began. I was wondering, were there hearings? Were people finally beginning to learn about AIDS? Or was it just happenstance that some people had read the book, or one thing or another? Was there enough of a groundswell?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the press didn't report much on it except they reported the negative position that "they are getting what they deserved," you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any kind of talk in the Legislature, along the lines of "We don't need to deal with this."?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not that I know of. No one brought it up. And if the bill came to committee, I don't remember even reviewing a bill that addressed AIDS. Either Don or Jean would have caught it if they felt that it was really something we needed to consider and apparently they

didn't. We didn't get the insurance bill. And so the Social and Health Service Committee really didn't get some of the things they should have gotten; it shouldn't have gone to Insurance, really.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they were getting at these issues in kind of oblique ways, it's interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whoever decided – and it was our people deciding it at that point – that some of the bills could go to Insurance rather than Health, whoever made that decision on the AIDS bill...I don't remember even having an AIDS bill. They didn't have a hearing. Because Jean or Don didn't think it was necessary and they usually were good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the time was not quite right, legislatively, at any rate. The profile was too low. Well, some bills seem to take years and years to come to fruition, but these AIDS bills, the Legislature was stumbling this year but the next year...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We picked it up. Because the health officers were beginning to recognize it. The Red Cross had finally recognized that it could be transmitted by a blood transfusion; they were actually killing people. And it came to an abrupt head because everything converged at once. The book came out, but no one read it at first or no one cared about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm always just fascinated to figure out what creates that sort of critical mass for a bill or an issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's everybody coming together at the same time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And sometimes the trajectory is really long and sometimes it's almost instantaneous. You had several other bills that you did manage to get that year. One of the bigger ones was Senate Bill 5857 about the impaired physician program. What brought that to your attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The doctors themselves. They recognized that they had some problem physicians on their hands who needed help and there was no way to help them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Within their own body, they had no regulatory authority to address this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had no money to do it, apparently. They were paying enough through their licensing act to get some funding, but to remove it from that fund into a fund to be used for this purpose, it had to be legislatively authorized, as I remember the problem. They wanted to be able to spend some money to counsel people, to get them into treatment and out of the practice of medicine until they could be treated. And so it was fairly easy to do. It wasn't a real tough issue. It was their own money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that makes it easier. On another front, you wanted to create a wellness program for state employees; what was that the origin of that idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got it, but it never developed. It was a good bill, but it was before its time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was part of this that the cost for medical insurance for state employees was going up and this was an illness-prevention idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we believed that people could help themselves to maintain good health and one way to do it was to create within each agency of state government a program advocating wellness, which didn't cost anything, except the employees could ask for additional time that could be made up. They could go out and run during their lunch hour, take an additional fifteen or twenty minutes, which they would make up at the end of the day and leave it up to their honor to do that. But every agency could develop their own plan. It wasn't mandatory but it was suggesting that each one develop themselves. The Director of Personnel, Leonard Nord, was very supportive. He's the one who really brought the idea to me; he thought it was a great idea. I thought it was nutty. But I said, "I'll go along with you. We'll try it and see if it goes over but I don't think that it will." Well, it did. It's helped people to help themselves. He was also on the State Employees Insurance Board with me. He was there for

years. Anyway, Leonard Nord was the one who brought the bill. It was an agency request.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To this day, state employees get wellness newsletters with tips on exercise and the latest about cholesterol and things of that nature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's good. But as a unit, every agency did not adopt the program. I tried find out what was happening just before I left the Legislature but nobody seemed to know. I didn't know there was a wellness letter going out. Well, I'm glad it's still happening. I think Jim McDermott also went on the bill. He didn't think it was such a great idea, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also did some work relative to midwives that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** This was a bill to regulate them. Did health insurance cover them at that time? It may have. Sure, it did!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly Group Health did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did cover them, because when we passed the midwifery with the State Insurance Board, it covered them on the state insurance. That's right. But some of the regulations were stiff. And in eastern Washington, where there weren't enough physicians, where midwives were being used quite a bit, they wanted the ability to do some things that maybe they shouldn't be able to do and I didn't like the bill. I thought it was wrong. But it passed. I think if I went on the bill, it was to kill it. Because I didn't like it, as I remember. And they couldn't respond – they couldn't answer that they could always have a doctor available if the baby was going to be delivered, and that was one of the criteria. We thought they had to be close to a hospital – that's when they were allowed in hospitals – if they were going to do this. So if there was an emergency or a setback, they could get the woman to the hospital. Well, this had deteriorated from that point. There were some areas of eastern Washington where there were not even hospitals close by and very few, or no doctors within miles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose in that setting, you'd be better off at least having a midwife rather than nobody.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was the argument. And so we reduced, as I remember, some of the regulations, made them a little softer. But I didn't like it; I remember not liking it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you still feel that way about midwives? I remember you were initially opposed to them in earlier days.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not so much now, because I think they are better trained now. I think that some of them are nurse-practitioners and that would not bother me at all. I always thought the doctor's assistants should be nurses, not people who had served in Vietnam who then became a doctor's aide. And I fought that. I didn't like that. I thought it should be a nurse who had all the qualifications and a lot of expertise. I've always been for the true professionals. If we're going to have para-professionals, bring them up better than they are. So that was the reason I didn't like the midwifery bill. Now it's fine. But some of them in eastern Washington were not qualified.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would this bill regulate midwives and bring them all up to a certain standard? That would have been one of the goals here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it does regulate them now, oh yes. But if we'd done that to the degree I wished we'd have eliminated some who were still needed because there was no one else there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could they be grandfathered in, where you keep certain people but hope that the next generation would have more training?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can't remember what we did. We apparently did grandfather some of them in who had more experience, but I don't think we grandfathered them all in. I can't remember the bill. I just remember my feelings on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just reading the title of the bill, there's no sense that you're not necessarily for this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I got my arm twisted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly allows you to have a greater impact on the bill language.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You can improve it. Well, as I remember, we improved it as much as we could. It passed. I can remember being thanked. And thinking, "Why am I doing this?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear! Of course, there is issue after issue, but I don't want to go through everything in that session. You do have special sessions – three, I believe. Different issues kept coming up. But at the end of the regular session, you were appointed to the Interim Legislative Budget Committee with Senators McDermott, Gaspard, Talmadge, Zimmerman, Lee, Barr and Nelson. What sort of things did you do on that committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We reviewed sunset requests on legislation. Before that, we were just reviewing – it wasn't a budget committee – it was to do a comparison to see if they were following the rules and regs of the Legislature and if they were cost effective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Following legislative intent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Intent, and if they were cost effective, and in other words, were they actually doing some good with the money that was being spent?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How big of a review process would that be? I mean, how many different kinds of programs would you review?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we were going through reviewing all the boards and commissions, for one thing. We could have gotten into other state agencies or one portion of a state agency. The Leg. Budget Committee had been in effect for many, many years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How big of a commitment would being on this committee be?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We met about once a month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like a large job. So you would have staff, presumably?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. There's a whole Legislative Budget staff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would prepare reports and then you would get together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes. It's a very formalized process. I got Don Sloma on the Leg. Budget Committee for my committee because he understood time elements and had done legislative budgets. I wanted someone who was familiar with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would the committee identify problem areas and then you would discuss them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the committee would not; the Legislature identified them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then the staff would dig out the facts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did anything come out of all of this? Were certain things eliminated or changed as a result?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, we eliminated some or changed a lot to make them more effective. We found out the State Board of Health didn't have enough money and was not effective. We were able to eventually get them more money to do the job that was required because it's a constitutional agency; it isn't statutory. It was a state agency which wasn't effective, so we made them effective by giving them more to do and giving them the right to do more things within their county and then have a state board overlooking them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a lot of legislation could flow out of a committee like this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. But it would always flow at the request of a legislator. We didn't go out and look for things. We waited for them to come to us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This sounds very essential and basic.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every public body should have a legislative oversight committee. There might be an agency or a commission of state government which had three people: a head and maybe two staff, or a secretary – who didn't have any



members. How could they be doing anything? And a lot of things we reviewed: one was the occupational therapy committee. What were they doing? That was set for review to see if they were actually effective, and was the expenditure of money an appropriate expenditure of money? Yes, and so it was not eliminated. The first thing we did was to check the prison up in Monroe to see if it was effectively carrying out its responsibilities. So we were able to do state agencies, boards and commissions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had quite a broad power.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very powerful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And these are certainly top-level people to be working with.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were usually senior members. Now they put freshmen on it, I think. It's kind of a boring committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's hard work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's hard work. I never wanted to be a chair of it, I know that. I never even wanted to be on the executive committee of it because it takes a lot of time. I'm more of a work horse, not a show horse, that was my reputation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though well-placed. We've already covered one of the special sessions. The first one, April 27 to May 21, was primarily the budget battle. I thought Senator Talmadge had a good description: he called it "like a never-ending tooth ache."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very expressive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. One of the issues – I couldn't tell if it had been percolating awhile or just came up then – was the Seattle Convention Center bail-out. That sounded pretty messy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was absolutely opposed to that, to using public moneys.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounded like if you didn't use public money – if the state didn't take it over completely – with the state public/private partnership, that the state would always be responsible for the most vulnerable parts of the

convention center and the private sector of the partnership would have the most assured money-making part.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the way it started out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They'd have the revenue stream and you'd be left holding the bag?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so the push seemed to be, "If we're going to have responsibility for the most vulnerable part, why don't we take the money-making part?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They always had their hand in our pocket, I believed, and I felt that that was wrong. And then they wanted to tear down the buildings surrounding it and do more. They did tear down a hotel, I think. I don't know what was there. It was an Elks Club or a Moose or some building that came down. And I thought it was wrong in the first place to spend public money to build something which was the brain-child of a group of entrepreneurs, who didn't want to be responsible for the financing of it. And they tried to get out of it. We finally made it a state building, but made them pick up the expenditure for any employees hired to work in the State Convention Center, so that we were not responsible for all the expenses that come with state employees. It was a very difficult, tenuous thing to do. I didn't like it and I voted against it. Everybody else has to handle their own convention center.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By the August 10 special session, the second one, Larry Vognild officially assumed Democratic Senate leadership position. And Jim McDermott retired from the Senate. He gave in his letter of resignation. That's kind of the end of an era there. He had been a big player in the Party for a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and a very responsible member. Very bright.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel? Did you know about this in advance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt sad. Well, I felt sad, but I felt that he was giving a lot more than he was getting out of it. I would never have tried to

keep him there; he was taking that job in Africa, I think, at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He doesn't go to Congress until 1989.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, but he took a job in the interim with the U.S. Health Department, and went to Zaire, which was substantially a better job than what he was doing. Apparently his practice wasn't great. He was a psychiatrist, you know, a medical doctor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure it would be very hard to have an active practice and do what he was doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And so I was sad. We were losing one of our best minds. You know, many of the things that Gardner did, in my opinion, were Jim McDermott's ideas when he ran for Governor. Because Jim got the start of the health insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean the Basic Health Plan?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A huge health plan. He got it through with a lot of help, but he did it. Jim did it himself. He also got the money for infrastructure, for building throughout the state of Washington – a method to pay for that. So that the counties could borrow at a very low interest rate on a competitive basis in order to rebuild bridges and sewer systems. He did that. He was an innovative person – much more than any other legislator, I think. He was always thinking of things to do that improved the state and helped people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, a real loss.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A real loss! A deadly loss. The other one still there was Phil Talmadge; he was the other innovator. He was still there and thank God for that! And after they both left, it really took the heart out of me. I could do some things myself, but I did not consider myself an innovator or a leader. I apparently was in some ways, but I looked to them. The things that were done for domestic violence were done by Talmadge. He really brought that issue to the Floor, where Jim brought health issues to the Floor and the infrastructure – buildings and

things which needed to be done. Talmadge did the other end, the other way, and it was great. They were great leaders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly was a strong team.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they were very good friends, in fact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A person like that, when they retire, does it change the whole chemistry of the caucus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. There's a big hole left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It almost seems like everyone else would have to rearrange their relationships after such a change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Look for new leadership, or new ideas. Collectively, you've got to come up with ideas because you don't have one person up there doing it. And usually there's one big idea out of every session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** McDermott was replaced by Janice Niemi. Had you known her before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was very good, yes. Janice was very good, very bright. She was a Superior Court judge. An attorney. No, she was good. We also had Pat McMullen, the attorney from Skagit County, who had also come over from the House. Both Janice and Pat – two pretty bright people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You gained a woman. The balance between women and men in the Senate, was that still an issue for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, sure. I thought we needed more women in the Legislature, but I thought it was hopeless. I was delighted to have Janice come over because I respected her. I'd worked with her when she was in the House on issues, mostly fetal alcohol issues. And she was good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that Senator McDermott did before he retired was make an impassioned speech defending the art in the Senate, the murals. Do you remember that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. And I didn't like the murals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was his message?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, as I remember, it was that we didn't have to really understand art, we had to just appreciate it. Oh, I don't remember what he said. But I remember he was very impassioned about it. And I thought the pointillism in the Senate chamber was a disgrace and I didn't like it. And I didn't feel that a medical doctor should figure he knew so much about art, I guess. I don't know! I didn't say that, but I got up and spoke against it. I said I have astigmatism and I have to put my glasses on before I could look at the wall up there because I would get dizzy and I said that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you more a supporter of traditional murals showing state history and that sort of thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was a neoclassical building and I didn't think that you really needed any murals in the chambers, you should put them out in the rotunda. That's where the Jacob Lawrence paintings were supposed to go. Those gorgeous things he was doing. And he refused – after we took the other murals out – he refused to sell his murals to the state. I had the working drawings of his murals in my office. They were huge and he'd finished the coloring in the up-above and he just had the sketches done in pencil below. They were murals about that wide...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** About eight feet wide?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, they were huge! I had one section in my office. It even had the artist's coffee stains on it, it was incredible! They were very valuable. I borrowed them from the State Capital Museum because we could have things from the museum and I asked for that. So I had them when I was Pro Tem. But the murals were supposed to go in the rotunda in the four corners. They were of the working man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Lawrence worried the same thing would happen to his work, that it wouldn't be preserved?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I don't know, he just said that it was wrong – as an artist. Jacob Lawrence was at the University of Washington. I think he taught there. I thought the murals in the House

were appropriate because they were sort of neoclassical.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Labors of Hercules?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, interesting, because most people were just inflamed about those images.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I thought they were okay. They were Greek and they had a neoclassical theme. They should have been kept. But I remember someone put sheets over them!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No end of controversy! One issue which hung over the whole session, as we said, was that the U.S. Supreme Court was going to hear a case on the Washington State B&O tax, whether or not it was constitutional.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It finally got resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. And fortunately in Washington's favor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did not hurt us at all. But it would have blown the budget out of water!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a working group with persons from both sides of the aisle. The only person really against it seemed to be Phil Talmadge. But I don't know what his position was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I've never even discussed it with him. I was not involved with it at all and I don't even remember – there is some way we can't collect B&O tax for companies which do business in the state of Washington but do not have a place of business in the state. I think that was part of the resolution, but I don't know just exactly how it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would that be like catalog companies that are headquartered elsewhere?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we've tried to correct that. That's never been resolved – out-of-state catalogs. I think it works the same way with the sales tax. If the catalog company has a residence in the state, like Nordstrom...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or Eddy Bauer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They can collect the state tax. But if they do not have a residence, like that kitchen group that is in Seattle now...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Williams Sonoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Williams Sonoma from California. They didn't have any place of business here – or didn't used to have one. And so you could buy from their catalog and never pay state sales tax. But if they have a place of business, you can't do that anymore. And so that must be the way it works, except there are some arrangements with various states – like Tennessee and Washington have an arrangement where we pay sales tax when we send things to Tennessee and they pay sales tax in Tennessee when they send things to Washington. So there's some type of arrangement that has been made with states but I don't know what it is. I should find out because I want to know. And I know American Express always used to collect sales tax. Regardless. Whenever my husband bought me a watch or something through American Express, he paid sales tax on it. I want to say I don't buy through catalogues in order to avoid sales tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but it's just one of those things you notice.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's one of those things that happens, right. And most of the places I buy from do charge sales tax. Although Neiman Marcus does not. They don't have a place of business in the state. But if they ever did, then we would pay sales tax. For instance, if I went to Portland and bought clothes at Nordstrom and used my credit card, I don't know whether I pay sales tax on it there or not. I don't know. But if you charge from a catalog, you do. If they have business in the state. So it's a very complicated procedure. And I can't explain it. I need to talk with Phil at length and find out what it's all about, or with the Revenue Department. They could explain it to me. I should have done it when I was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you've got someone of the caliber of Phil Talmadge dogging this, then that's probably a sign of something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's all you need. We worked well together because the things that I dogged, I dogged well and the things he did, he did very well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you were trying to cover everything, you would probably just fall apart.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You couldn't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have to focus. Another economic issue with which you may have had peripheral involvement was the Boeing take-over threat by T. Boon Pickens.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Texan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed to loom very large as a real possibility, that he would somehow do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, be able to manipulate and to raid the Boeing Company. We passed legislation that precluded him from doing that, but don't ask me what it is because I can't tell you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, it seemed very technical.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was very technical and we did handle it and he was not able to do it. But it has to be a particular item that the legislation is focused on. You can't just do general legislation to cover everything. So someone else could come in and take-over and we couldn't stop it unless we acted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm curious, were these rumors circulating or there was some activity and then Boeing got worried and came to the Legislature and asked for this protection?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They came to us and asked for help. And I don't know whether I was on the Financial Institutions Committee at the time, or not. I don't think I was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. But you were on Ways and Means so it may have touched some of your activities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The legislation was handled by the Banking Committee, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everyone took this very seriously, though? Was this considered a real possibility?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think it was Senator Zimmerman who actually called Pickens and asked him what the hell he was – he didn't, he would never have used the word 'hell' – what he was doing. I think that was what initiated all the activity on both sides. And Zimmerman mentioned that he was charming on the telephone. But he didn't trust him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure. The charming ones are the worst kind!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The charmers are the worst. Pickens sent some members a hand-signed copy of his book – I've got one – with a letter saying he wasn't a threat to Boeing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But was it your sense, notwithstanding his blandishments, that if he did, somehow, get control of Boeing, he would raid it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believed he would raid the Boeing Company and dismantle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And destroy a major industry?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, the major industry in the state of Washington. We depended upon them for our economy. It was a main force, upholding our economy. And that's the reason we've always known we had to diversify. But we've never been able to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Boeing's very large.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You cannot exist on one industry. And I think that's the reason Tennessee is in good shape. They don't have an income tax in Tennessee; they have a corporate income tax, but no personal income tax. And they have the same type of schedule we do. They have a high sales tax. You pay on everything there. I met with the Governor of Tennessee some years ago when I was back in Tennessee. My niece was familiar with him, she knew him and so she introduced me to him. We had a long chat and he told me the only thing that saved us in Washington State was our B&O

tax. But they had a corporate income tax and they have a sales tax. It's very high – it's as high as ours, and includes food. And he said it would never be taken off food, as far as they were concerned. But because they have a lot of industry there, they were able to sustain themselves. Whereas we were always behind the eight ball, because when we had a recession or a slow-down in the economy, the money did not flow in. It was always starts-and-stops in our economy. The ability to plan is not there, generally. And so, in my opinion, we do need an income tax. But anyway, he was of the opinion that we could never get rid of the B&O tax until we established a corporate income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would a corporate income tax be more fair? The B&O tax here is on gross income, not net.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He thought it was a terrible thing. But I know that because our states are so similar – our taxing proposals – we are one of six or seven who do not have the income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As we know through these discussions, it's been tried and it's not going to happen, apparently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the big-five major industries in the state really don't mind the B&O tax because they don't pay it. I mean, they do their configuration for the Boeing Company outside the state, and all of the interior of the planes – they send the planes stripped. And whoever buys them refurbishes them. And so they don't have a lot of that in-state and they get back through their corporate structure a lot of the tax that they do pay. So they don't mind the B&O, but they fight an income tax. They claim they don't, but they don't make much effort to support one. And so as long as that's occurring, we're not going to get an income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not any time soon.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Small business is going to have to support one – because they do suffer. The retailers and the grocers are the ones who pay the B&O tax, and they pay on gross but don't have large profit margins. But those businesses

which don't gross a lot, and can hide their investments get away with murder.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It makes for a pretty uneven situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It is very uneven. Grocers pay the bulk of the B&O Tax. But ultimately, the tax payers are the ones who suffer the most, the low income. Because their whole paycheck goes out in sales tax. It's one-sided. Even the very wealthy, who are fighting the proposal of the tax on estates, they don't believe that should ever be eliminated as the federal government wants to do. But they still don't want an income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of leaves the state hanging high and dry.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It does. But I was interested in that Bill Gates, Senior was adamantly opposed to the repeal of the estate tax. His family is adamant about it because they give large amounts to charity and to the arts and to the things that they enjoy which would otherwise disappear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a loss. When the B&O court case was resolved, you were in special session at that time. You were dealing with the Boeing take-over. You were also fixing the pay for nursing home workers. There had been some kind of glitch and you were called back to deal with that. And you managed to get chore services restored for elderly persons. So that was a productive little session.

There were some bills held over for lack of time. One of them was a bill you introduced on long-term care issues. You were beginning to pay attention to that issue this session, an issue which stayed with you for the rest of your career.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Chore services is a great part of long-term care.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, definitely.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And what we were able to do was to pay for the chore service. The senior citizens who were receiving chore services, and the developmentally disabled, were able to compromise and take a lesser share of the pot so

that it could be spread over more people. They were very generous. They worked with us on that. And I'll never forget how they came and said, "We will make do with fewer hours and you can spread the funding then more equally among others."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is unusual.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's very unusual.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's one of those "spend a penny, save a pound" kind of programs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We saved so much money by keeping them in their homes. And that's the reason we've suffered through these initiatives: people become penny-wise and pound-foolish. They are removing life support, almost, for people who were saving the state money, and it doesn't make sense. Selfishness, individual selfishness! It's the same thing with people who don't want to support schools by paying on a special levy because they don't have kids in school. Seniors generally do. They have had children in school and they have reaped the benefits of that. But it's some of the newly arrived and people who don't have children, or send them to private school, "Why should I pay taxes for schools, when I don't use them?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody uses an educated society, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course they do. I love that slogan the University of Washington had many years ago, when they were talking about taxes, they'd say, "The University of Washington offers something to everybody, whether you go there or not." I don't remember exactly how it went.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like that bumper sticker, "Education's expensive, but just try ignorance." Or something to that effect.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. "Everyone gains whether you attend the University or not." Anyway, it was a nice slogan and it seemed to permeate the state and it seemed to help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, and then you had another special session. You came back in October, and at that session – just a small note –

Senator Lowell Peterson retired. Jim McDermott, and now Lowell Peterson. With this accumulation of changes in the Senate, does the retirement of two or three long-time senators in one short period change how things were run?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not too much because we had new leaders coming in. The Senate had strong leadership up until a few years ago. Jim was a definite loss, but we had somebody coming in to pick it up right away who had been trained to pick it up.

Lowell had been chair of Transportation and we'd been able to get the last gas tax when he was chair. Everything stopped dead after that. But I don't think it was the retirement so much of those people – as the fact that the initiative process was becoming more and more powerful at the time. But we were able to hold our own against what they did. Like the time when Reagan became President, we lost \$120 million, right off the bat, of congressional aid we had been getting. But we were able to pick that up again, and so we had the money to do things. But with the arrival of more and more initiatives and the loss of some of our leaders, things were beginning to get tight. But we still had Talmadge who was a leader and led us up there again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This special session was called for a couple of reasons, one having to do with hazardous waste clean-up and one having to do with a teacher pay increase. I'm not clear about this, but apparently, the large districts and small districts were being treated differently. There was a wrinkle in the law and so this measure was to even out the appropriation, how it was being handled?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Part of the problem has always been that some school districts did not pass special levies, especially in rural areas. And the equalization plan was to help. That's the reason we first started collecting property tax at the state level. We didn't used to get any of the property tax money. We started when Dan Evans was Governor; we were collecting ten percent. But that's the way we were able to equalize education, through a formula. Now, it's

up to twenty percent, I believe. We kept increasing that amount and that is maybe what we did again, but I'm not sure if we continued that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In back of this, Governor Gardner was really pushing his educational reform package. He was on the stump and that effort just gets stronger and stronger as his administration went into its second term. There is some indication that the economy was improving, that the tax base was a little stronger; you were coming out of the recession of the eighties and things were going to get a little easier. There were some bills which passed now which had been stalled for a couple of years and I'm assuming things were easing up a bit. Some things were also, perhaps, passing because the Governor was becoming more of an activist. He started off a little slowly, many people felt, but he seems to be in high gear by this time. How much can an activist Governor push the agenda and get things done?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it depends upon the Legislature, what kind of a legislative body he has to work with and how well he's received, of course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How well was he being received in these sessions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would say very good. He had both houses of the Legislature. The Democrats were in the majority and that helped a lot. And also, he had a lot of advisors. I think that he was known to have hired more staff than any Governor in the history of the state of Washington. And that didn't hurt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good advice seems like a good place to start. So in your estimation, do you think he was finally finding himself? Was he on his feet, getting his message out there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. I think it was a period of less stress, let's say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly having a bit more money always helps people be more creative.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and people can get the things they want for their districts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that makes more people happy. One of the things that happened just before the end of that year is that Linda Smith won a special election and came into the Senate through a complicated series of changes: Senator Alan Thompson resigned to become Chief Clerk and Joe Tanner took over that seat and then lost a bi-election to Linda Smith. You had a shifting of the gears in that district. She became quite a force for her own agenda.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a sense of what it would be like to work with her when she first came over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very bad. She proposed issues, she distorted facts, and for awhile got her own way. However, she made so many enemies because she was not truthful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Knowingly untruthful? Or just excited about an issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. All I know is that she couldn't be trusted. She double-crossed me on something. I would never, ever have trusted her after that. She agreed to something and then stood on the Floor of the Senate and reneged. And so, she was a very, very – what am I trying to say? Destructive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was strongly supported in her district by a fairly new force in politics, what's been called the Religious Right. Did you see more and more of that influence in the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. But we didn't realize it at the time. That's another area in which she was not truthful. And nobody really knew – we were not sure of her. She seemed like a very nice lady.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was her day-to-day working demeanor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, she was a "yes" person. Always nice and always friendly and always stabbing you in the back at the same time. If I ever talked about anybody who spoke with a forked tongue, it would be Linda Smith.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, she cuts a real swath through the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She did. And she did something good. She got developmentally disabled zoning changes so that DD facilities could be built. At the time there were only two kinds of people who got special dispensation on zoning and one was garbage, and she got the ability to place developmentally disabled facilities, regardless of zoning. I had been trying for ages to get it for day care where it was needed, an exemption from zoning and I couldn't. That's where she agreed to my amendment, and then double-crossed me, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she have a particular agenda of items she wanted to work on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think she was anti-abortion, number one; but she cleverly disguised that with good works, supposedly. I can't put my finger on the things she did, but I know that she was universally disliked. By both parties, eventually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She does manage to get Initiative 601 passed. You were talking earlier about being boxed in by different initiatives; that is certainly one of the most serious initiative efforts and perhaps one of the first to really impact the budget process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's very complicated, although it wasn't as bad as it could have been. It did tend to control spending to a degree and apparently the money coming into the state, but we weren't hobbled too much by that. But with the future initiatives, we have been hobbled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's the first of what became many.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't like the idea of being controlled by initiative. We thought it was wrong, that you can't control a state budget by initiating the control of expenditures and intake.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is supposed to be a legislative function.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's supposed to be. And we're supposed to have good enough sense to abide by certain rules of budgeting. We have information on all the facts and programs which initiative



sponsors do not. Budgeting should be a legislative prerogative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that part of what alienated legislators from Linda Smith, that she actually spent a fair amount of time attacking the Legislature itself and its processes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Publicity. She was kind of like what's-his-name is now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who, Tim Eyman? But she was a legislator; she was attacking from the inside. Did that add to the pain? She was giving her point of view some legitimacy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, she was on the inside. Of course it did, because she wasn't telling the whole truth. She was insidious in the way she worked. And it caused a lot of problems for all of us because you never knew what was coming out next. And where Tim Eyman always said that we're lying, she, in a way, insidiously, said the same thing. That you can control. What she wanted to do – she did not want to control the budget in areas where she was concerned – as I believe it had to happen. She wanted to be able to expend money as she believed it should be spent, but she wanted to control everyone else. It isn't "what I do," it's "what I say." And I can't identify it any more than that. I can't remember all the things she did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You might not remember the instances, but her actions appear to have had a strong influence on your feelings concerning her and that is part of the story.

## CHAPTER 18: FUNDS FOR TACOMA DEVELOPMENT, 1988

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With Linda Smith's election, the Democrats slipped into the minority by one vote for the 1988 session, which changed, of course, everything – the committee chairmanships and leadership.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The new Republican leadership included Jeannette Hayner as majority leader, George Sellar as caucus leader, Irv Newhouse as floor leader, Hal Zimmerman became the whip and actually quite a long list of people as assistants: Emilio Cantu, Stanley Johnson, Gary Nelson, and Ann Anderson.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody became something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have quite a large group up there compared to the Democrats. And the Senate Democrats had Larry Vognild as your leader, and George Fleming, caucus chair, Al Bauer as the assistant leader, yourself as caucus vice-chair, and your whip was Rick Bender. A smaller group.

Several things happened, we'll step through them. One thing I want to note is that it was John Cherberg's last term as Lieutenant Governor. Were you aware that he was nearing retirement? Was there a sort of poignancy about this last term for him? He had been there "forever."



*Saying "farewell" to retiring Lieutenant Governor John Cherberg*

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't think he was ever going to leave. So nobody took it too seriously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand he was not feeling very well and things were kind of difficult for him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he wasn't. But he was still sharp and he still knew the rules and he maintained the decorum of the Senate very well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He could probably do it in his sleep.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. I think all of us – when it finally happened – were just terribly upset. Because he'd always been there. He was like Mr. Methuselah. And always ruled so beautifully. Always did it with grace. He was very gracious. And I know that he was in a turmoil inside sometimes. But he was always gracious. You never knew how he really felt. He never let on. I used to go in his office once in awhile and he would open up. I loved him. I think most of us did. And he always seemed to be friendly with the Republicans. You know, that was the one thing that he maintained.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seemed very even-handed. An old-school kind of guy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very. The Old Boys' Club, really. But still, you never felt that he was exercising the Old Boys' Club prerogatives because he was always gracious with women and women legislators – senators. So I don't know that anyone really took it to heart he was actually going to retire. Until he didn't run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been a bit of a shock, then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a shock.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You named a building for him. The Public Lands Building became the John A. Cherberg Building.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It seemed like that's always been there, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that at all controversial, to name a building after a living person?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, because the Republicans wanted to name buildings too, and they had people lined up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly no campus buildings had been named for people up until this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, John O'Brien.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** His came right after this. The following year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** John O'Brien was still living. No, it was such a natural. And I'm sure the Republicans were sitting back, waiting to be able to name buildings for their people. And now, I guess, there's talk of naming a building for a woman. They never have named a building for a woman yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They should name the Transportation Building after Julia Butler Hansen. I can hardly think of anyone more suitable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so, too. No, she's it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** John Cherberg served for thirty-two years. He was the longest serving Lieutenant Governor in the nation, I believe. And when he did retire after the next election in 1989, he was named the "Goodwill Ambassador" for the state by Governor Gardner. I understand he was very fond of foreign visitors and travel.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He traveled and made arrangements for travel. I went on two trade missions with him; we all paid our own way, but we all went. And he was wonderful. Even when he wasn't really welcome. I remember we went to Taiwan and we did not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan and they didn't greet us very warmly the first time. Then we went back later – not with Cherberg – but six of us went later and we were treated very well. But we couldn't get in to do a lot of things we wanted to do, although we saw a lot of the country. We were there a week and traveled all over Taiwan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe they didn't know what to do with you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know, but it was strained.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn't sound very comfortable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the second time was warm. So it was worth doing. And Cherberg always opened doors for us. I remember – I was not on this trade mission – I wish I had been – they were in Bangkok and they were in that silk store run by Thompson; it's world famous. Princess Grace and the King of Monaco came into the store, so Cherberg graciously introduced himself and then introduced the whole delegation and they all got to meet them. And they were delightful. As a tour guide, as a leader of the group, and as an official of the state of Washington, he could do that. He met with the editor of the paper in Tokyo when we were there. And he arranged for the Boeing Company to hold a lovely dinner for us in Japan where food was very expensive. He did things right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think he came from quite an ordinary background but somehow he grew into this role.

**Sen. Wojahn:** His wife was well-placed. Her brother started the Mason Clinic and her sister was married to one of the Weyerhaeusers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Doesn't hurt.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But even so, he did his own thing. And I guess the thing that always bothered him was that he was fired as a coach at the University of Washington. He could never get over that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that's a famous story. Well, he went on to bigger and better things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But he never treated anybody – he never tried to get back. If he did, it was sub rosa and you didn't know it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So smooth you never felt it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very smooth. He got mad at me once and I never even knew it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's an art.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember one time – Sid Snyder tells this story – that Cherberg did not

like a particular lobbyist; he hated him and he would never do anything for him. A bill came up that this lobbyist was pursuing – it was a bill that I wanted, not because of the lobbyist, because I wanted the bill – and when it got around to the vote it was a tie and Cherberg voted yes. And Sid Snyder went up to him afterwards and said, “I thought you couldn’t stand the lobbyist,” he said, “and here you voted to go with him.” And Cherberg said, “I didn’t.” And Sid is quoted as saying, “John Cherberg said, ‘Yes, but I didn’t want to tangle with Wojahn.’” I loved that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s good!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Another story: Joe Turner tells me, now that he’s with the News Tribune Bureau, that John Ladenburg is supposed to have said to him when they lost the vote on the McNeil Island Sexual Offender Unit “If Wojahn had been there, it wouldn’t have happened.” And Turner said, “I didn’t believe that.” So Turner went and asked Sid Snyder and also the chair of Human Services – the guy from Hoquiam, the sponsor of the bill – if that were true, and they said, “Yes.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that’s a legacy!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that’s a legacy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The dedication of the Cherberg Building for him was some measure of his legacy, too. And then the following year, saw the dedication of the Public Health Building for John O’Brien, who had served the longest term in the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And two years later, the dedication of the “News Shack” to John White.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes. But it wasn’t, I guess, until the Irv Newhouse Building was dedicated that the Republicans had their turn.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And now they’ve dedicated the Library Building to Joel Pritchard. So they are getting there. I agree, it should be even. No question. Joel was a wonderful man. He had his own interpretation of being Lieutenant Governor and presiding over the Senate, and he was funny. I kind of enjoyed him. Some of the others were offended, but I always liked Joel

Pritchard because he was one of the first ones out of the box on the abortion bill and women’s rights; he was wonderful! And he even came to me after we lost the amendment to one of the bills that would have outlawed guns – the assault rifles – and we lost it by one vote and he said, “If it had been a tie, I would have voted with you.” See, he was always right out with what he believed and he never changed. He was always there. Nobody could make him change. I was very fond of him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess with John Cherberg being there thirty-two years, no matter who served next in the office, there would have been comparisons.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would have been tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he had the confidence to be himself. He didn’t try to be John Cherberg.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he didn’t try to be; he was Joel Pritchard. And Joel was not particularly too much for protocol. But he was wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Strangely enough, John Cherberg was his football coach in high school.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s true!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there’s a kind of hand-off there. It’s a rather nice story. Strange connections, small world.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Joel played football?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In high school.

**Sen. Wojahn:** In high school, at the Queen Anne High School. I’d forgotten about that.

Well, what goes around, comes around. It’s more and more obvious, the older I get.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I hope so. So you were, in this session, caucus vice-chair, but in the minority. You haven’t been in the minority very often.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it’s tough. We didn’t like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a different strategy this year, then? How you were going to deal with things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don’t know that we ever strategized. Democrats were very democratic

and everybody got a chance to say anything they wanted to say. I always said what I wanted to say, and I was always firm in what I said. They didn't seem to pay attention, but they actually did, I'm finding out. They actually did. A lot of the things I advocated, or pushed, or didn't like, or disagreed with, they eventually came around. And so, it was alright, because we all got to say our piece and I said what I needed to say, which might not always have been popular.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that what you brought into the leadership, your firm convictions and your willingness to go to bat for things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And loyalty. I think that loyalty was number-one and I think it's a very strong trait of mine. Loyalty and the ability to talk straight. No double-talk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This group of leaders hadn't been together very long. Did you have to forge new relationships?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it came together very well. And Larry took over extremely well. He was used to negotiating; he'd been a fire fighter and he was very even-handed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Al Bauer is new to this leadership group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had supported Al for assistant floor leader against Bud Shinpoch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Stuart Halsan apparently wanted that position and had challenged Al Bauer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but he didn't get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He withdrew and so then did it all come together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think he could get many votes. I'd supported Al during the Bottiger years when Bottiger apparently wanted Bud Shinpoch and I supported Bauer. I remember I got up and made that big speech in caucus for Bauer and then Bauer told me later, "Well, I withdrew." He didn't tell me!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was it about Al Bauer that led to your strong support?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I liked his approach to education. I was totally with him on his educational areas. And I always backed him up on anything he pursued because he was the leader in that area. I had lobbied education when I worked for the Labor Council so there was no question I appreciated him and his efforts, and he never caved either. Al was very strong-willed, just like I am. We rarely clashed. We disagreed a few times, but we were nice about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that he was in the Legislature almost about the same length of time that you were.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Shorter time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, comparable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Comparable, yes. I was there about two years before he started and then I went to the Senate two or three years before he did, so it was about the same. And we always agreed, we always were friendly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You both had pretty extraordinary careers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true, and you know, we were both strong-willed. And equal – he won a few and I won a few. And I got back at him a few times; he was pursuing the separation of community colleges from the common school system and I fought that. Hard! First, I fought the establishment of the community college system and then I fought it when they put voc-tech colleges under community colleges. I really fought that, but we lost. One of the things I got back at him after he won was to raise hell in caucus because the first thing the voc-tech presidents did when they became a part of the community college system was to double their salaries! They were now "college presidents and deserved a pay raise." God, yes! And I never let them forget it. And he always would go like this...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You look like you are cringing. Hold up his hands in defense?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, he would cringe. So anyway, we both got out of the Legislature what

we thought we wanted, I think. He was still fighting for schools when he retired.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some write-ups in the press that the Democratic Party, when they lost their majority in 1988, would need to become more “centrist.” There was a concern about healing the breach with the conservative Democrats who had been voting with the Republicans and bringing your caucus back together again. That you would have to “be more sensitive to business interests” and you’d have to be more bi-partisan. Is that a message you felt was necessary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, we talked about it. We talked about it and I think we caused members to think a little bit more and the extreme liberals to modify their position somewhat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Democratic caucus shift to the middle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think they shifted, I think the spokespeople for the caucus were able to present more modified ideas when speaking with the leadership of the other side. And they were able to subdue, let’s say, somewhat the voices of the extreme liberals. Because I don’t think that the extreme liberals were all that vocal. And I can’t even think of who they would be. But they were there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Party always has a range of people and sometimes it has a stronger voice on one edge and then sometimes on the other.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. And they are not all liberal on all issues. I think that we were able to modify our positions and we were always willing to give a vote. We gave votes for tax increases with the Republicans when they were in control. They were tougher to crack to give us votes when we needed them to pass absolutely necessary legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were a famously united caucus.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. We had to give votes on occasion and we did. Al Bauer was always gracious about it. I wasn’t. He was. But I think they could always count on him to give a vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were other internal caucus issues. Apparently, Vognild had wanted Frank Warnke as Ways and Means chair, but instead the caucus chose Marc Gaspard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Frank was more conservative, I think, than Marc. And that may have been the reason that Larry wanted him. I don’t know. But when we got the leadership back, then Frank did become caucus chair, as Larry had wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Instead of chairing Ways and Means? A different leadership role. Ways and Means in not part of leadership, but it’s a very powerful position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would be ranking minority on Ways and Means.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this part of the rise of Marc Gaspard in the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Marc had had the same level of responsibility that I had. He’d chaired committees in the Senate. When we came over from the House at the same time, he got a chairmanship to Agriculture and I didn’t get anything. And he started in the House after I did. Buster was there when I was first there – Buster Brouillet and Leonard Sawyer. So Marc started after I did. I felt I should have gotten a chairmanship when I went to the Senate but they gave it to Marc and he had less seniority. You know, that was the Old Boys’ Club. But Marc was a quiet leader; he wasn’t particularly outspoken.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine, given that, he was a different type of chair of Ways and Means than McDermott?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Marc and I were co-vice-chairs on Ways and Means, under McDermott.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so this is just a step up for him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We’d both been vice-chair and it seemed logical that Marc would be the ranking minority because he – I think – had been in the Legislature longer than Frank. I don’t remember. Frank was in, then he lost, then he came back. So, I guess they were about equal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, when you lose the majority, you also lost some positions. Slim Rasmussen had been the President Pro Tem and he resigned and Alan Bluechel was elected in his place. And Sid Snyder lost his position as Secretary of the Senate and the Republicans brought in Gordon Golob, who seemed to be well supported by both sides.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was nice. Everybody liked Gordon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sid stayed as the deputy so he was still there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He stayed on and then he was always there until he ran for office and won election. So it was okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The House was still Democratic – actually was thoroughly Democratic with sixty-one to thirty-seven for the majority. Joe King was enjoying his second term as Speaker. Did you ever have any dealings with him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. He insulted me. I went over once to talk to him about a day care bill that Ann Anderson had, that would have disrupted good legislation and he wasn't there. He and Brian Ebersole were in southwest Washington on a speaking tour, so he wasn't presiding even. In the first place, when I said I would like to make an appointment with him as soon as he gets back, his secretary said, "Who shall I say wants to see him?" Yes, number one! And then when he did get back, he wrote me a letter and he didn't address it "Dear Lorraine," just "Dear Senator Wojahn, I will see you when the Senate takes up the bill on the children's initiative." There was a children's bill that they were all lobbying. We had tried and tried and tried, when we got to that order of business; they rushed over it and we were never recognized. I couldn't do it and so he refused to see me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was that like sending you a letter, "I'll see you when hell freezes over?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Absolutely. I gave the letter to Larry Vognild. I was so angry. I should have kept it. I meant to keep it, but I

know he did it. Evie knows he did it. From then on – and then he would come over and he would sit with the Republicans in the lunch room. And not speak to the Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the news articles at this time were lauding his rapport with Majority Leader Jeannette Hayner. They are calling it the "Joe King and Jeannette Hayner show." Was that part of his method of getting things done?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I don't know because he demanded absolute support on anything he wanted in the House, and they were afraid to oppose him. And I thought that was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he wasn't getting everything he wanted because a lot of House legislation was dying in the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of people didn't like what he was doing. What he did, if they didn't do what he wanted, he would jerk their chairmanship or threaten them. I know that. Ruth Fisher voted against the ophthalmologists – and her husband was a dentist – voted against the professions. She voted for the optometrists during that time. She never did that before. I know that he controlled them. And I went over and said to her, "How dare you?" Because I was always with the ophthalmologists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though Ruth Fisher doesn't strike me as an easy person to sway.

**Sen. Wojahn:** On transportation. And from then on, I would not have voted to confirm him for that job as a trustee at one of the universities. Locke wanted to appoint him to WSU. I said, "I will never" – and that's when the vote was tight, the last year I was there. "I will never vote for him. I don't respect him, I don't like his ways." And the senator, the Republican from Tri-Cities, Patricia Hale, she said that if his name were brought up, she would get up and speak against him. And she had some really viable things to say. And I said, "And I may get up and speak against it, too." I really did not want him! His name was still on the calendar when I left. It may still be there, I don't know. Unless the Governor withdrew it. It was crazy. He had a lot

of enemies. He wore out his welcome, I think, with his demands. And he was demanding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's better to work with people, not just command them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, you work together and you compromise to the degree you are able.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at how you worked that session. When the Republicans came in, they reorganized the committee structure a bit. One of the things they did was split Human Services and Corrections into two committees. They created the Children and Family Services Committee, which was chaired by Senator Kiskaddon and then they created a separate one, Health Care and Corrections, on which you then served as a member. You lost your chairmanship, of course. That committee was chaired by Alex Deccio, with Johnson as the vice-chair. And you just became a member. Was it hard for you to lose your chairmanship and just become a regular member?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it wasn't. I had started out in the minority and I always had the feeling that if I had a good bill, it would pass anyway. That I wouldn't be...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Shut out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And so it didn't bother me. I didn't like it because we weren't able to do the things we wanted to do, but it never really bothered me. Some of it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you told me that Alex Deccio was actually a very good chair.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I respected him. As far as a chairmanship, that didn't bother me a bit because he was a very good chair and I respected him and liked him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that would help. This was a very active committee. The year before you had started working on AIDS issues, but this is the year that you passed the AIDS Omnibus Bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that was totally done by Deccio.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** AIDS was a very volatile issue and there was a lot of misinformation and a lot of prejudice and fear and that doesn't bring out the best in people. One thing I thought was really interesting was it was said in the press, "This bill resisted punitive, reactionary solutions." Given the heat around this issue and the temptation, that was really an achievement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But, you see as chair, Deccio kept it level. And he didn't listen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Linda Smith was on your committee. How did she handle this issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was fighting it. She hated the bill. She would be one of the opponents of good legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Jim West? He was on this committee, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that he was as vocal. I don't think that he opposed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Stan Johnson?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Stan was okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there was Alex Deccio, Mike Kreidler, yourself, Stan Johnson, Jim West, Linda Smith and Janice Niemi. Was Linda Smith in a minority of one, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, probably. We didn't have any trouble getting the bill out of committee. We had trouble getting the House bill out of the Senate because of Linda Smith. The House bill came over. We passed it into Rules. It got on the calendar, and we lacked one vote. The other one was Lois Stratton. She opposed the bill. See, she teamed up with Linda. And Craswell opposed it. But the rest of us would be okay. Jim West may have gone with them, I don't know, but he wasn't vocal. Linda and Ellen were absolutely adamant.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be their take on it? How did they want to treat the AIDS issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Shove it under the carpet because it was "immoral." "It was caused by immoral people doing immoral things."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So just let them die? Forgive me, but that's what it would be in this case.



**Sen. Wojahn:** Let them die. That's all you can figure out. We had a fairly new health officer from Tacoma who was really dynamic and he was very impressed with how it was handled in Ways and Means. He was very involved with AIDS. He understood it. He was a former Army officer who understood the problem; he was a medical doctor. He said, "We have to have the funding, we cannot do it without." We had to get a handle on the situation. Otherwise, AIDS could be rampant in the state, an epidemic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the cases at that point just skyrocketing? I think that there were hundreds and then all of a sudden it really jumps up in numbers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Through blood transfusions, probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that get people's attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** People who had that blood disease – hemophiliacs – were being given transfusions. And they all died. That was what forewarned us. And I remember following his lead in really battling for funding. He had come to me and asked for help and I was impressed with his knowledge of the issue. Those of us on the committee with Alex who were for the bill used to meet in a subcommittee all the time – just a small group of us – I was the ranking minority at that time – trying to figure out how we were going to get the money when we didn't even have a bill. We wrote the bill – actually it was written with a lot of input from Janice and Kreidler – but we were all together, those of us who were for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought it was really interesting that it was an "omnibus bill," which I gather means you're going to take care of a whole bunch of issues and wrap them up into one bill. Is that a good strategy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was in this particular case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More of a holistic approach?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And I can remember sitting in the committee room, after a committee meeting when we would still be there talking

about how we were going to do this and what do we need to do? When we couldn't get the bill out of the Senate. Deccio said it needed more money and I know I made the motion to add – we had got \$15 million right off the bat, which we hung on the bill. And I don't know whether it ever came off the bill, and went under the budget or not. It could have gone either way. But I think the money was in the bill. And the House sent over their bill, we perfected it but we couldn't get it out of the Senate. The House sent over another bill, and we couldn't get it out of the Senate. The same bill kept going back and being passed. Actually, I think the money was in the bill. So they had all kinds of reasons to battle it, but mostly they were moral issues.

Lois Stratton was the one vote we needed. We couldn't get the bill passed in the Senate. We almost lost the AIDS bill. Deccio was chairing the committee and he brought it up five times. The House passed the bill over and the Senate rejected it; it was sent back to the House and it came back the fifth time and she was voting no. And we were close. It went on and on, and finally it was the fifth time and he was told by his caucus, "Forget it." And he said, "No, I'm going to try it one more time." "One more time." And he told all of us, "I'm going to try it one more time." And we couldn't get her vote.

I was sitting in Larry Vognild's office the day the telephone call came for her. We were meeting with Larry on something and he said, "Let's all get out of here." Larry said we had to leave. He ushered me out. And he went over and got hold of Lois Stratton and had her go back into his office and he didn't say a word. Then he went over and told Deccio to bring up the bill. Or told the floor leader to bring up the bill and alert Deccio. And then she came out and we brought the bill up again and she voted for it! Her parish priest had called her to vote for the AIDS bill. That happened! That absolutely happened. She had voted no, right down the line. It was a moral issue with them. It was a moral issue and "gays were immoral people" and that's the same approach as Slim Rasmussen used, I'm sure. And if Deccio hadn't

held out, we'd have lost the bill. It went on for days. And finally the last time it came back, he said to me, "I'm going to try one more time." Because I had been able to get money – not enough but some money – for the program through Ways and Means, it was in the budget. And he said, "I'm going to try one more time."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would be the voice that would tip her vote, her parish priest?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the voice that did it. I found out later that's who it was. And I know that when Larry answered the telephone, he knew, too. And I didn't know that this was going to happen. They had contacted him and I was not involved with it. I was in the leadership and I didn't know about it. They didn't tell you everything. And when she came out, she looked like a thundercloud, she really did. And Deccio took it up right away. It all was planned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I suppose it was pretty necessary, to keep it, you know, close to the vest.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was angry. And she came out and voted yes, the twenty-fifth vote. I'll never forget that as long as I live.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The one vote.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The one last vote. And they had gotten hold of her parish priest and he was on the telephone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And he was for this, fortunately?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Fortunately. And that's the way that we got it. And that is the God's truth. And it was the fifth time and Deccio became my hero! Because he did it. And any other one, except for Deccio or me, who never gave up, would have lost it. So we have a mutual admiration society.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was a huge achievement. And somewhat of a surprise to everyone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was tremendous! A citizen legislature can sometimes do the impossible. I don't ever want a professional legislature

because I believe it is too remote from the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The passage of the bill put Washington in the lead. It was a huge thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and we got enough money and we did it! He should always be acknowledged for that. They should name a building for him as far as I'm concerned. But I'll never forget that. It was really tight and it was something that you knew you had to do, but you couldn't. And Alex did it. He said, "We're going to try it one more time." I'll never forget that. "One more time." Everybody thought he was crazy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe he had an intuition.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He's a thinking Republican; he was not a lemming who goes for the group. No, it was tough and I will never forget that day! We were all aghast at the idea of bringing it up again.

But there was another issue which enters into this that becomes very key. The Legislature had nothing to do with; it was peripheral to this AIDS battle, but at the same time, there was a man in Tacoma who had a card table down on Pacific Avenue where he was giving out free needles. Remember that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A case was brought against him in the courts in Pierce County and it went before the Superior Court judge. At that time we were attempting to stop an epidemic because AIDS was becoming very, very serious. And so, before the case came before the courts – the case had been filed but hadn't come to court, the Health Department in Tacoma had a public hearing on the needle exchange. A lot of us went in to testify. I couldn't get back from Seattle that day to do it, but I would have testified that we had to have the exchange – that you do anything you can to stop the spread of AIDS, no matter how painful. People said that if you gave away free needles, it would just encourage people to use drugs. Yes, well, anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People are already using drugs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. The Health Department okayed it. And then it got into court. Pierce County was up in arms over it. The Superior Court found that it was appropriate to give away needles in order to stop the spread of AIDS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it illegal to possess clean needles, somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't illegal; there was no law on it. He was doing the exchange and it wasn't illegal, but the people were up in arms in Pierce County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, some kind of gray area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a gray area. There was no law. And so the Pierce County Superior Court approved it – said anything to stop the spread. This came up just after we passed the AIDS bill. Under the Spokane Court, about six months later, their Superior Court said it was illegal. So needle exchange had two decisions, which made them both null and void. It then went to the State Supreme Court and the Supreme Court upheld Pierce County. And that's how it became legal. And that's when the nation started adopting the practice. It went national at that point. So, we've changed a lot of federal laws. We changed the bacon bill first, that's mine. We have been a lighthouse state. Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington has often been a leader. AIDS, besides being an issue itself was, among other emerging issues, was one of the drivers in a new focus. A lot of people were starting to look at health care costs, and worry about them. There was AIDS; there was the fact the population was aging and more people needed different kinds of care and a more intense kind of care. This was when the long-term care issue begins to come up. You didn't get anything passed on long-term care that year, but there was a study of the trauma care system, at least. Were you involved in that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We did a bill which established the protocols for trauma and what needed to be done. Trauma has to affect five areas of the body so that the person is near death

in order to be called trauma. We passed a trauma protocol which was advocated by the Washington State Medical Association. Every state in the union adopted those protocols.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So another instance of national leadership? But this was the beginning?

**Sen. Wojahn:** This is when the protocols were passed. That was done. I wasn't the chair at that time. We had Senator Jim West from Spokane as chair of the Health Committee when we did the protocols. But that was later. I thought that was about 1990. But there had to be a way to pay for them. That's when we did the '93 bill through Phil Talmadge's efforts; it was through that bill – it would have paid for trauma. And then when that bill went down the tube, there was no money for trauma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that this was something that, for the rest of your career, you worked on so I just wanted to note when the word "trauma care" first appears in your record.

**Sen. Wojahn:** About that time. Yes. It all was there. The Washington State Medical Association actually drafted the protocols and we adopted them and they were really good. And they were then adopted nationally through the American Medical Association. Every state, I think, adopted them. Then we had trouble paying for it here. But that came later. But we had to start talking about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, Washington seems to be a little ahead of the curve. You were talking about health care costs using McDermott's basic health care plan.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Basic Health Bill passed and we provided funding for low incomes. We were beginning to see the results with the reduction of costs. Our Health Care Committee became a very strong committee, with both Republicans and Democrats – Deccio and me and West – we all were advocates. Jim West was a strong advocate, trying to get universal immunization. We got money provided and then it didn't get done. It's still a problem. People are not getting their kids immunized. We finally got a bill through that parents had to do it before

their kids could enter school. Then we tried to move it back when the doctors came out and said that a child by the age of two years, had to have twenty inoculations – I think twenty-one by now – that they should have. And they were free, but people wouldn't do it. People didn't take their kids in. So, anyway, it's been a big issue and we've all been focused on that. And it was good when we were focused on that. We didn't fight among ourselves as much because we were focused on necessary things. Everyone was copasetic because we all had our own issues. Deccio's was AIDS and Janice Niemi was very good with mental health. And so we all came together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that was accomplished that year is the Legislature abolished the State Employee's Insurance Board and created the Health Care Authority. Can you tell me about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was bad and it almost didn't pass. Janice Niemi was the one who did it and I regret that. Because the State Insurance Board was a very strong board, it was active and we were able to get good fees and good coverage. I was on the Board for a number of years. I was off it by that time, but we always had strong advocates. And because of that we were able to get pretty much what we wanted. We always got the money through the Legislature to do it. The Board was made up of the two universities' representatives and they were very strong advocates. The president of the State Employee's Union was the chair; there was a member of the State Board of Nursing on it. It was a very strong board and they disrupted that whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the thought behind abolishing it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was just a Republican move because they felt that we should not be paying for health care – the total cost of health care. We were getting really good contracts and we were paying for everything. And they thought everyone should pay part of their own thing. Well, it wasn't necessary for us to do that until they got their way. They were in the

majority and they were able to change the focus and establish an independent-type board. We kept losing money in the Legislature and they didn't want to provide the funding for it. So, we kept losing benefits and ever since then we've lost benefits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly the co-pays have gotten higher.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The co-pays have gotten higher; there were no co-pays at first. Everyone was equal and you had your choice of five different programs, usually. It worked well. It was a program which worked well, which was destroyed, in my opinion, by the Republican leadership who felt that we should not be paying for coverage for public employees. Or paying as much. And I regret that Janice Niemi was the vote that killed that, that brought that over. I remember Senator McMullen, who was on our side and didn't want that to happen, took her aside and tried to talk her out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was she thinking? Why was she for this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. I have no idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody was persuasive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't know. She was a friend of Jim West's. They both grew up in Spokane, and her dad was a doctor and I guess he was impressed with her. Because of Spokane, they would compare notes. I don't know. But I think that had something to do with it. But I've always regretted that. She's always been a good friend, but I always regretted that she did that. And I know that she did it. You may as well lay the responsibility, it happened. And then we got in where people who disagreed – I'm sure that the Association of Washington Business or small businesses were involved in the public employees' actions and were able to enforce their wishes. Since then we have not been able to get as much money for state employees' coverage; we're now losing money for our pool for our Basic Health Plan and everything is going down the tube. And it should not have happened! It did not have to have happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's always a work in progress, isn't it? You gain a little here, you lose a little there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a work in progress. And you lose a little there and it's going to be a long time before we gain it back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were many other health-related issues in which you were involved that I want to touch on. This didn't pass this session, but I believe was the first time you got on the stick for it, which was insurance coverage for TMJ.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tempon Mandibular Joint. Insurance covers every joint in the body...except this joint that forms the hinge of the jaw – if that joint goes out, it can affect your whole body. You get headaches – from your head to your toe! People have committed suicide because of TMJ. And if they take the padding out, that creates more problems. And it's the only joint in the body which isn't covered by insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because it's so expensive! And the insurance won't pay for it. We got a little bit done but not enough. Some insurance will pay for it to a certain amount. We got a little bit of help there. Not enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did a constituent come to you with this? How did this come to your attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** My daughter-in-law had it. But then I found out that there were a lot of people who had it and I'd heard of several suicides committed because of it. It happens to be a disability which occurs mostly with women because their joints are smaller. Some men have it, but women get it more than men. I was first alerted to it through my daughter-in-law. She's had three surgeries. They removed the padding on her jaw. She got it from having adult braces on her teeth, but her orthodontist in Tacoma tightened them too much and destroyed the joint, he didn't know what he was doing. They were going to sue but they had to drop the case, because a TMJ specialist she went to refused to testify against him. Then they had nobody to

testify. After they spent thousands of dollars on depositions with their attorney and \$20,000 for the surgery.

But no one was covering this; they refused to pay for it. Doctors were sending their patients to dentists, because eye, ear, nose and throat doctors didn't know how to treat it so they would send their patients to dentists to be treated and then because it was dental coverage and that wasn't covered by medical insurance, insurance wouldn't cover it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a nice little black hole in the system!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a black hole.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you fight for this. You gave speeches.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then Group Health accused me of helping a group of charlatans who were charging unreasonably high fees and still not performing. There was apparently a group of dentists out there who were specializing in TMJ, but they were charging exorbitant prices – more for a surgery on the joints than surgeons charged for open-heart surgery.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good heavens.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The insurance companies became inflamed over it. So it became a six-way battle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Messy, but really necessary for people's health and well-being.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. So we got some coverage. Group Health covered a little bit of it but they were the ones who accused me of being in the pocket of these dentists who were really creaming the people. And I didn't even know about these people. So I went before the group and said to some of them that the insurance people impugned my motives, that I had no idea there was such a group out there and if they would tell me about it, I would be glad to attempt to do something about it. "But don't accuse me of being a part of it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, what a hornet's nest.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator Peter von Reichbauer joined me on that issue. His sister-in-law had it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that seems to be the key? If you've actually met somebody with this, you get it, you understand it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You understand it. Everything I've ever done has been the result of somebody's misfortune. Or somebody's come to me with a misfortune or an idea for a bill. None of these are my ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Someone has to bring this to your attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My daughter-in-law went to the University of Oregon to have her surgery done by the chief of staff at the Department of Health Sciences there who was the most knowledgeable person in the whole world on TMJ; he was wonderful. But he could never come up to testify, he couldn't get away. He was too busy and couldn't come. Dr. Mark Carlson, who was his assistant, came. He'd helped practices in Tacoma and was on the staff of Allenmore Hospital. When I served on the Allenmore Board I was able to assist him. He made a remark to my daughter-in-law once, he said, "Your mother-in-law is sure a tiger!" Also, my husband and I had gone to a dentist who really understood TJM, Doctor Jankelson, who was treating people with it because doctors had come to him for help. He's a marvelous dentist in Seattle, but he got in bad with the University of Washington because they believed he was a quack. Well, he wasn't a quack. He was always expensive, but he didn't charge any more for TMJ than he did for anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that part of what was going on here, that this falls somewhat in a doctor's realm and somewhat in a dentist's realm? Nobody quite knows whose body part it is?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doctors can't take care of it; they didn't know what to do. They would first have the patient go through all these tests which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars because the doctor would think it was their back or their head – the headaches. But it wouldn't address the root cause. It was from TMJ. Apparently it

affects your whole body; it affects your whole bone structure. The nerves and the whole structure of your body. And so it would be excruciating. And we couldn't get help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, at first they would have to figure out what it was and then how to treat it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so when they finally figured out what it was, then they had to work. The doctors sent their patients to oral surgeons to either have surgery or they sent them to dentists to get a prosthesis made, a device to wear to correct the situation before it got worse. So they are in-between now. And I don't know what they've done lately to resolve it, but there are more and more dentists entering in that area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people have this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So that's the dentist part, to make the prosthesis to take care of it, that they can put it in their mouth at night. The teeth were misaligned and persons suffering from TMJ often grind their teeth and that causes the disruption. And there is some payment made now. It is a long surgery but it's not as long as some of the others. And there's a pain clinic at the University of Washington which is helping with that. There's some help out there for them. People who have been in auto accidents also sometimes get disjointed and they suffer. But they couldn't get it taken care of by insurance. Their auto insurance wouldn't pay for it. They were going to court because some of the dentists came forward to testify on that bill who weren't being paid for treating TMJ caused by auto accidents, but they sued and they finally got paid; they won. They have to take care of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is odd how the body is divided up into insurable areas and other areas aren't covered.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I put in a bill that they had to insure every joint in the body. Well, I tried to get around it by saying medical insurance "should cover every joint in the body," but the insurance companies caught that right away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you stepped on a hot one there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing you did get covered that year was insurance coverage for PKU testing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the testing of babies at birth for phenylketonuria.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't that a disease that if there is a certain protein present in the bloodstream...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that it causes developmental disabilities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then if you don't catch it, you have a very serious situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It saves lots of money to do the test. That's again getting beyond being penny-wise and pound-foolish.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This session you worked to certify dieticians and nutritionists. There seems to be an increasing need to regulate different kinds of professional work. Your analysis of the bill was that some people were calling themselves dieticians and nutritionists who had no qualifications.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, they were not qualified. So you certify them; you have to draw the line. There's a need to do things, but you have to recognize the difference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who had the education and who doesn't?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the only control you have over them is, actually, licensing, because you can withdraw their license if they cheat. But certifying is the first process that is good to do. I've always been supportive of the true professions. Because the para-professionals were moving in and charging so much. And when you serve on a hospital board, you know...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that line is getting blurry there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's getting blurry and people are beginning to raise their fees, so doctors had to raise their fees. The doctors got accused of being greedy when they had a right to do that. It's all there in black and white if people would just recognize it. I said there had to be a line

drawn between the true professions, where you have to go in and take state boards: engineers, architects, CPAs, medical doctors, you name it; they have to take state boards. The others don't. They can be licensed. So they are trying to get by licensing what they haven't gotten by education – the optometrist trying to become an ophthalmologist.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other medical-type issue you were involved in that year was permitting Medicare-approved dialysis centers to dispense certain legend drugs. So this would be right there at the center where someone's getting a treatment, they need, maybe a pain killer or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We expanded their use; yes, that was important. The ability to do that was started by a University of Washington doctor who developed the little prosthetic to put in the arm so that you could leave it in, so that they didn't have to put a new one in every time they went in for dialysis. It's now used for all kinds of blood procedures. They just connect the needle into the shunt. Dr. Belding Scribner. He was still working at eighty-six; he's probably retired or dead by now.

My brother had to have dialysis down in Denver and you remember our son died of Hodgkin's Disease. The University of Washington wanted all of his records, which we gave them. And it was there at the University of Washington, that the treatment was developed, partly through the death of our son, but through others, too. If they catch it in time, they can stop it; they can cure Hodgkin's. So I've been involved with medicine. My mother was the first person to live through a gastroenterostomy operation, where they make a new opening in the stomach. She had to go with her doctor who had been at the Mayo Clinic who lectured to other doctors about how they did this. It was done in Seattle at Swedish Hospital. So through all my life I've been involved with medicine – indirectly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had – indirectly or directly – a huge impact in this state on how health care is dispensed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I've been a good advocate. And you know, I don't always know what it is, or how it's done, or how to go about it, but you know there's an answer out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you seem to know who to talk to.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You talk to people and find out. And try to become as much of an authority as you can in order to do legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides these important health issues, children were still high on the legislative agenda that year. The Governor appointed a commission for children's issues and there was an initiative from the House. There was concern in the Governor's Office about child abuse, also felt by many legislators. There was concern about Child Protective Services; all kinds of bills were floating around but they were dying in the Senate. Primarily for fiscal reasons, it seemed. Senator McDonald was head of Ways and Means and he was keeping a pretty tight rein on the budget, as far as I can tell. That year, I believe, the discussion of the Children's Initiative took fire. Senator Phil Talmadge seemed to be one of the big voices. That's a long story, but can you tell me a little about where that idea came from and why an initiative? Why dedicated funds for children's programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, children historically have never had a lobbyist in Olympia to help them out, so they get placed on the back burner. A lot of programs get placed on the back burner because of lack of support from constituents and particularly from eastern Washington constituents who tend to be more conservative and really do not have the problems that we have – if they do have problems, they are pretty well disguised or they are not uncovered. And so there is no hue and cry for any assistance or programs for children. And consequently, the advocates for children's issues went to the initiative process, as I remember, to achieve their goals. They got the signatures and it was a referendum to the Legislature, not to the people. So it had to go the Legislature to be voted on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And why did they take that route?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because they figured that they could force the Legislature to act. And they preferred that, rather than going to the people. I think if they'd gone to the people, they probably would have gotten the initiative. But maybe they didn't start it in time and, of course, we have a much longer time to gather signatures for an initiative to the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, is that what the difference is? Do you need as many signatures?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know if you need as many. I'm not sure of that; I believe you do, but if it's to the Legislature, they have until December to get the signatures, just prior to the opening of the new session. So they had plenty of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose there's a difference too, between saying to the people, "Let's pass this law," versus "Let's make the Legislature look at this issue."

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the first place, in the Legislature it would have to find the money to implement the legislation. So, I imagine that entered into the discussions when they made the decision to go to an initiative to the Legislature. Because then they would have to consider it seriously and generate the funds to take care of the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was quite a bit of discussion about the notion that these would be dedicated funds and, I gather, that the wording was such that they would be dedicated "forever." Was that a problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Legislators do not like to dedicate funds for any purpose. It's distasteful to them. In the first place, because that fund can have a huge overage of money and that money cannot be used for anything except for the item which has been voted and consequently it's an undesirable way to go. And generally speaking, the Legislature has never liked to dedicate funds; none of us like to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because it locks you in?



**Sen. Wojahn:** It locks you in and the money has to flow into that fund and it cannot be used for any other purpose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read that it was felt the wording of the initiative was quite vague, that the money could go to “anything to do with children.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it would be never ending. And so if they had an overage in one program, they could move it into another program. I think that was a mistake. It should have been more direct and more aligned to a particular program. Like foster children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A dollar amount given, with inflation worked out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It should have been an escalating amount. It should have been as an escalator clause so that it could be moved up or down, depending upon the situation, which would make it more palatable to legislators, if we were going to do that. That’s one thing that I included when I did the proposal for a one-percent income tax for health care. That it could escalate up or down and could never exceed one percent. It could escalate within that amount and it makes more sense that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s got some flexibility?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have what you need but you don’t have an overage. And you don’t have the Legislature allocating money into a reserve fund against the will of the Legislature. Which has happened now with the Trauma Fund, because they put six million of that in a reserve and because it was overage, but they needed to pay back bills and now they don’t have it. So it should have been done, and I didn’t think of it at the time. They couldn’t take it for reserve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, how did you feel about this bill yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted it. I thought it was appropriate and I’ve always been aligned with social programs and especially with children – especially with sexual assaults and after the Creekmore case. There’s never been enough money to handle the program properly or hire enough intake workers. We had thirty-five

children to one intake worker, which is impossible to work. And so there was desperate need, and it was timely because of the Creekmore problem, where a child died because we were neglectful of funding a program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I hate to call someone a poster child for this kind of thing, but his is the name that resonates with many people, a horrific situation of neglect and mismanagement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** See, DSHS had already written some protocols which should have been followed, but they didn’t follow them. They were written during the time there was a change in administration, when Bud Shinpoch was named DSHS chair and hired Don Sloma to help him. They lasted six months and they were fired. That’s when those protocols were written to correct the problem, and they were never adopted. And that’s the question we always ask.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there’s a chasm there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There is, there is. And those who attempt to do anything, don’t last. The same thing happened with the assistant secretary in charge of mental health who was fired because he objected to the funding appropriated. That was Lyle Quasim. I remember we tried to help him; Senator Winsley and I went to bat for him along with Senator Deccio and some members of the committee of the Human Services who realized he was right and it still didn’t help. We didn’t have the power; it lies in the executive office. And so there never was enough for mental health for adults or children, sexually abused children, foster children; it’s all there. But the initiative was necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you must have had a certain resiliency to keep pounding at these issues. So, was there a general frustration at the end of 1988, when you couldn’t get things passed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you had the three conservative members of the Republican caucus who held everybody’s feet to the fire. And they were Senator Smith, Senator Pullen and Senator Metcalf.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On various issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** On various issues that dealt with social issues that they did not believe in. That it was apparent that they didn't believe in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It shows the power of the committee chair. There was an editorial in the Seattle P-I with the headline "Children at Risk get Short Shrift." It reads: "State Senate Republicans have offered children some scraps off the table but denied them meat and potatoes by refusing to provide money to improve severely under-funded children's services programs." Then they talked about Senator Talmadge's work in that area and his frustration and how that then grew into the work on the initiative.

One thing that you were successful with is you got some money for the HOMEBUILDERS Program. I believe you were instrumental in that particular effort.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I brought the program into existence; it was in existence in Pierce County but we wanted to expand to other counties.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This editorial says there were seventeen bills that the Senate approved which were what they called "heavy on good intentions." And then the editor went on to say, "But without money to provide staff and services to implement those recommendations, they don't mean much." So it was a bit hollow, I gather. They urged Republicans to join Talmadge in the effort to raise money. They urged Governor Booth Gardner to step out and get money. And he does really go on the stump for the initiative. Was he out in front on this issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the end, signatures are gathered and enough are signed that it goes to the Legislature in 1989 and we'll pick the story up there. There was one other thing that I want to talk about from the '88 session. The budget went to special session; it took a lot of back and forth before you were able to write the budget and very few people got things they wanted, but you managed to get some money in there for Tacoma, for the Union Station renovation.

That's quite a huge accomplishment. Could we talk about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we were worried about what was to be done with the Union Station and there was a group of people who were working hard to assure that it was maintained. We even had meetings and I can remember meeting with the Save Our Station Association and someone from the railroad, who was a former prosecuting attorney in Seattle, Chris Bayley. I knew him because we had worked together before. He graduated from Lincoln High School in Seattle and went on to an Ivy-League college and then came back to Washington. We met with him and a group of citizens who were supportive – among them was George Weyerhaeuser – from whom we were trying to get some money. They did finally sell the station; they agreed to sell the station to the City of Tacoma for one dollar.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It had been empty and unused for a while?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was recognized as one of the most beautiful stations in the country when it was built and it was just going to wrack and ruin. It was just dreadful. It was deserted and full of mice and everything, with broken windows and the NP sign was broken out. It was a mess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you give us the background of that situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The trains were still coming in and stopping there and American Express was still shipping by rail into Tacoma, before the new station was built out on Puyallup Avenue, but the station was hardly used at all. It was derelict – the plaster was falling and the windows had been broken. But we wanted to preserve it in order to save the City of Tacoma, because nothing was happening in Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The station was the traditional heart of the city, wasn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was the heart of the city but it was slowly deteriorating. The whole city was deteriorating. You could roll a bowling ball down Broadway on Saturday and Sunday and

not hit anyone. A group of City of Tacoma citizens – I was not a part of that – went ahead to preserve Union Station. They approached the History Museum and asked them to come in and to occupy a part of it. But first the city had to buy the station. Or someone had to buy the station in order for this to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the new museum idea was already on the burner?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was on the back burner. We wanted to convert part of the station into a museum. So the city and Burlington Northern made an agreement where the city would pay a dollar-a-year lease, wasn't it? Or an outright dollar for ownership and then the city would proceed.

I was on the Board of Trustees of the History Museum. John McClelland – who started Seattle Magazine and now published the Columbia Magazine and several newspapers: the Journal American and the Port Angeles and Longview paper – he was the chair and the president of the Historical Society committee at the time. I was one, there were nine of us. We debated about putting the History Museum there but the Historical Society wasn't interested because there wasn't any traffic down there. We knew that we had to move the existing museum, or at least build another one if we could, but moving down to Union Station where there was no traffic would create more dilemma than we already had. We also talked about going up to Point Defiance, out to the zoo, because people are going there, but they were not coming downtown. Like I said, on Saturday and Sunday you could roll a bowling ball through the town or shoot a cannon and you wouldn't hit anybody. And so we said no, and so the people who were organizing then went to Congressman Norm Dicks and asked him to help. Norm came up with the idea of putting the federal court there. And he finally persuaded the Feds to provide the money for the federal court to go in there and so they hired an architect to do the federal court and the parking.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you working together, or did that just kind of happen outside of your discussions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, we worked together and Dicks got the money for the federal courts. Then we decided that we would put the museum in the foyer of the Union Station. They were going to leave the museum up on the hill for just for research materials and storage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't the original museum over by the Stadium High School?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's still there. It was given to the state by the Ferry family, the Ferry Museum it was called at first, and then it was given to the state. I think that's the history. But the building was inadequate by then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you part of a committee? Was it an informal kind of group discussing these possibilities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an informal group, but it was quite a large group called "Save Our Station."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how long had this group been operating?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they worked until they finally got the federal government, through Congressman Dicks, to get the money for the federal courts. And then, we decided that if the courts were going in there, that we could bring people downtown if we were to decide to put



*Overlooking the City of Tacoma to Foss Waterway*

the museum there. What we had wanted to do was to put part of the display in the station and then put an entrance to the new building adjoining that, so that we could get from one to the other.

Well, the courts objected to that. They did not want the history museum to go into the main floor there – the display place. They said, “You can’t do that; we have to secure the building. You can’t have people coming in at all hours to look at artifacts.” And they wouldn’t let us go in there because of security and privacy concerns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So combining the court and the museum was not feasible?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The courts wouldn’t allow it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it is rather incompatible in some ways.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and the amount of space they had for security reduced the space – there wasn’t enough space for the museum to go in there. And we couldn’t put the museum in the basement of the courts; it wouldn’t work. And so finally we decided we had to go for a whole new museum. We decided to build a museum next to the station. And not connect it. That’s what we had to do, because the courts fought us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which turned out to be a wonderful thing in the end.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did, in the end it did. All this development took some time; we were

working on this for several years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had the museum board been discussing expansion or moving or some kind of new program before this opportunity with Union Station came up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. The board of the museum at first felt that we didn’t want to move downtown because there was no traffic downtown and no one would use it. And we talked about going to Point Defiance and building a museum. But we didn’t know whether we could even do that, whether we could get the money, and then John McClelland who was the president of the board at that time, who lived in Seattle, wanted to take it to Seattle and put it beside the Museum of History and Industry, down off of Montlake. And we said no to that. We decided that we would attempt to do a new museum and that we wouldn’t go to Seattle. That was the first big step of the museum board. And then came the throes of deciding where to put it. In the meantime, we did secure the Union Station for the courts and decided that maybe it was advisable to put it down there.

Ten years before that there had been an architectural group who came into Tacoma, called R/UDAT and they recommended that something be done to the Union Station, that a nice hotel be put down there, and that we do a convention center, the whole works. Well, nothing seemed to be happening. At that time Dan Grimm and I were both involved with R/UDAT because I was running for Mayor – this was back in ’77. Dan Grimm loved the idea of putting in an ice rink – that was my idea to put an ice rink there because the one in Vancouver was so popular. We talked about that and so from those conversations, from ’77, we decided that it would be a great idea to redevelop the museum beside the Union Station, since we couldn’t use the Union Station itself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in your mind, you were just waiting for some project for that area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted to see the whole area redeveloped because the waterway was there



*At Point Defiance Zoo, getting acquainted with a beluga whale, a new growing attraction for a growing Tacoma*

and I said, “We have to do it totally or what we’re going to get down there with the museum are a lot of McDonalds and a lot of fast food places. They will love it and we don’t want that. We want to reserve it for the future, for condominiums and for a park area for people to enjoy the water.” So that’s when it all began to evolve. It all began to evolve with the R/UDAT exploration in the seventies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s what’s wonderful about that process, that it allows that “big-picture” exploration to happen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right, and then from that came all the other developments and the funding came for it also. For the art museum that’s going in down there now and the condominiums are being built.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are achieving a critical mass of development.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. Critical mass for waterfront to be enjoyed by all the citizens. We wanted to put in restaurants down there and that’s happening. It’s all coming together, but it’s been a twenty-five year project.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s what longevity is all about.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to plan and planning is a process; it’s not a static thing. It’s a process and so from that first idea presented by R/UDAT we were able to pursue and to get the ear of the Legislature. We had to really convince Representative Helen Sommers that it was a good idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a tough economic year, people were not getting things. How did you do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was a work of a lot of legislators, it wasn’t just one or two. It was always working together. Dan Grimm working from the House and Ruth Fisher working from the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Brian Ebersole?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he wasn’t there. He was later. He did nothing in this area. It was Ruth Fisher and Dan Grimm and Ken Madsen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had Senator Marc Gaspard, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Marc Gaspard and me. I remember a lot of the legislators were very supportive, especially the Tacoma legislators. We did it.



*In front of Union Station, celebrating a Tacoma preservation success story with Representatives Dan Grimm and Ruth Fisher*

And I was involved with the board of the History Museum, the Historical Society, and on John McClelland’s executive committee. We did get the board to go along with holding a competition for the architect rather than just hiring one off the street. We could have hired the architects who did the courts who were local – any architect could do it, but we wanted the very best that we could find. I insisted that we go to a competition and the committee finally caved in and the executive committee decided they would do that. And then we talked about

funding and Representative Ken Madsen wanted to go for fifty- million dollars and I said, “I think we can do it for thirty-five.” And we didn’t really disagree because we both submitted our proposal independent of one another. So I didn’t know he was going for fifty and I was going for thirty-five million.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When did the board get the vision to build a really big museum? To really expand their program?

**Sen. Wojahn:** When we had the money. What the Legislature said was they would give us so much money – but not all of it – that the City of Tacoma had to provide some of the money. And I fought that because in the history of state building, the cities have never had to participate, but they forced that on us. So we had to raise five-million dollars on our own in order to even get to first base. That’s when Dave Nicandri appointed this committee; I think that Bill Philip from Puget Sound Bank was chair of it. And they were able to generate the five-million dollars that we needed. So, actually, I think in total, the museum cost about thirty-five million dollars, as I had projected in the first place, but we could only get about twenty-five. And then we jockeyed for a little bit more and we finally got it up to thirty, I believe, and then the five-million dollars was raised by local people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand it took more than one round of state budget negotiations to achieve this appropriation. You watched over this process with great care and attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did an open-concept museum; in other words, all of the infrastructure is exposed. We had to do that in order to save money, but it’s wonderful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It worked! It is a recognized style now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that’s a new look with architecture. And my husband had taught me that, if you have to save money, you don’t bother to cover up the super-structure, you leave it. You can see the pipes and structural beams and everything, we did it right. There’s an outdoor amphitheater there; there’s everything

that we needed. Even the arches of the Union Station were reproduced. I insisted on having a competition for the museum. Because that’s the way you get the best of all worlds. They’d hired an architect, who we were really disappointed with, for the Union Station – that goes beyond saying. Anyway, they got their way and they built the Union Station, which is not the greatest architecture in the world. But we insisted on the museum. John McClelland fought it. He wanted to take the museum to Seattle during that time. But we won and the board people said no. Then we had to get the state to provide the money for the museum and they said, “No.” It was hanging out there. And we couldn’t get it. Helen Sommers wouldn’t go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And she chaired the House Capital Budget Committee and so played a key role.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, so we fought, and then Senator Slim Rasmussen got into it and said, “Who wants to fix that old Union Station anyway and build a museum there? The railroad tracks go right along there, they come across Pacific Avenue and cross Pacific Avenue tying up traffic. And we shouldn’t put the University of Washington there either.” It got to be one hell of a mess!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could see the dream building and falling at the same time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Building up and then falling apart. Building up and falling apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it all has to come together because one won’t work without the other.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Exactly right. Then Senator Rasmussen brought Dan McDonald to Tacoma to show him why “we didn’t want to do that.” Why we shouldn’t.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was being a real nay-sayer?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a real nay-sayer. But then the Republicans got out of control of the Senate, and Senator Rasmussen died, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear. Yes, he died in 1993. Well, that’s one way...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And all this mess was going on and then it kind of got dropped. The newspaper had stories that said, “Rasmussen and McDonald say no,” and it was bad. That was the Tribune. But anyway, eventually, it did come together and I prevailed, along with Dave Nicandri. He was the director. And the chair, McClelland, caved in on the location and the board finally said, “Go ahead and get a competition.” By that time we had gotten some money. I think we got about twenty-seven million; it wasn’t enough. We finally got mooched up within the span of time to thirty, but the state said local government had to pay for five million of that. We had to raise the first dollars before anything else could happen. It’s the first time in the history of the state of Washington that local government had to pay for a portion of a public state building. I’ve continued to remind them of that. That’s the reason we’ve gotten more money for the University of Washington, because every time they try to tell us they can’t have it, I say, “Look what you did to us in the museum. We raised the five million dollars and we shouldn’t have had to!” And I’ve used that and it worked! We’ve repeatedly gotten more money for the University of Washington because of that argument, I believe, when I approached them. And I can’t prove it, but I know we got money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least some good came of it.



*With Dave Nicandri, Director of the Washington State Historical Society, in the Senate Rules Room, 1991, still working to support their shared vision of a state history museum*

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anyway, we got the competition and we got this gorgeous museum with the arches matching the arches of the courthouse. The architect was phenomenal! And then we put that big amphitheater out between the end of the museum and the station so they can have programs, with the seating all around. It’s beautifully designed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It really works, it’s a stunning building.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We finally decided, when the courts were going in, that it might be appropriate – if the whole thing could come together – the waterfront proposal with the condos, and the lots across the street were being rented to artists at that time – the old West Coast Grocery Building – they were lofts and artists were renting those.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that area beginning to lift out of its doldrums by the early nineties?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It began to lift out of the doldrums. And I wanted an ice arena there as part of the new compact down there with the condominiums. That didn’t pan out. And about that time, the University of Washington was looking for a place to locate and the Downtown Association prevailed and they decided to buy the land across the street from the Union Station for the University of Washington branch campus. So it was all coming together. And then from that, the University of Washington decided to go in across the street.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, we should back up a bit and say where the idea for branch campuses comes from. It had been percolating for a little while alongside these other developments?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was started in Tacoma. It was started by an economic development group in Tacoma. One of the bank presidents talked to me about starting a branch campus. And we had some meetings but nothing materialized. And then Dan Grimm became a hero because he spoke to a group of people in Fife and projected the whole idea. The University of Washington was not interested – we had approached them and they drug their feet; they didn’t want it – but

Dan Grimm suggested we bring in the Washington State University and that prompted the University of Washington to come forward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, a little competition there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A little competition to come forward and they agreed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Building branch campuses was a very new idea, wasn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was. We contended that people who would attend the branch campus were working people who could not afford to travel to Seattle, even for night school. The traffic was becoming so bad that they could not afford the time and would not have the energy to do that and that we needed to do a branch campus. But from that also came the branch campus for north Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For Bothell?

**Sen. Wojahn:** For Bothell, because they got into the act, too. "If you're going to do it, we're going to do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I gather there were several cities thinking about it or vying for the same pot of money. And Tacoma rose to the top of the list and Bothell got it too, but you were more organized, apparently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then we got more money than we needed. We were very organized. And the thing is, too, everybody was coming together; there was no one hero among this group. No hero. We all did our part. And as far as Ebersole, he came in later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He just shows up as active in a lot in the newspaper stories.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he became Speaker. He said, "Why not do the Union Station?" He did bring that up as a freshman legislator. And so he focused on that. So I'll give him that, that he did that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, it wasn't totally smooth-sailing because for a while there were two or three different locations where a campus might go. Groups were competing and had different visions for what it could do for Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and we had them all make suggestions. One of them, Jennie Otegard, who owned some houses around the park at McKinley Avenue, offered her properties to the University of Washington if they would build a campus there, which was a great idea. An old empty hospital located there had become a low-income retirement home and there was nothing that we could do about that, but there was a lot of land that Jennie did offer. They could have built the University on the hill, taking up all of McKinley Park, because it was a public park. And then, taking the houses that Jennie offered and tearing them down, and then incorporating – if we could acquire it – the former hospital, and then also land where we have a memorial which was done by the Tacoma fire fighters on behalf of Joe Otegard, her husband. He was a fire fighter, who died – not in the line of duty – but he died an early death and we had honored him with a plaque and a little memorial there. And that's at the top of McKinley Hill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that the area called the Hilltop neighborhood?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. That's a different neighborhood.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** My geography is a little weak in that area. I just wanted to make sure, because that was a neighborhood that was also discussed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But what we were doing is really going up into Hilltop, where part of Hilltop comes down and meets the downtown area. The Hilltop is above downtown Tacoma and so we were actually going up the hill somewhat. We have taken over a Japanese Christian church which was located there and that's now part of the University of Washington buildings. So we were going up Tacoma Avenue with buildings that maybe will reach up above that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was the argument, that if you put the campus downtown, it would help revitalize downtown.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you put it by Union Station, it would help that area. Or if you put it in the Hilltop neighborhood...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. It will enhance that area. They're at the base of Hilltop and so it is enhancing the whole area. Rasmussen fought it because the railroad tracks crossed right there and he took Dan McDonald, who was chairman of Ways and Means during that period of time, to show him how ridiculous it was to put the University there. But he lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because it was just too industrial?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He said it was stupid to put it where you had the railroad tracks crossing Pacific Avenue there and there was nothing there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, wasn't that the point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what we said. With the Union Station being redone, and the museum going in there, and there were a lot of warehouses down in that area which could be purchased, probably for a reasonable price – we didn't know. It made sense to put the University there. Besides it would enhance the downtown. And the downtown group was very powerful and they all worked together, so there were no heroes, really. Everybody was a hero in this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, in the end, that's where it was put? And it did help revitalize that area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did revitalize it and it is still revitalizing it. And it hasn't come into its own yet because some of the shops down there are not making it. The Northwest Shop moved into the Historical Society building but they finally left because they didn't get enough traffic and were not making it. A city council member started it; he had the Northwest Shop up in the north end of Tacoma and he went in there. He still has the Northwest Shop; it's still in existence, but he left about the Museum two months ago, so it's vacant right now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's always a struggle, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and then there was a very popular gift and card shop, the Connoisseur

Shop, which was located on North First and moved down, and they are struggling. The Connoisseur Shop was always there; my husband's office was right next door, so it all fits together. A dentist took over my husband's office because they needed more space, so Gil had to move out and the Connoisseur Shop eventually left and went downtown. This was all within a period of twenty-five years; it all changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like you said, it's not static. You have to keep trying and keep finding solutions and re-imagining the space.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a restaurant that has gone downtown, I don't know how successful it is, but it's still struggling. The Harmon Building is there and they are leasing space to the University of Washington, and there's a winery which has gone in the hotel by Harmon. They actually make wine there, across the street. But now it's all being torn up because of the inter-city railroad is going in there. A part of the connection...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sound Transit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** People can take the bus from downtown or they can park and share the ride into Seattle. It's all happening. It's all torn up now so that everyone is having more problems making it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess sometimes you have to take a step backwards to go forward.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually it's going to be the place to be. And all they need is a grocery store.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there are some magnificent buildings there and you've added some really great buildings. You were getting this critical mass.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The critical mass was coming – slowly. It's gorgeous down there! And that old building that was the utility – the motor-shop for all the street cars – the University uses it for the library. They've done the demonstration and done the whole roof line – it's an absolutely gorgeous building! And it was just a utility building. It's beautiful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that took tremendous vision. To see those buildings transformed and functional again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Believe it! It was as much my vision as anybody, if not mine totally. Except the beginning of it was not mine, the Union Station. And my husband said, "No." He was an architect, but then he came around, finally; he was retired by that time. But we finally got the works. And Dan Grimm was very helpful – he was now State Treasurer – with the University of Washington project. I started it, but he actually moved it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, everybody's got to get on board for a big project like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody came aboard and we raised the money and they honored those people who raised the money. They made Dan Evans Honorary Chair and he was one of the judges for the competition of architectural submissions. Weyerhaeuser and a lot of good people came forward with money. And are still doing it. And now we're putting in the Art Museum. It is going down there. Russell Investments are doing the Glass Bridge for the Chihuly Glass Museum. It's being paid for by private donations, through the Executive Council for a Greater Tacoma. George Russell is the one we retained in Tacoma with his international company, Russell Investments. Anyway, he got the idea for the Glass Museum and the Glass Bridge and went internationally to raise money for that – Indonesia and all these countries where he manages pension systems – and that's all going in now. It's incredible! And at the end of that street was the Old Croft Hotel, where my grandfather lived as an old retired railroader; it's now part of the place where the new museum is going in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's wonderful!

**Sen. Wojahn:** The old Croft Hotel was torn down and then I got the money on my own out of the General Fund for the Sprague Building which is now owned by the United Way – that was my money that I got. So the whole complex has my name all over it and I know it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a great satisfaction! That was a derelict part of town.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Mayor – the former Mayor, Ebersole, he didn't do anything when he was in the Leg. He fought the Sprague Building, but I got that money. And I got it! All the buildings. And they are all related.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think it would work half as well if all were pieces were not in place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Sprague Building was an old, old building which was retained and now the community college core is stationed there. It serves as a public service building; United Way wanted the building and we were able to save that for them. Now they have all the resource people in there who work with the public. They are all non-profits so the rent is kept reasonable. There's one room which is reserved for people researching foundation grants and applying for trust money for non-profits.

The only thing is the Court should have been designed much better. I mean, this is me talking. It's very functional, it works, and it looks okay, but with the Sprague Building they just gutted the inside but retained the structure. After I got them a half a million or \$650,000 for their part, the United Way was able to sell their tax credits to Pierce County Medical for one and a half million dollars, so they actually got two million dollars out of my work for the Sprague Building. Nobody acknowledges that, but they know. And now it's all coordinated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think being married to an architect made you more sensitive and knowledgeable about these issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course! I was only knowledgeable through osmosis, but I knew good design. Gil worked with a firm in Seattle when he first started as an associate architect, when he actually passed his boards, on the first initial Bellevue Shopping Center. They did the Crab Apple Restaurant. It was beautiful. All that's been torn down, but Gil and Bliss Moore and Mary Lund Davis were the initial architects for the original Bellevue Shopping Center.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were conversant with architectural terminology and values? And the way architects see things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. That was the reason I knew what to do. And I knew to hold firm on a competition because then you can go international. They had Japanese firms and others competing for this and they had to narrow it down to five they selected to compete.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who was the architect in the end?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A fellow by the name of Charles Moore, out of Austin, Texas. He's now dead. But another firm he partnered with will do the University of Washington buildings. And they are doing other buildings in the city. They may be doing the Chihuly Museum building. And one of the old brewery buildings – it's just as decrepit as hell – but he's been able to sell the tax credits and he's restoring one of those buildings up on Hilltop. It's incredible; it's all happening!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tacoma has so many wonderful old brick buildings.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, we saved the Albers Mill, but they are fighting it still. They are trying to tear it down. We've got to keep that mill. It's an old oblong building and, architecturally, it's perfect. You can't do anything wrong with an oblong building. It's perfectly square, perfectly simple, and it can be done. But I don't know. I'm having some problems, but we're holding on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you're still fighting these fights?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, but I'm just one among many.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well certainly, but I'm sure your name has some weight. You have a good track record.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It has had with the City Council. Because I've done things for them. And I've never asked them for anything. I never even sent them invitations to my fundraisers. So it's alright.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, those are great legacies.

**Sen. Wojahn:** These are accomplishments. And I take my fair share of the credit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nothing like brick and mortar.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I've proven that. The brick and mortar of the Sprague Building, the brick and mortar of the History Museum, where we got the thirty-five million dollars that I asked for. Everybody kids me and says, "That's what you said we needed, Wojahn, and that's all we got." And they said, "You won." We tried!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I can remember the meetings where they would have the architect standing there and John McClelland standing there with the Board of Trustees and Dave Nicandri and I would say, "Thirty-five," and Madsen said, "No, we need fifty," and the architect's eyes were lighting up, and then McClelland saying, "What?" and all we got was thirty-five, thirty – we had to provide five. And that's still not fair, still not fair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it didn't stop you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I threw that back at the chairman of Appropriations when they were trying to take away some of the Historical Museum money – not from the building, but from some of the programs – to give it to a fossil museum which wasn't even built yet. Fossils were being found over around Republic and Helen Sommers wanted to take some of that money away, and I said, "Don't you dare. You did it to us once; don't do it again." And that's all I said and it didn't happen. So I don't know what persuaded her, but they made up the fossil museum and I would have supported it, actually. But not by taking away from the budget of the museum they needed for programs; we have to have money for programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, a museum without programs...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And now the major museum in the state is the one in Tacoma, although there is one in Spokane. But the Washington State

Historical Society has the Columbia Magazine for which John McClelland underwrote the cost of publication, until he turned it over to the museum; and he is always there, supporting with his money. Always there. When they had the party for me when I retired at the museum, John McClelland was there. He's wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what it takes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. And if you do for them, it's give-and-take. You do what you can. And you insist, and you're nice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds like useful advice. I meant to ask you, there was one more piece about the branch campuses which was controversial. I don't know how close it came to derailing the whole idea, but some legislators and some other people felt that money should go to the community colleges and not four-year institution branch campuses. If you were going to spread colleges around, they felt that community colleges system should get it. One of the most articulated arguments about the branch campus issue was not just where to put it and who should get it, but which system should get it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I was never part of that. The community colleges were already satelliting, which they shouldn't be doing. They were sneaking money into the budget to satellite. They were springing up and we could not afford them in the first place. We were having all part-time teachers because we couldn't afford to hire full-time teachers and pay the fringe benefits. Tacoma Community College was branching and Pierce College was branching and the junior colleges were branching all over the state. And we couldn't afford that; we needed four-year colleges.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was there a different sense of priorities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was always that competition between the two and there always will be. I have always been supportive of the four-year institutions. And I've felt that community colleges, while needed, that we do not have a population to support them. They are

supposed to support the community kids; we don't build dormitories there because of that. Now, they are coming in and talking about building dormitories at community colleges; that's crazy! The community college should only support the community in which the families live.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like they are transforming into something else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are trying to. They all want to become little Harvards. And we've almost destroyed the voc-tech schools. That was another thing that was very bad. Apparently it's working out to some degree, but we had outstanding voc-tech schools before that in the state. We had two in Pierce County which were outstanding, Bates and Clover Park. That was a move started by Ebersole which we fought desperately, Rasmussen and I, because we thought it was a mistake. We could always send the high school kids to Bates and to Clover Park for part of their day so they could learn a trade rather than wasting their time in high school. They could take the basics they needed in high school and then transfer to a tech school to get their technical training. We've destroyed that. The high schools don't want the voc-tech schools. They were owned by the local school districts and we controlled them. We always wanted them in Tacoma, but other districts didn't want them. And because they wouldn't pay for them, they didn't get them. One was started in Whatcom County by the school district and they just used buildings they had available to them. They had a good one. And Lake Washington Voc-Tech was a great school. They were doing fine and we destroyed them. We made them community colleges and then all of the voc-tech presidents doubled their wages – because they were now “college presidents.” This happened! And I fought it. I'm offended by that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting how you align with some legislators on some issues and then fight the same legislators on other issues. Sometimes you didn't work well with Senator Rasmussen and at other times you teamed with him, like on this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the reason you never make enemies. We worked together. You have to do that. Some people became enemies; I sensed their animosity because I was very positive. But I never really disliked anybody. I didn't trust a lot of people, but I didn't go out to make enemies. Ted Bottiger taught me that, he said, "You have to have twenty-five votes for anything you want and don't go around making enemies, because you will never get the twenty-five votes."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a pretty solid lesson on how it works.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He taught me more than any other person. He's a lovely man. We didn't agree on lots of things, but he was a good teacher and he was a patient teacher.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people just have that knack. Did he have other gems of "how to do it?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was always telling me what to do! And I was generally listening and objecting some times, but he was a very good mentor. I can remember getting his vote on something that I never expected to by just glaring at him across the room. He had just come on the floor and didn't know what was going on and I looked at him and motioned either yes or no, I don't remember, but he finally got the message. It was on the abortion issue and it was important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He could feel your eyes boring into him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and then he voted the right way – with us. It happened! Phil Talmadge taught me a lot and I taught him a lot of things. We worked together, and Ted was really good and I guess they were the two people that I really trusted. And Jim McDermott. I knew Ted from working with him when I was a lobbyist. He was a legislator and he would carry some of my bills that the labor movement wanted. Then when Phil came in after I did, I gave up my seat on Judiciary so that he could have it, because I was not an attorney and he was. There was no

room for him, it was all made up. He was great. He was probably one of the most influential legislators we ever had. He picked up all the work on domestic violence I had attempted to do and was flunking out on. And the bills on stalking.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All those are legal, judicial issues. So that would be the committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and child abuse. Phil picked that up.

## CHAPTER 19: TAKING CARE OF HEALTH, 1989



*Still serving on the Committee on Rules with Senators Paul Conner, Al Bauer, Irv Newhouse, George Sellar, Jeannette Hayner*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The next session in 1989, the Republicans still had a majority of one. You served on the same committees as last session, but again, no chairmanships, of course.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm still on Rules, but I don't have a chairmanship.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And on Ways and Means. The Republicans were really pushing through a lot of measures and those were two committees where you could, perhaps, have some influence in reshaping things or stopping things, if need be.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Stopping things from happening and getting something you wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did those committees work for the Democrats – for yourself – during

this era of your minority? Did you have any power at all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. The only power I had at that time was through people with whom I could work and consult. Phil and I always worked together on things. We sat together in Ways and Means, always. And he usually carried the ball because he could argue. I'm not a good debater and I don't attempt to be, never have been.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe that skill comes with legal training.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it helps, yes. And then there are those who don't know what they are doing who do it anyway, you know! Whatever, but we were able to prevail. But we never prevailed in Ways and Means on anything the Republicans didn't want because we didn't have enough members and it was stacked that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was it like to sit there and see favorite things not pass or be taken back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the Republicans were pretty careful about what they went after and they didn't touch the hot-button issues like abortion. They stayed away from that. So they did their thing to the extent that they felt they could. Let's put it as carefully as that. And we didn't lose out entirely; they listened if it was appropriate or if it was incumbent upon them. If they needed a vote from us to get something passed, they listened. Ted Bottiger would always give them votes; our caucus always gave them the votes they needed to pass things that were really important to the people of the state. And Al Bauer was good; he was in a border town and it was very painful for him to do this, but he did. And so, there were those of us who would step over the line and go with the other side. But it was always understood that we had to do it, that it was imperative. So it was never held against you, is what I'm saying.

The only cross-over vote that was ever held against me was when we needed economic development in the city of Tacoma and I stepped over the line and voted for that. One particular member of our caucus, Jerry Hughes, couldn't stand a member of Governor Spellman's cabinet – the Republican agency head for Tourism – and Hughes didn't want any votes going to support his program. But the fellow was assisting economic development which would have benefitted Tacoma, so I voted for it. And Hughes never forgave me. He got even with me and killed one of my bills because of it. He was missing for the vote on the Displaced Homemaker bill, but eventually it was resolved. And he is no longer there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's kind of personalizing legislation. If those two committees weren't the most effective for you, you certainly did a lot of work on the Health Care and Corrections Committee, even if you were just a member and not the chair.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We all agreed; it was a good committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That year you covered several things. I'll just go through them, not necessarily by priority. You worked on several mental health issues that year. There had apparently been three interim legislative committees which studied various aspects of the mental health system and came back with the conclusion that the whole system was broken. There was no coordination in the programs; there were just too many people being dumped into hospitals; there were all these holes in the system. Some people were getting no care at all. The report said, "There were current estimates that there were over 250,000 mentally ill adults and children, but the system was treating less than twenty percent of those in need." That's a lot of people and a lot of pain and chaos of untreated mental illness. There was seemingly no continuum of care. They talked about people having a psychotic episode going in and getting, I guess, drugs for it and coming out and then disappearing again out of the system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had no coordination between the mental health institutions and the local communities either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were big holes in the whole system. Senator Niemi pushed through Senate Bill 5400, to take care of some of these issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Fought it all the way through the Governor, because he opposed it, too. She was wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you describe that bill and what she did there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She said the money should follow the patient and that there needed to be coordination between the patient and the care they got. And so she was able to project her proposal, which eventually was adopted, but the Governor fought her and I know she had conversations with the Office of Fiscal Management over the cost of it, but eventually won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So was this a total revolution in concept? Instead of being institution-focused, it was person-focused?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we were able to establish half-way houses for mentally ill people. She found a hotel in Seattle, down on First Avenue which was converted into a half-way house. We toured that and it was working. People who were living in the community could go there for medication or help if they needed it and it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So much more accessible? Is that right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The funding, I gather, she wanted it to come through the communities rather than from the state-down and have it be county-based. How did that work? Did the state then give counties money? Where did the money come from?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The state did contracts with the counties and gave them the money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the care and the administration would be closer to the ground, so to speak?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The community.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that successful?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it probably was until the money was no longer there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose that's the danger, if the state gets into a crunch and doesn't give the money...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did have the money, up until the initiative which destroyed the source of community money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If communities have to come up with this money themselves, where would they get it from?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We gave them all additional taxing authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. But is mental health then in competition with roads and all the other things that counties do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But then we gave them additional sources of money. The money from

the car tabs. That's what Eyman's initiative destroyed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So counties didn't have a lot of ways of getting money, so they had these little odd fees and taxes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every once in awhile we would give them a little bit more taxing authority and because of that, King County is now up to about a nine percent sales tax – because of the additional taxing authority they were given to do these things. So when we couldn't give them the money, we gave them additional taxing authority. I don't know whether we required a vote of the people; I don't think we did at that time. They could do it with an inside levy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does care become regionalized with some more wealthy regions giving good care and some less so?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so, I think it was pretty well distributed. We usually based it on per capita. Another thing, too, the people who were using the two major mental hospitals, when they were released from there, they were staying in those communities. And yet, we were giving their home communities money to take care of them and the counties were spending it for something else and letting Tacoma and Spokane take care of the mentally ill from the whole state – which we couldn't do. And so this eased that situation and gave the counties more money, but they had to keep the mentally ill in their own communities. They are still getting funded to a degree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly in this era, the late eighties, homelessness was a huge issue and the understanding that many of the homeless are mentally ill and the relationship that exists between the two issues was in the newspapers every day. There were all kinds of consciousness-raising articles which described this connection. I was wondering how much discussion there was about the connection these problems had with each other. If you solved the mental health problem, would you also solve a chunk of the homelessness problem?



**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. And we did contract with counties to take care of the mentally ill and the developmentally disabled. They could use the money however they needed to do it, either through half-way houses or for other programs. Before all this happened, when the person was released from the hospital, they would have had a social worker follow them, to get them situated into the community in which they were going to live and make connection with the local mental health people so that they could always get care. And if they couldn't get their medication, they could get back to the hospital.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some kind of lifeline there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then it changed so the communities were given their own money to do what they needed to do and to provide some funding on their own to do these things. That was the whole issue, the state did not want to give up any money to this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But surely there must have been savings if fewer people were in the big institutions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, in the first place, they could rely on the communities to raise some of the money themselves and we gave them a little additional taxing authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because more groups were doing things that worked for their communities, did some creative ideas flow from this? Because you had more variety of approaches?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. There were several mental health groups organized at that time. There was one organized in Lakewood – I can't think of the name of it now – and so they came forward and generated new ideas. I don't know how much they did; I didn't follow it that closely because it was off my shoulders. But what's happened now is the local governments are not getting enough money to do the things that they need to do. People are going to fall through the cracks. The safety net is not there. And we never should have closed Northern State Hospital. They still get dumped in Western State and at the same time we were losing our resources and property at Ft. Steilacoom where

all that land that was given to the hospital for mentally ill people is been taken away by local government for other purposes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, was that part of this issue? The very next bill I wanted to talk about is the Disabilities Land Trust Bill that you pushed. You maintained these trust lands were being kind of frittered away.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Western State Hospital was losing the revenue. That was a hard-fought bill for you. Currently, the state had no idea how many acres of this land were being used for the intended purpose, or so it seemed, that there wasn't even basic knowledge of what was going on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They were trust lands and trust lands should never be given up. They could be leased out, but never given up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Over time, parcels were just lost?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Those lands were still in trust but they're slowly losing the use of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Should it have worked like the forest land for schools, where you were supposed to get income from them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted all the trust land to be put under the Department of Natural Resources, but they didn't want it. So part of them are under DSHS and still remain under DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because a lot of them are urban? That DNR didn't want them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They said they had nothing to do with timber or natural resources. Although at Ft. Steilacoom, there is a stand of timber, it's not big enough for them and they don't want it and they won't take it. And there's also the problem of the contaminated soil because they had farms out there. Well, I don't think the contamination from cow manure would be contamination; it would be fertile, I would think. They would never accept the responsibility and I fought that when Jennifer Belcher was there. She didn't want it. There was a lake on it which we could use. We could take a portion of that land and

build on it and sell it for development around the lake, for God's sake. It's still sitting there and slowly being taken over by Pierce College. And Pierce College should never have gone in there in the first place because we bought one-hundred and fourteen acres out at Puyallup for the college and there are only a couple buildings out there. And only two buildings at Pierce College in Tacoma; it's within two miles of TCC and it's stupid, but I could never get it back. I tried to get that taken away, given back to the state and have the buildings there relocated – they are portables.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your bill fail because too many powerful interests didn't want this, or what happened there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Senate understood, totally. The House would never understand or wouldn't listen. And we never could get the votes. The Senate passed it several times, but in the House this Carrell, who doesn't know what it's all about, fought it because it talked about Ft. Steilacoom, which is part of his district, and he didn't bother to find out what we were trying to do. Senator Winsley knew what we were trying to do; she fought him but he stopped it. And he has stopped many good programs from happening. Like when we did the "Becca Bill," but didn't get the money for it, so it isn't working. You don't do something unless you have the money to back it up. You're doing no-law laws and I hate people who fight for no-law laws because they don't work!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just an empty gesture?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That disgusts me – and I've been disgusted with some members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you fought for that one but yes, it's true, you didn't get it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was never resolved. I wanted it for the mentally ill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another area of health care that needed attention was what was happening in the rural areas. There were a lot of bills to do with that in this period.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, in the first place physicians won't go to rural areas. And we had

to accommodate. We even permitted hospitals to have – what do they call it – swing beds, which could be used for nursing home care. And they are doing that. The federal government permitted us to do that and collect Medicare money for it, but it could only be done in rural areas. I tried to get that advanced into urban areas, because we needed the same thing here, because at one time we were over-built, but the hospitals now don't really seem to have enough beds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting how it gravitates back and forth.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did permit the swing beds – I think that was a bill I sponsored – in rural areas so that they could incorporate a nursing home as part of the hospital, but they each had to have their own administration. The administrators for the hospital could not administrate the nursing home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are quite different things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And the federal government acceded to that and permitted us to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This had been a growing problem for several years, and then finally in 1988, there was a rural commission on health care which did a big study. Out of that seemed to come at least eight bills to deal with rural health care: training, cross credentialing, some projects to try to get funding for hospitals. Maybe you could explain it to me. One of the bills exempts rural hospitals from the "certificate of need" process. Could you describe what that would mean for a rural hospital?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, a C. of N. would relieve them of having to having to go before DSHS to get approval for any kind of expansion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that kind of an onerous process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a very complicated process. It has to go through the Department of Health now that they are out of DSHS. But we permitted exemptions for the rural areas. We

removed the C. of N. for them so they wouldn't have to go through the costly process of getting certified.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So to just make it easier for them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Make it easier. They didn't have any money, anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was contentious, though?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they moved to remove it totally and I'm not so sure that it's doing what it's supposed to be doing. It's hobbling things from happening. At one time, with the C. of N., the hospital could not put in an MRI to do magnetic imaging so doctors had to do it. It should have been in the hospital which would be shared by other hospitals instead of having free-standing facilities done by doctors. Some doctors banded together themselves to do it but didn't get enough business and so they went under.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's very expensive technology. So only economies of scale would make that possible?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very. And every time anyone wants to add a new item, they have to go through this lengthy and very extensive process to get this Certificate of Need and then they can be denied after spending substantial amounts to get it. The thing is, Tacoma General now wants to put a small hospital up around Covington. There is a hospital there, but there's a need for another one to take care of that community and they can't get the C. of N.; they have to go through an expensive process to be certified, and they don't think they should have to because they can prove they have enough patients from Covington and the surrounding area to accommodate a small hospital. And they tried to get me to help them and I couldn't help them because I'd have been stepping out of my sphere of authority. And then St. Joe's went through an extensive process and was awarded the right to operate a dialysis center. I was able to help the Franciscans to get that. There was a desperate need for additional kidney dialysis help. Two groups were vying for it and one of

them had built the facility and then didn't have the money to open it up. They both were given the right to do it and both were given so many slots and when the other one was going into bankruptcy – their stock went down to two dollars a share and they were going under and St. Joseph's was still not able to open up for kidney dialysis. They were the only kidney dialysis center in Tacoma at that time, so there are people who couldn't get in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's something you need every week, for some people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They needed to be open twenty-four hours a day. And people were having to come in from Puyallup, and they were accommodating people on vacation. If they wanted to come and visit relatives, they could arrange to come for care in advance. But they couldn't accommodate anybody because they didn't have enough beds. Tacoma was overcrowded and yet the Department of Health wouldn't grant this. It got to be real hot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can imagine.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's all competitive and the Department of Health didn't have the courage to stand up and say it has to be done. I just made some calls and got them talking with each other. That's all I did. It's very complicated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Health care is like a quagmire sometimes, trying to figure it out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a quagmire. Now they opened it up and they are able to accommodate people – I think they offer it twenty-four hours a day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other big issue that you fought for this session, of course, was the creation of the Department of Health, this beleaguered agency; that is one of your huge achievements.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, one of them, because I felt that DSHS was treating every problem as a social problem. A medical problem is not a social problem and social science is not a true science, but health care is. And we needed to have them separated; we should never have joined them.



*Establishing the Department of Health, surrounded by supporters including Myra DeLaunay, Kathy Lynn being hugged by Sen. Wojahn, Evie White, Dr. Robert Atwood, at bill signing with Governor Gardner*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So two very different kinds of thinking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very different philosophies, you bet. The basis of their policy was misconstrued.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How long did it take you to create a new department?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Six years. It went in every year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What were the road blocks and what were the success stories?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Senator Phil Talmadge was one of the opponents of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. And then the cost of it. Although when we finally got it, we said all the money has to flow from DSHS into this new agency. But it's very expensive to start up a new agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly. And was that part of the argument?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was part of the argument. And we couldn't do everything we wanted. It had to

be fragmented because we needed the Medicaid money to remain with DSHS because it supported children's programs and it got to be a real complicated mess pulling that apart, tactically it was difficult to do. And then we were moving all the programs which had licensing of health professionals into the Health Department, taking it away from Licensing, which was then the Department of Motor Vehicles. It didn't belong there, to have professional medical licensing in

with those other things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are some strange groupings.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We changed the Department of Motor Vehicles back to Licensing but moved all of the professional medical licenses into the Department of Health. And all the statistics dealing with births and deaths went into the Department of Health. All that had to be moved. It was a tremendous undertaking. But I was firm because I felt that we were treating every problem as a social problem, even though it was pure medical. We needed to separate them. And now they need a new building because they are spread out in all of these awful places.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. How did you achieve this? What was the breaking point that finally convinced enough people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** By constantly talking about it. Telling people that we had to move them out. That regulating sewer system was not just an environmental issue, for God's sake. That's health, public health. And public health was

being ignored. That's one of the reasons things went down the tube with mental health, because when we removed the local health departments, DSHS didn't do much of anything to support it, except I think there were some local contracts that were partially funded by the state, so we removed their authority. And it shouldn't have been merged with DSHS, I didn't think. I thought it was a huge mistake. Then they lost their mental health programs; it all went down the tube when we put them together. The original reason they were put together to create DSHS made sense, in a way, if you talk about it, but in actuality, it did not make sense, because when a person got out of a mental institution, it was thought they would be followed with the social programs they would need, or a person getting out of prison would be followed by social programs they would need. It was all supposed to be coordinated by being in one agency. But after we merged the two into the super-agency, because they were different departments of the same agency, they wouldn't talk to one another. They began to compete with each other for funding and were not cooperating. So they weren't doing what they were supposed to be doing. And that's what burned me up. I voted against that bill, DSHS merging. All the time I said, "It won't work." Then they did it. And then we slowly started removing the agencies: we removed Veterans' Affairs; we removed Corrections; we removed the Commission for the Blind. Yes, we removed them all. And I decided Health had to go, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever convince Phil Talmadge you were right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he finally supported the issue. He finally voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you say to him that was new and different?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, every time something would come up where something wasn't being handled, I would say, "See, if we had a Department of Health, it would be handled. It isn't being handled."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you'd give him a little poke in the ribs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** At first he didn't accept it and Ray Moore didn't accept it, either. He finally did, though. Because Ray and Phil were real close and so was I with them, real tight with them, but we varied on different issues and we always argued over different issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is a huge triumph for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I even persuaded a doctor – Doctor Brooks – he was a Republican from Walla Walla – to take the bill and try to get it through the House if I couldn't get my bill through the Senate. I worked both houses. His bill passed and the Governor vetoed it. It wasn't fair, but there was something he didn't like about his bill and so we changed something, I guess, in ours and then the Governor signed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then he took the Senate bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He took the Senate bill. I wasn't happy when the House bill was vetoed; in fact I was furious, and then they recast it. And I think Booth said to me, "If you change one thing, we'll do it." Anyway, we did it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a smooth road.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And all the people who worked with me – I had an intern, Kathy Lynn, and Jean Soliz was working for me when we tried to do it; she later became DSHS Secretary. And Don Sloma worked like a dog on the bill. Sloma was my committee chief of staff and Jean was my committee attorney, when I chaired the committee. They were an outstanding committee staff, as you can tell. Sloma worked his heart out for that bill and Evie White worked with me – Bob wasn't with me at that time – Evie and Myra DeLaunay also worked as one of my staff people. And when we got the bill, I got them together, and we all went and had our picture taken at the bill signing. By the time we finally got it Kathy had graduated from law school. She'd had three years of law school and was a practicing attorney and she came back for the picture. It was Myra DeLaunay, Kathy Lynn, Don Sloma and Jean Soliz and me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see, the bill goes through all these machinations. You do have some support from the medical community, also Boeing, Weyerhaeuser, insurance companies, the hospital associations...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They all came forward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The State Medical Association. You had some heavy-hitters on your side.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But it was tough. After – after I'd fought it through, though. They weren't there at the beginning. They all came forward and especially the medical people know that it's the best it's ever been, because local health got better and that helped the mentally ill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little bit more focus there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** More focus, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't pass until the special session, right to the end there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It all started because of the removal of the Board of Health. That's what started the whole thing. With my fight with Kreidler over that – the ninety-two page bill and my six-page bill took him out. It all started with that. And from that came the Department of Health. And that's when the medical community began to realize that they needed a Department of Health. Mary Selecky was a great help in retaining the Board of Health – she was one of the local health officers involved who later became the Secretary of the Department. It was appropriate. But that was some years later. And all those people who worked with me, all health officers, were there pushing for the removal of Health from DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it's a strong-sounding group. I would like you to explain to me some of the problems in this bill for some people. They didn't want a Department of Health bill which contained regulation of hospitals, for instance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We removed the Hospital Commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the Hospital Commission is sun-setted that June, 1989.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I fought to get the Commission removed because I didn't believe it was serving a purpose. They would refuse to certify something that the hospital wanted and then six months later they would give in. In other words, anything the hospitals wanted they usually got. It was just delayed for a time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just wasted time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wasted time, and it's been pointed out – and I thought the same thing – that the Certificate of Need did the same thing. But we weren't ready to challenge the Certificate of Need just yet, because some things we needed to retain in the Certificate of Need and other things we didn't need. We simply did not have time enough to sort out all the issues. The Commission went because it was eventually granting rights after delaying them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that some sort of a power play?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The hospitals know what they need. And we did permit them to co-purchase, you know, finally that they could purchase with government-owned and run hospitals, but private hospitals could save money. And we permitted the hospitals to use generics – this is another big bill which was done – but we did not permit the generics out in the public until much later. But we figured the hospitals knew what they were doing because the doctors were there watching the patient being given the drugs and it was perfectly safe for them to do that. I forgot what they call that, we are one of the few states in the union which permitted it. The hospital pharmacist knew how to do these things and coalescing with the physicians, whereas the doctor on the outside could not control what his patient was doing because he wasn't seeing him all the time, like in the hospital.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So after a while of doing that, would you establish a kind of track record so that you would understand how generic drugs operate? And then it would be a safer thing to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Now they are using generics and probably should not. The doctors are supposed

to know if the generic is not working. And if they are following a patient closely enough they will know that, but my consideration – I fought generics for a long time – about the Department of DSHS when they had the health care, they would insist on generics for people on public assistance and sometimes they didn't work. And I know of a person who died because it didn't work. And that was when I was able to make my voice heard, because sometimes the material used to hold the pill together does not dissolve at the same time as the formulary drug. And so we have to use the formulary, not the generic. Because of that it's dangerous. And it's still dangerous. But I finally, after five or six years, caved in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it's alright for some medicines but really not alright for some others?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The doctors are supposed to know that. So if a doctor prescribes a brand-name drug, not the generic, then the pharmacist has to provide it. Or the doctor can prescribe a drug but permit a generic. It must be written on the prescription so that the pharmacist knows he can substitute generic. Doctors are supposed to know their patients well enough. But do they now, with so many patients?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is a question.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know if we have enough doctors to be able to follow their patients that closely. My endocrinologist follows my medication very closely, he checks it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I imagine there are doctors who don't. Or can't because of their patient load.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Especially when they don't have enough experience to know the difference. You see, that's the danger of a new doctor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or a new drug.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or a new drug. There's a danger now they are advertising drugs on television and telling the listening public to "talk to their doctor about prescribing..." and then they say, "Don't do it if you have this and this and this and this." People don't know what they have. The pharmacy I get my drugs through, I can call

and get the pharmacist who will go through my drugs and tell me if any of them are contrary to another drug; they will tell me. They watch that. See, I go to several "parts" doctors. I don't have an internist who would interpret the "sum of all the parts." And if one of my doctors recommends something I shouldn't be taking because of another doctor's prescription, they catch it at the pharmacy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's good somebody's looking at the big picture. The part which interested me here, it said, "The Republican-controlled Senate was willing to kill all Department of Health bills that contained any provision for a form of a hospital commission." So when that was sun-setted, did that remove that issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I agreed with them because I didn't think the commission should exist anyway. I thought it was wrong. Maybe that's the reason we got along so well. But the way we got rid of the Commission was by sun-setting it, rather than just taking it out. And then those who favored it could argue for it but the arguments didn't win. And that was another thing that I did, I was the first to develop a sunset bill, you remember that? And I was the one who brought in the Leg. Budget as a reviewing practice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And here it is when you need it. It's a good tool. Did Washington then become one of a few states which had a completely free-market health care delivery system which regulated itself? Was that intended? To deregulate health care and bring in competition between hospitals or clinics?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Competition, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that actually improve health care, or was that a bit of a loose cannon?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wasn't a loose cannon, it worked. It worked. That was because of the Commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes deregulating industries brings unintended consequences. Like with the air traffic control people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know that. No, it worked. They had to become more competitive and responsive to their communities and bring down costs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, certainly health care costs are rising at this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some hospitals were monopolies and could impose policies like refusing to perform abortions. Allowing another hospital to come in addressed that issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Another area under consideration then was working with health care for seniors and other people too, bringing in licensing for adult family homes. We've talked about the AIDS epidemic being a driver on this issue, too. Senator Fleming worked to establish a joint long-term care task force to review the whole system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They conducted reviews of nursing homes in particular.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you involved in that in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I was not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did manage to get chore services and different things like that into the budget and so that was taken care of there. You accomplished a lot that year in the health care committee. We talked a little bit last time about the TMJ bill and this time it was in place, you get it. So that's also a triumph, of a kind.

Some of the hot-button issues that session revolved around Senator Linda Smith. She pushed a bill having to do with parental consent for minor girls whether or not they could get an abortion. How was that framed in the discussion? Did that open up the whole abortion question again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Marjorie Lynch had forced that issue when she was in the House in the seventies. She was a Republican leader in that area. Adolescent girls could get a doctor's care without the parents' consent, as I remember. We'd already passed the right years before and apparently they were trying to take it away again. There was a move to rescind it or to amend the bill and we fought it. Did it pass?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it didn't. Another bill which got tangled up with the abortion issue was the Prenatal Medical Care Bill – it has various names. The descriptions say Washington had one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation. Now, why is that? That seems very odd.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was high in Pierce County even though we have Madigan Hospital, where there is free medical care for the Army wives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington is not a poor state, one you would think of as having such a problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was very high, we don't know why. No one knew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They said a lot of babies were being born prematurely or with low birth weight. Would these be babies affected by drug use of the parents?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I think fetal alcohol is worse than drugs. I don't know what was causing it, but Pierce County was the one which led the state in low birth weight and in mortality for babies. And so we had a little task force here in Pierce County to figure out what to do and from that came this triage where we offered every woman the right to a doctor. We got money for the triage. We organized a group through Pierce County Medical Bureau and the obstetricians and gynecologists did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were trying to address that issue and you were able to affect a change in this dismal record?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We did it and that money is still flowing in – at least it was when I left – about \$350,000 a year to Pierce County for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This program, First Steps, wanted to expand prenatal care services to low-income, at-risk pregnant women and offer medical care for their children once they were born. The Democrats wanted to expand it, the Republicans were willing, it looks like, to expand it to a certain extent, but not as much as the Democrats wanted.



**Sen. Wojahn:** The Republicans kept a tight hold on the money belt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were about 12,000 women and children who were either going to be served or not served, depending on how this went. And this got tangled up in the abortion bill because part of the services included abortion and Linda Smith tried to block it. I understand she got into a little bit of trouble with her own caucus over that particular effort.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember what it was. I wouldn't have been privy to that because there were some rather progressive Republicans who didn't agree with her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to cause a lot of heat. Also, this is the session, of course, that the Children's Initiative was brought to the Legislature and it went into her committee, the Children and Family Services Committee. And she very infamously "sat on it" and would not let it come to a vote. It just stayed stuck in the committee. What can you do in those situations?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's when the Speaker wouldn't speak to me unless I got that bill up on the Floor for a vote. That's what he wrote back to me: "I'll see you when you get the Children's Initiative onto the Floor for a vote." We couldn't get it; we tried!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How could you do that? You weren't even on that committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. The bill hadn't even gone to Rules Committee. We tried to remove it from the committee, and bring it onto the Floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there any kind of maneuver for that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, you have to go to the Ninth Order of Business in order to open it up for petitions and then you get up and move that the bill be moved out from the committee onto the Floor of the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a pretty radical thing to do, isn't it? To pull a bill out of a committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's very radical and even more so you have to get to the right procedure during the session to do it and we'd never get to that order. She'd purposely kept us from getting there. And if they had to do something, they

would quickly do it and then vote to not take a motion from the Democrats. We'd jump up every time. We took turns jumping up to try to get the bill out of committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be an embarrassment to the Republicans if you were able to do this? Isn't it kind of like saying, "The committee is not working?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, sure, it always is. It's embarrassing to the committee chair. It happened with a bill of mine when they took the hearing aid bill away from Senator Greive. A House bill of mine got to the Senate and the Senate took it away from him because he wouldn't let it out of committee, they did that. It was one of the first times it had ever been done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it can happen, but it's very rare?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very rare and it was the Democrats who took it away from another Democrat. The Democrats were in the majority and they took it away from Greive – another Democrat – and that's rarely done! It's like challenging a decision of the chair. You never do that if you ever expect to live in the Legislature! I did it once and then I withdrew it. I realized what I'd done to John O'Brien and then I apologized to him later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The committee, in this case, had three reputedly quite conservative women, Linda Smith, Ellen Craswell, and Lois Stratton. And then two men who were called "the bookends." They were both from Snohomish County: Larry Vognild and Cliff Bailey.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Larry was a Democrat and Cliff was a Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently the women sat together and the two men sat on either side so they were called the "Snohomish County Bookends." And according to the newspaper articles about this, people looked to those two men to save anything which went into that committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** From dying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The three women reputedly dominated the committee and just killed legislation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Good thing I wasn't on that committee; I'd have died a slow death.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it would have taken a certain amount of something. This era was known for its ideologically conservative legislators; these women were considered prime examples. What happens to the legislative process when you have legislators of a very strong ideological bent – either to the right or left – who can't compromise because for them it's not a process, it's a measure of good and evil, I guess you could say? What happens?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think everybody, every legislator has a value system and there are some things they will never tolerate. I think every one of us has something comparable to that. I was aware of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This seemed to be a much more pronounced ideological bent than usual and perhaps the area that they couldn't bend on was much greater. It was not just capital punishment or something like that; it was a much bigger group of issues. If you get many key legislators of that type, what happens to the legislative process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, eventually their ideology is overrun and they lose on some issues. You're going to lose if they are so tied with the philosophy that they can't compromise because of the varying degrees of philosophy among all legislators; they are going to lose on some issues. Where even their cohorts will not agree with them. And that's when you take a bill away from a committee or attempt to do it. And she lost on some issues; I think that it was during the time she was chair she offended me. She promised me and didn't follow through and took it up on the Floor after promising that she wouldn't. I was so angry. But I won, she lost, even so. And every time a legislator does that – and I think at that point, it was recognized by a lot of members that she had – I think I got up and said, "You have just broken your word and I resent what you are doing." At that point it may have turned some of them off on her. And that would have affected Lois Stratton, because she was as conservative as hell, she should have been a Republican. But I won the issue of day

care zoning, for the elimination of zoning for day care for up to twelve kids.

We got it for the cities but couldn't get it for the counties, ever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, in a normal residential neighborhood, somebody could have an in-home day care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could have an in-home day care, but I think they were limited to the number of kids they could have – I think about eight or twelve children – and it would not affect local zoning. I remember I got up and said, "There are only two areas we permit zoning to not apply and that's on shorelines and garbage disposal. It was okay for garbage and we won't do it for children?" And I won. I got it for the cities, but I couldn't get it for the counties. We lost part of it in the process. It passed the Senate clean, but I was told Mary Margaret Haugen took the counties out of the House version, I'm not sure. The Association of Counties had fought it and they had finally lifted their foot and let it go – they accepted it, and then she took it out. I think it had been in there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking about the concept of the "half loaf." How, if you want to be an effective legislator, you ought to know when to take the half loaf. I was wondering how legislators feel about these partial victories. Count it good, or hold out for the whole package?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You sometimes try to kill the whole bill. It happened to me with the debt adjustor bill. I killed it because it got so bad. We got it and now the issue's back. The Department of Revenue wanted to permit debt adjustors to come back in 1999 and I fought it and I won. And then I left the Senate and now it's back. It was on TV the other night, where they are cheating people. We should never have debt adjustors. That's currently being permitted and we had outlawed that practice; the only ones which were allowed to exist were the non-profits which served people. The debt adjustors took their money and didn't send it to their debtors, and then the people got dunned. It was fraud. So we stopped that. These are the things

which occur and nobody thinks through the damage they are doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe somebody will remember how you fought it and they'll go back.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm going to tell them about it. And everybody I helped be elected is going to be told, "Get rid of that bill, it's dangerous." And I'm so upset because I got rid of it and then I see it back. Channel 4 was talking about it; Connie Thompson was talking about it on television just two nights ago. I'm on the consumer credit counseling service of Tacoma, which is a non-profit and I know these things are going on. I know what shouldn't be done, rather.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a case of eternal vigilance, I guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, but sometimes something slips through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We were talking about the Children's Initiative. It never did come to the Floor of the Senate. It was said, "The Republicans rejected every effort to let the full Senate vote on this important measure."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because of the budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then it went to the ballot. It didn't pass. It was made into a budget issue instead of a social service issue, you might say. What happened? Was there just not enough groundwork or was there something else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It may have been the wording of the ballot title. I don't remember what it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When in doubt, people vote no, kind of thing? It didn't seem to be a totally Democrat or Republican issue. Both sides supported and didn't support it. Some people really were worried about setting money aside in perpetuity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the idea was it put money in trust. Dedicated funds would not have helped it on the ballot. It was too loosely written, probably, and it wasn't tightened. No one bothered to correct the language and it went to the people. They probably fought it on the basis that it was too loosely written.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was considered too expensive, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And expensive. But if it had been properly written, they couldn't have used that argument. They needed an escalator clause conditioned on available funds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Initiatives are a difficult tool for legislation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then a few years later we got the initiative through the people on the minimum wage. And that was expensive and more people were affected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to quickly look at some of the bills you did get passed that year. Here's a different one, a bill to provide for a "maritime commemorative observance." Was this perhaps part of your state Historical Society membership? "To plan and implement an appropriate commemorative celebration of the bi-centennials of the maritime accomplishments of Robert Gray and George Vancouver, and the Spanish settlement at Neah Bay."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was done for the Historical Society. We formed a little committee and they wanted me to chair it, and I refused. I did the bill, but I didn't want to be the chair so they had one of the fellows who is now on staff and was real involved with that – he is of Spanish decent and has a doctorate. He was very effective and he carried the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Speaking of commemorations, this is the centennial year for the state. Were there special ceremonies in the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All the communities were doing their own thing. There was a commemorative committee which formed, but I was not on it. They wanted to do something with specially designed license plates – vanity plates. I remember being heavily lobbied on that idea, but I fought that; I thought that was stupid and they didn't get it. Of course, that's when they did the decorating of the Leg Building. They did a magnificent job! I don't remember there being anything particularly exciting. There were little celebrations going on all over the state which were precipitated by this commission which was in charge of establishing them.

## CHAPTER 20: COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION, 1990

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We are coming up to the 1990 session in our discussion, where the Republicans still had a one-vote majority and the House situation was that there were sixty-three Democrats to thirty-five Republicans. So a fair majority there; Joe King was still the Speaker. Governor Gardner was still in office, it's early in his second term. But before we plunge into that session, we need to discuss something important that happened in 1989 after the session ended.

There had been a series of events in the state. One, the assault and mutilation of a young Tacoma boy by a man, as it turned out, who had a long history of violence. And then rather quickly following that, there was a kidnapping and murder of a Seattle woman by an inmate on work release. The mother of the young woman, Ida Ballasiotes, eventually ran for office using the issues which arose from that case as her campaign platform. These were horrific events which shook the whole state. There was a very huge public outcry about community safety: why are these violent people out there? Why are they not behind bars? And also about mental health issues: if someone can do something like that, surely there's something wrong with them and they should be confined, was the tenor of the commentary. Governor Gardner quickly appointed a task force, called the Task Force on Community Protection, and you were appointed as one of the members of that group. The chair was Norm Maleng, Prosecutor for King County.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was made up of a vast cross-section of prosecutors and private attorneys and advocates and legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you come to be appointed? Because you were from Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was appointed by the Majority Leader in the Senate; Larry Vognild called me and asked me if I would serve on it. He tracked me down. I was in Bellevue because a friend of mine had just died, a dear friend, an old, old friend. And he caught me off guard, really. I had

gone up to spend some time, my husband and I, with her husband. They had just come back from California where they had a winter home and she had died of cancer. She had a relapse and after five years it had returned; it was a very sensitive time and we were still in shock. And he got me there and I agreed to serve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have not agreed in other circumstances?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether I would have or not, because the event happened in Tacoma. We were still bruised in Tacoma over that because the child lived not too far from our home at that time, although they were far enough removed that I didn't know them, but it was a dreadful episode. I don't know whether I would have served or not. I might have stepped aside for someone who was more attached to the legal community, who knew their way around the legalese, because this was treacherous to try to come up with legislation. And it proved to be treacherous, because that's when we established the philosophy that once you committed a crime like this that you could never be treated adequately, and you should never get out of prison. And from that came the establishment of the sexual offender unit on McNeil Island which is now being challenged and was recently overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. It was a very technical issue. I might have backed away and suggested to Larry Vognild that he needed an attorney on that commission. We didn't have many attorneys in the Senate and so it would probably have fallen on the shoulders of Phil Talmadge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he certainly comes to mind. But did you have some quality that Vognild was looking for here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, because of my sensitivity to the issues. And having worked with women and children's issues – because as one of the few women in the Senate you did. Larry talked me into it as a sensitive person, and the latest episode having happened in Tacoma, not too far

from where I lived, and the fact that it involved a deeply serious project with a child. I called Mary Bridge Hospital immediately to tell them there was funding available for them and, of course, they were very appreciative. Then, the doctor who attended to the boy was a friend of ours; he was an urologist. I was deeply imbedded in the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you're a natural, I guess. In all these ways, you became involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so it was natural and he talked me into it and I agreed. I don't know that I added very much to the committee because, as I say again, it dealt so much with the Constitution, with the statutory authorities, and especially the Constitution of the United States and the state of Washington that I didn't feel very credible on that task force. The only thing I could offer was sensitivity to the people and to go on my gut reactions on what was offered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's not nothing. A lot of the work of that group was listening and meeting with the victims and learning about the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the people who helped me a lot, again, were Don Sloma and Talmadge and those whom I relied on for information were a great help in trying to figure out what to do. And we voted to do this and now it's being challenged. Fifteen years later, or twelve years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a very messy issue; it's not surprising that it didn't go smoothly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And at one time, that's right, there were only a few people in that sexual offender facility – even at the very end there were very few.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if there's a good answer for this problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think there is. I don't know. You're dealing with the First Amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also recruited for the task force was Ida Ballasiotes and Helen Harlow,

who was the mother of the little boy. What was it difficult to work with them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Helen Harlow was very, very good. I developed a deep respect for her handling of the situation. The press took her apart. They were so insensitive. There was a large amount of money donated to take care of the child and to buy transportation for her. Her mother, with her step-father or whoever it was, and the whole family had handled it, I thought, remarkably well. And they asked her what kind of a car she thought she should have, and she said, "A Volvo." Well, I don't know why she said that; apparently, it's a very safe car and they have a lot of safety factors in it and the press took her on with that. I'll never forgive them for that. The press just took her apart for asking for a very expensive car like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think they are any more expensive than a van.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't challenge it. They ended up buying a van. Probably one of these SUV types, I don't know. Which is very expensive to run because of the gasoline and the mileage, so during the whole thing I thought the press handled it very, very badly: insensitive and revealing and repeating and repeating what had happened until I'm sure that...and what she was trying to do was to come to terms with her child. And this is a very sensitive issue with him. You can imagine!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure, and the terror of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The whole thing. As a result of all this they established a park and took out all the brambles and all the bushes and things which had made it so dangerous. It's under construction right now. It's taken a long time. But people volunteer to go in and rip out a lot of the blackberry bushes and a lot of the underbrush so that it can be opened up. And now it's being developed into a park. I have nothing but contempt for the press over the things they have done to that child and that mother and the fellow who – it was eventually decided – he was insane. He never did end up in the protective area in Monroe; he was, I think,

sent to Walla Walla and put in protective custody and allowed very few privileges.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand a person like that in prison is actually in a lot of danger from the other inmates. Kind of the law of the jungle in there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right. And so that's the reason they had to keep him separated from them. He'll never get out, I don't think. You know, who knows?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand both Mrs. Ballasiotes and Helen Harlow were very active on this committee. I'm guessing that it was helpful to them to take some kind of action.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was therapeutic for them to be able to let it all out. I think it was great therapy for them and they were listened to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it painful for other members to work with them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Yes. Especially when those of us who had been in office and had authorized the shelter to be placed in Seattle, where they had freedom to move about, which caused the death of Ida Ballasiotes' daughter. This fellow was working in a job, apparently, and was expected to be back in the shelter in the night, but was out during the day. And it made a lot of us sensitive over shelters and as a result of that, when there was a shelter being planned right over here off the freeway, right adjacent, below the hill to the condo where I live, we fought it. We said, "No way."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of puts it in a different light.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It absolutely did and we were able to win the issue. That was about six years later that they tried to put in a shelter here to replace a shelter on Sixth Avenue, where they would be allowed to be out working during the day. The shelter on Sixth Avenue has never been replaced; it's still there. They are contracted out by DSHS and leased by the County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That brings up one of the issues you had to deal with is, how do you

understand which offenders are dangerous and which ones are not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how do you design programs with public safety in mind with some kind of standards for different types of offenders?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'll never forget. My son was married to the daughter of one of the justices of the State Supreme Court and I was talking to the justice one day. I don't believe in capital punishment and he did, and what he said to me made a lot of sense, he said, "You cannot look into the head and the heart of these people. There's no way that you can tell; all that you can tell is what you hear second-hand from psychiatrists and doctors and psychologists, but you never really know. And the only safe thing is to get them off the street." That didn't persuade me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a difference in "getting people off the street" and capital punishment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Getting them off the street forever is actually what the connotation was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That does it. One of the things the task force is said to have learned during all the hearings is that this is broader than just the criminal law aspect; it's a whole social phenomena.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it directly imposes restraints on the U.S. Constitution and on the state of Washington. We voided that. And that was a big issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Commission, I understand, listened to a lot of different kinds of people, examined a lot of research on sex offenders, looked at what other states were doing, looked at the different types of people involved in this sort of crime, which, I'm gathering, is just beginning to be studied now. I don't know where the literature was then, but it seems like there was so much we still don't know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a cause and effect. The effect of that was to cause various states to look at the issue and some states adopted the same solution we adopted. Now, that is all out the window because of the recent Supreme Court decision. So, I don't know what the answer is going to be. It's still not resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the report, it said one of the issues was the perception that the judicial system is ineffective, that it's just reactive. You have to wait until a crime is committed before you can do anything about it. But with these types of crimes, that's a very high price.

**Sen. Wojahn:** To be able to anticipate and prevent them from happening, but the whole law and justice works on "after the fact." You can't accuse anybody of planning something and get any satisfaction or imprisonment for them because of that until after the fact. And how do you protect a person from injustice, even though you anticipate that it might happen, without having a police escort or police protection? It's the same thing with domestic violence; it's the same thing with rape. And it's going on right now. It seems when there is a slow-down in the economy, terrible things begin to happen. And this is the same thing there, there was a slow-down in the economy and there were people out there without and whether that imposes damage to others, I don't know. How do you know?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's part of the weakness of the whole system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's the weakness of the system which I don't think can ever be resolved. I'm reading John Adams, about the writing of the Constitution of the United States. Actually, they adopted the Constitution of the state of Massachusetts which he had written.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think they were ever anticipating problems like this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did. They anticipated everything. But they didn't anticipate how you plan for what was going to happen that did happen that they didn't know about before it happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a pretty terrific knot. You did come up with a three-part strategy, at least in your study. You had programs you wanted to put in place for offender control and treatment. You looked a lot at victim services and you looked at issues of community protection. We could go through some of those.

The difficulty in predicting who will re-offend, once you've caught someone, knowing what to do with them then becomes a huge problem. Part of it is this is sort of a cycle because it was discovered in your study and elsewhere, that people who do commit those kinds of crimes, by far, also have been victims themselves.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That evolved from that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is part of the cycle. And part of the thinking – and here I'm reading into the report – is that if you could take better care of the victims, you could at least stop the cycle. So the victim of today will not become the abuser of tomorrow. Is that right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you can give a child who has witnessed domestic violence, or any kind of violence, counseling enough to offset that, they will not become an aggressor themselves and that has been proven to be true. But where do you find the money to do all of that? You see, everything you find that can help costs money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But at least, you're on record as recognizing there's something that can be done?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Recognize that once victimized, you become an aggressor on your own, and the younger you are the more you remember. And that's been proven to be very, very true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if this was new thinking.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I think that evolved from reviewing past experiences which had occurred. And we found out, for instance that Campbell, who committed that serious murder of three women after being on work release, had been victimized as a child and it went through and he told all the terrible things which had happened to him as a child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Never really excuses the actions, but...it's an explanation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's not an excuse, but it's a reason. And so because of that and because of the Campbell case, we recognized that this could happen and that we had better be prepared to handle it. To check into the background of the person who victimizes another.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was also thought that if you had more successful prosecutions of these crimes, it would encourage more people to report them because they could see that then something would happen. And that would be another way of stopping the cycle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, from that came the idea of a constitutional amendment to permit a child victim to not have to be in the same courtroom as the person they are accusing, because of the frightening aspects of it. They would be terrorized.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's return to that in a minute. There was also the notion that people were being sentenced, but then getting off early for good time, because apparently, sexual offender criminals do well in prison. It's a controlled environment; they are model prisoners, so they get out early – and untreated, so you looked at that aspect. What kinds of people came forward and spoke to this task force to help you understand all these different aspects?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, mostly it was professionals talking about the problems they had encountered and offering their recommendations as far as they saw them and then, of course, the victims' parents. Ida Ballasiotes and Helen were very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did other victims and their families come forward?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there were others, and I don't remember all the circumstances. Sometimes they were just case studies; they were not mentioning names. I think it was open for anyone who wished to come forward but nothing sparks my memory, I don't remember anything happening. And you know, when

people come forward often they get off the subject. They don't stick to the subject and you have to keep bringing them back and so, very often, they are not very effective. But a case study, with no names mentioned, given by a psychiatrist, or someone working within the penal system, of course, we relied upon them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How do you as a person sitting on the task force keep your emotional balance when you're hearing about these pretty horrendous acts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, in my early days in the Legislature, I was a very good friend of Bill Callahan, who was the Superintendent at Cascadia, which was the juvenile unit. He was a psychiatric social worker who then went into criminal justice. He had dealt with all kinds of crime – youth and otherwise. He had a particular philosophy that some things you never can control. And that you have to control them. I'll never forget chatting with him about this because he was very frustrated. He was a very humane person, but he also saw the deadliness of criminal acts. And I think that he probably sparked my imagination on the person who has been victimized becomes a victimizer themselves. Because he witnessed it. But he didn't know what to do about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These are such painful issues; I just wondered how you kept your equilibrium while you sat there and took in all this information.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think, because I was older, number one. I had had a lot of experiences. I've talked to a lot of people. I've been involved in a lot of programs and I remembered what Bill Callahan had said to me, and this all came back. I didn't remember that when Larry talked me into doing it, but it seems to me over a lifetime you build experiences which help you make decisions, as you become older, and that's the reason a person who is older is more viable in making judgments or coming up with decisions for programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's certainly a difficult form of public service, confronting these issues and making wise recommendations.



**Sen. Wojahn:** The other thing, when I was married, we moved back to my husband's family home, which was on McKinley Hill, a low-income area. And we witnessed good and bad parents around us in the elementary school. We knew who the pretty good parents were, and we knew the kids who were left alone with no care. We knew the kids, and at my instigation, when I went to the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health at the invitation of President Nixon, we developed a food program and agitated for free lunches. This all came together; it all comes together and you never really think about it, but it's there. It builds up.

And one of the other things we did was require that the Department of Corrections notify the local law enforcement people when a potential predator was being released into the community. Only that broke down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All those little notices in the newspaper? So many of the people being released say they are transient. How are you supposed to keep track of them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a flaw. You see, everything we did was flawed. And that was the reason I didn't want to get involved, because you could just see it all – the law going against the Constitution, and the flaws we developed trying to keep track of these people, and the process the law enforcement and Corrections would go through, because we didn't have computers at that time. It's easier now. But until we get all of the computers synchronized – Tacoma was using one of the early computers they got from France which was not the one adopted by the state of Washington, so that all had to be changed; it's still being changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, computers have to be able to talk to each other.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They have to be able to talk to one another and ours in Tacoma was a different system from the others. The state did not adopt the one that Tacoma had and so it didn't work. But you keep trying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm gathering that you learned a lot about the issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You learned all the things you don't know. You learn all the flaws that you developed. But from that comes something. Eventually, maybe we'll have utopia and have it all figured out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear, I won't hold my breath.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not in my lifetime.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All of this work, this listening, this gathering, this learning, this testimony, it did come together. You had a very large report and it resulted in a package introduced by members of the task force. You were then co-sponsor of a bill in this next session, sometimes called the Omnibus Sex Offender Bill, Senate Bill 6259, which brought together, as much you could, the solutions on how to deal with this issue. You wanted to bring in longer sentencing for these people; was that so there would be more time for treatment or just to keep them off the streets, or both?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Both.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And civil commitment, which turned out to be problematic.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. Never let them out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And increased aid to victims.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We already had a victims-of-crime program on the books. It was funded by something other people had tied into. But we didn't have enough money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, nothing like these horrendous cases to call attention to an issue. And you called for more treatment. There was quite a bit of discussion, several amendments; the bill eventually became a substitute Senate bill, but the discussions seem to be really productive and not partisan. Some of the discussions you had at that time seemed to fall apart but this one seemed to be very serious. It went through pretty handily. You, yourself, had an amendment which passed. There was an amendment introduced by Senator Newhouse, Nelson and Talmadge, a group not often seen on the same bill which made an interesting point. They said that too often, in abusive families, the

child is taken out of the family which causes more trauma. Their idea was that why disrupt the child, they are innocent. Why not take the offender out of the home?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that seemed like an interesting point and that passed. In fact, the bill passed unanimously in both houses. Which must be unusual.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was comprehensive and enough of the staff were brought in to work with us to help us to not only put the bill together, but to present the arguments before the Senate. I don't think there were many arguments on the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. Just little tweaks.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tweaks to make it better, which was welcome because how could any one group do a comprehensive bill like that? You needed everybody's thinking involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. It sailed through. So that was kind of a landmark. Curiously, and this must be just an odd quirk of legislative procedure, but during your very serious discussion, twice your deliberations were interrupted by the introduction of special guests. I was a little surprised, actually. Here you are, working through this bill. The subject matter, of course, is just terrible. Right in the middle of your deliberations, the comedian, Mark Russell, is introduced to you and he does a little stand-up comedy in the Senate chamber. It just seemed so discordant to me; could you describe that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Apparently he was only here for a short time. He'd been on television; he was so funny and in order to get him, you had to do it on his time. And besides it was levity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he help somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. In the midst of this serious debate, there was a need for a little bit of lightness and it was wonderful. And he is so good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wasn't sure how that would work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was invited to Channel Five once. Myra DeLaunay was working with me and her son was involved with Channel Five. They had Phil Donohue on and I got to go to meet him. And I invited him to the Senate and the time that he could come down, I would arrange for him to be on the Senate Floor. But then he couldn't; he had to get back for a program. He was really disappointed. He wanted to come. And that's levity. Anyone in the Senate can bring in a person; there is a lot of freedom in the Senate to do things. And that was the levity at that time and it was the best thing that could have happened, I'm sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That explanation helps. When I first saw that, I was puzzled. Mark Russell?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whoa! He is so funny and he is so political.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know he was an acquaintance of Lieutenant Governor Joel Pritchard from his congressional days. So I surmised he had some relationship with him as presiding officer.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Joel was really a fun presiding officer. He did everything all wrong, but it was funny and he was a delightful person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, anyway, that one really just threw me.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was good. It was good. We got the levity we needed in order to proceed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also had, right in the middle of this debate, somebody come in and tell you about the Goodwill Games in Seattle, which is a feel-good thing. But, again I was a little surprised.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Goodwill Games could have been at any time, but as far as Mark Russell...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see it now. The prime sponsor of Senate Bill 6259 was Gary Nelson, who was the chair of the Law and Justice Committee. He seemed to do a very good job of steering the bill through the session. One of the things he did was stick to the task force presentation and weed out or keep separate from

that other bills his own caucus members were bringing forward which were related to this issue. Did that help the task force bill pass without the distractions of other measures?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Republicans were in the majority and they could do that. Everyone was open for suggestions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, his own caucus members, I don't know if they were trying to attach their ideas to this bill or they just wanted to be heard, but Randy Tate wanted permanent registration of sex offenders, including even minor offenders and he wanted it to be retroactive. That was more than people were ready for.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's hard to make anything retroactive. You can't go back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legally, it seemed a bit questionable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wouldn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other big one, which got lots of press, was the idea of castrating sex offenders.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We can't do that. You can chemically castrate, but you can't physically. And we do chemically castrate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Ellen Craswell and Gerald Saling were both supporters of that idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, these are the conservatives – very conservative people. But we do permit chemical castration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't want to just permit it; they wanted to make it mandatory.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted physical castration. You can't do that. Now, there's a guy who wants to have Viagra. And it's on the front page, headlines almost. The guy was in prison and he wants to have visits with his wife in prison, which they permit, and he wants to have Viagra because he's been chemically castrated. It's all in the papers. This is what I hate about newspapers. They are so descriptive, how can anybody be innocent anymore? How can a child

remain innocent after grade school, I mean after kindergarten?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As soon as they can read.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They play it up. It's a number-one or number-two story and they keep carrying on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was that discussion like in the Senate? The whole castration thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember, but it was bitter, I'm sure. Nelson is not an attorney, but I can't imagine Newhouse sitting back and taking that because he was really a stand-up guy, I think. And although somewhat conservative, not as far as the law was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jeannette Hayner supported this idea.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm surprised at her, too. The idea sounds great, but...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It only addresses part of the issue. Sexual violence is both sexual and violent. It's a form of assault. Castration doesn't address the violence issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, in the first place, it comes from the brain. You can't cut out their brains. I think that was probably brought up: let's just take out their brain and forget about the other.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lobotomy session there. Well, a bit drastic. Phil Talmadge, Janice Niemi and others on that committee...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Were absolutely adamant over that, yes. They were very good. They are all attorneys.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And people tried to stay away from this issue, actually. And stick to the task force plan and work on that bill and leave this other stuff out of the discussion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The thing was, the reason it was so difficult is because of the narrow margin by which the Republicans controlled the Senate and they had to, more or less, acquiesce to some of the wishes of these super conservatives in order to get the things they needed through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were certainly trying to keep together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that's one time they didn't make it. It's one of the few times they were unable to stay united.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were pretty split on this issue, I think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, some of the Republicans cared about the law and were moderates, not conservatives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly Gary Nelson attempted to put that one under the rug, from what I could tell. It looked like nothing but a headache to him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was a moderate, I would say. Well, to him it would have been a headache and that would be one vote that they would not be able to get. In spite of the fact that they had a pact of "one for all and all for one." But I'm surprised, I didn't realize that Jeannette Hayner was for it. She was supportive of it, probably, because she was trying to hold her caucus together. I'm sure that that was it. Because normally she was pretty sensible. I think she had to appear that way to her people, but I'm sure she was not very supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It might have been giving her a headache too, I don't know. These things don't pass. There appeared to be a sort of machismo thing going on, also, because Attorney General Ken Eikenberry was coming up with some rather draconian plans; there was a "who's the toughest on crime" thing going on and that may have pushed some of the issues forward that might not have been otherwise.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm sure that a lot of us in our own caucus said, "We'd sure like to vote for that castration bill, but we can't." You know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Emotionally, you can understand that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you laugh about it or say "Let's do it," but you don't. It's not good law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At some point you have to be more than emotional? Let's talk now about your Senate Joint Resolution 8231 where you

proposed that constitutional amendment to allow young victims to testify on closed circuit television. Why was that a constitutional amendment? And did that make it more difficult to pass?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it had to be a constitutional amendment because the victim must always confront his accuser, according to the U.S. Constitution. Trial lawyers didn't like it, you know, and you can't fight the trial lawyers and win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm puzzled, it didn't stop people from testifying.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a buffer and it was only for children up to, I think, age twelve – I don't know – or ten. It wasn't all of them, but it was for the younger children who would have difficulty facing their aggressors, especially if it was their father or other relative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite often it is.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and I did everything I could, but I couldn't get the votes. You had to have a two-thirds majority for a constitutional amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When people opposed you, how did they justify this? This seems so humane.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember what they said because nothing they said would have made any impression with me anyway. I don't remember what the arguments were – that it was unconstitutional is all. We were trying to make it constitutional. And I can't understand. I remember at the judicial conference in Bellevue, where I brought it up, Locke followed me on the podium and said, "You can't do that." You know, here he's the one. He wasn't married, did not have children at that time. This is the insensitivity of males who have not been involved with family, with children. I think now that he has a family he might support it. I don't know, but he was adamant and we were right in the middle of the debate. The bill was between sessions but I still couldn't get it. Because I couldn't even get it heard in committee, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You seem to do alright in the Senate; it was in the House that it fell apart.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did I get it through the Senate? I don't remember. I think I had some good support. But it happens, you know. You roll with the punches, you take your lumps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did vow to continue this fight. Did you bring it up again and again, or was this just something that wasn't going to work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I finally dropped it, I think. The bill was probably in there repeatedly but it never got heard. I don't think I ever dropped the idea of the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe this will be one of those things where there will be another bad thing happen and it will be brought up again. An idea like that never really goes away. Yes, it was for children under ten years of age.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Under ten. I knew it was ten or twelve who were permitted to do that, and that was a condition on which we agreed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It passed out of the Law and Justice Committee, majority recommendation "do pass," signed by Senators Nelson, McCaslin, Hayner, Madsen, Newhouse, Patrick and Rasmussen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was read the second time, and then the roll call on final passage, it passed the Senate thirty-eight yes, ten no, one excused.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who were the no's?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Voting no: Conner, DeJarnatt, Kreidler, McMullen, Moore, Murray, Niemi, Rinehart, Talmadge and Williams.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were all very liberal. Janice, I don't know why Janice voted no. And Talmadge voted no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been the lawyer in him somehow? Even though he passed it out of committee with "do pass," I'm not sure what happened.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I probably prevailed on him to get it out of the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At any rate, it passed the Senate and then died in the House. So that's what happened.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, this is sort of borderline conservative. Did Hayner vote for it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. It feels very non-partisan.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know it does. I know it does, but it would be more conservative than liberal and the people who voted against it – Williams is very liberal. And the attorneys voted against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ray Moore voted against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ray Moore didn't like me. We always fought. He loved me, but he didn't like what I did. And he voted always with Talmadge. What did Newhouse do?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He voted for it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He did. Okay. I never knew what he was going to do. He was my best friend in the Legislature; you know, he was pretty good. He improved some of my bills, really. And I always applauded him. You know, sometimes I disagreed with him and it was always violent, but when I agreed, it was total. I liked him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he's with you on this one. There's a very wide range of people that supported it; I can't see any pattern here. It did pass the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I'm surprised I couldn't get it through the Democratic House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe the likes of then-Representative Locke were against it for whatever reason.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was there and he was an influence. I even gave him my bill that the Police Chief asked me to sponsor on behalf of the Tacoma Police Department on gun control. They asked me to sponsor a bill which permitted the police to confiscate weapons rather than sell them, to not put them back on the open market.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean, melt them down or somehow get rid of them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I sponsored the bill and Gary Locke grabbed it from me and sponsored it and I let his bill go through and then he voted against me on that. This happens! You know, I'll never forgive him for that, because he got the credit for that and it was a big deal. And it had come out of Tacoma, out of the Police Chief of Tacoma. So you just never know who your friends are, regardless of party.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unfortunate. A lot of this work dealt with children, as well as other adults, as victims. The Children's Initiative had failed the session before this, but the group who supported those issues was still around. And they were now calling themselves the Children's Coalition. They wanted to use the budget surplus you had that year for children's services.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And allocate aid to each county which was involved in the coalition to help them. But I know that Tacoma was very active in that and couldn't get the money. Couldn't get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though there is money this year?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we didn't get it. I'll never forget that. And it really broke my heart. I'll never forget that because the Tacoma coalition was really looking forward to using the money and they had it all planned. One of my dear friends, Carl Anderson, was a member of that coalition and he was actively lobbying me and I couldn't get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where did the money go?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. Who knows? Dissipated among other areas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dribbled out here and there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Dribbled out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Other people were very frustrated with the whole children's issue scenario. Even some surprising groups of people. Linda Smith and Larry Vognild – who I don't think teamed together very often...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Never.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were part of a group who proposed a new agency: Children, Youth, and Family Services, to carve this out of DSHS. And they said that they saw your Department of Health maneuver as their model, that they were "tired of excuses from DSHS and wanted to follow your lead."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I had done the Health Department. But, I didn't support that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently a children's agency was proposed several times. And never really happened. But there was this continuing frustration with DSHS' inability to address some important needs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There's always been frustration – that agency has never worked. You know, even when it was first organized, it wouldn't work. It's working better under Dennis Braddock, but it still isn't working. And then Jean Soliz got caught in the trap of the Boys' Ranch, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's so unwieldy as an agency.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's unwieldy, no one person can handle it. There is so much disagreement with members of the group. I don't believe they like one another. And they are always attempting to pull out. It is a very difficult job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like a thankless task. Well, another issue to do with caring for children and vulnerable people was FIP, the Family Independence Program. The previous session, Dan McDonald as the Senate budget chief, had held back funding for that program pending a performance review and the issue was that it was actually too successful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was working!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Too many people were flocking to the program because it had real promise and it became over-enrolled and therefore absorbed a lot of money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It became over-enrolled because they used a lottery to decide who was going to get the program. Instead of going into areas

where there was low unemployment, like Seattle, because everybody wanted it, they went into areas where they used a lottery. Vancouver got one, and Vancouver was very poor. I mean they had a lot of unemployment down in that area. They went into areas where it couldn't work. That was the beginning of the end. And then McDonald didn't put the money in so we couldn't get the federal matching money. So they broke faith. That would have been working and we'd have been home free.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a fight in which you are a noted participant.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and I lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What weapons did you use in this battle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there was nothing I could use. Because it was over-enrolled and that was because it was not controlled in the beginning. I couldn't control it because I wasn't writing the rules and regulations that DSHS was doing. So they went to a lottery to appease the Legislature and it destroyed the program. And then Dan wouldn't put the money in and we couldn't generate the federal funds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Frustrating to lose matching money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It could have worked, but we were in the minority. And that's what happens. I was offered the slot on the Pierce County Council just when we were working on FIP; I wanted to run but they told me I'd have to quit right then and take the job in the County Council but I was chairing the committee and I couldn't and I wouldn't. And I didn't get the Council position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were too involved in this fight.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wouldn't have been fair. So I didn't. So anyway, it went down the tube.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was hard fought. There was a big split in Ways and Means along party lines.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And now Dan was saying how great this was working. Well, it wasn't working because the Feds wouldn't let

us do it our way. It would still have worked if we could have done it our way, but the Feds said, "No, we're going to have an overall thing. We're going to have to get seventy percent of the people off of welfare." Well, if they are looking for work and signed up for work, we included them and so doing it our way, it was working, but the Feds wouldn't let it happen. It was a new President; the President said they had to get seventy percent of them off welfare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems like quite a large number. You joined other Democrats in proposing amendments in the second reading but the amendments failed on the straight party-line vote.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We knew they weren't going to go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the place where Republicans held together. Some Democrats did peel off and go with the Republicans, but you did not. Then it was sent to Rules.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Third reading.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember you talking about the Ninth Order of Business being quite rare, but Irv Newhouse used that to pull the bill out of Rules on March 20.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, well, if you're in the majority, it's easy. If you're in the minority, you can't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More amendments were offered and then Newhouse motioned to defer consideration. The amendments were withdrawn, and McDonald offered more amendments, which were accepted. And then, in the final passage, it passed through unanimously and that puzzled me. I mean, you voted for it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They must have added an amendment I approved. Because if I hadn't voted for it, all my people would not have voted for it, but I'm the last one to vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somehow it was fixed. It was one of those little surprising maneuvers.

Another very large bill that session was the Braddock-Wojahn Health Care Bill. He introduced it in the House and you introduced it

in the Senate. This was to create a seventeen-member Commission to study a proposal for universal access to health care. To help check the escalating costs and figure out a new list of services. It was modeled on the health care system in British Columbia.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't go anywhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people called it "socialized medicine" but Braddock called it "civilized medicine."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I love it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The idea was that contributions would be made through direct premiums or premiums made by employers, and families with incomes at or below the poverty level were to pay nothing. Did you and he get together to discuss what you wanted to do here? How did you go about designing this plan?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That must have been the beginning of the bill which provided for low-income health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. It was kind of the first move.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the first step. And then we didn't get it, but McDermott picked it up in the next session and got the bill. It was patterned after the Canadian system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go and study the B.C. system?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember what we did. I think Braddock had actually initiated all of that and got me to sponsor it in the Senate just to get it before the people, with no hope of it ever passing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This newspaper article said, "It would force law makers to radically change how health care is provided in Washington. Braddock proposed the state set levels of medical care to be available and set prices that doctors and hospitals could charge. It calls for the creation of this seventeen-member commission to develop a universal health access plan and a list of services that would be available." One thing that's always puzzled me, about all these health care bills, is why is health

care tied to employment? Why is it not more like education, just a "right?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. You're right. I don't know either. And it should not be insurance; it's not insurance. It's a right. And I don't know why we can't come to that. I completely agree with you. They are trying to ladle it onto employers and it shouldn't be done. That's the reason I want a one-percent income tax, dedicated in a trust fund to be used solely for health care. It would cover it and then the employers would be off the hook. We would collect an income tax, one percent, a one percent corporate income tax and we could raise \$17 billion and we could do it. And it should be a one-party pay because then you don't have insurance companies getting a take on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, all the paperwork is part of the cost.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! But you don't let insurance get involved because it's not insurance. And then everybody would have their own health card – man, woman, and child – and you could use the health insurance which we pay for state employees to go to that end. Take industrial insurance, the medical aid out of industrial insurance, throw that in. And, there's one other area we could throw in, Medicaid. Throw that money in and we'd have plenty of money. I can't sell it! And it's not insurance!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems so simple when you put it that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It should never have been insurance; it shouldn't even be talked about as insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand during the war years, companies wanted to find new ways to have their employees be loyal to them and keep them on board. It was during a period of high employment, low unemployment, so offering health benefits was a way to draw workers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was a carrot on the end of a stick.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It grew from there and we seem completely unable to untie that knot.



**Sen. Wojahn:** You know another way we could do it would be to force employers to do it by using the unemployment compensation program. Because that's a federal program, started by the Feds and employers have to participate in it or they pay a tax that's more than they would pay for unemployment comp. And the money goes back to the Feds and they give it back to us. It's a total federal program. We could do that with health insurance. Require them to pay for health insurance, if they don't pay for health insurance, put a tax on them that would be more than what they were paying. We could do it either way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if you lose your job, then you lose your health care. Just when you're most vulnerable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the bad part. But it would be a start. I talked to Phil about that when we were doing the health bill, and we decided it wasn't a good idea. But it could be done. And it could be done rationally. Then everything would cost more, but people would have the money because they wouldn't have these huge health care costs, or these huge insurance costs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which are only getting worse.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The best one is the simple one-percent income tax. Put it in a trust and allocate it for health and for health only. Simple, simple, simple. Well, people are beginning to talk about it; I've been doing it for six years, now ten years. I put the bill in and we finally had a hearing on it, you know, last year after I had retired. I went down to Olympia for the hearing and even Senator Deccio said we were going to come to it. He wouldn't vote for it; he called it socialized medicine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's not going to go away as an issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Do you know what the CEO for Multi-Care – who's a woman, incidentally, a great woman – said to me at a meeting, "People think the whole thing is going to explode. We just can't keep doing it. We don't have the money." And now I understand trauma money has been cut back. You know, I did the bill

which provided funding for trauma care. Part of the money has been held in reserve, but now I understand trauma care is going under because the hospitals have to collect from the insurance companies first; it takes time. If they don't get it, then it falls on the state or if it's trauma it is paid for out of the trauma fund. Well, they put a ceiling on the money which could be used for trauma. There's more money there, but they put a ceiling on the amount which can be taken out.

Then later, when the state was in financial trouble, the Ways and Means Committee authorized the use of trauma funds for the General Fund even though trauma was a trust fund! God! Now Multi-Care's telling me they are still paying their emergency doctors they had to hire to take care of trauma. They are paying their salaries and not always getting the money back and they don't know long they can keep doing that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Stay tuned! Well, you were trying; you were deep into health care issues now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, I'm in so deep, and I still am.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** First, you created the Department of Health, and then you were going at this angle. So this was becoming one of your biggest areas of interest.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it seems to be collapsing now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, not for lack of trying. You worked on several other bills to do with health. One was Senate Bill 6191 establishing the Washington State Trauma Care System; you and Senator West worked on that together. This bill set up the Department of Health to oversee the integration of trauma care systems with emergency services throughout the state. This bill passed unanimously, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was a great bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you part of the Trauma Advisory Committee from 1988? They did the background work which resulted in the creation of this statewide system. That report seems to lead to this bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I was not on that committee, but I was appointed to the follow-up committee in 2000.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had some other bills addressing health care needs that session. The Department of Health was directed to establish the Health Professional Temporary Substitute Resource Pool; I gather a doctor might be the only health care provider in an area and he could never take a vacation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they put a nurse practitioner in who could report back to the doctor. It makes sense. We did the same thing for midwives because we didn't have enough midwives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you had a scholarship program through the HEC Board to recruit physicians, pharmacists and midwives who would then go into rural committees.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what it was supposed to do. It was a program to train doctors. But there wasn't enough money and we weren't getting enough doctors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were searching for ways to take care of these issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are just piece-meal ways, you know, but you have to do something. A nurse practitioner could stabilize a patient enough to get them to a hospital. Because there are only so many health centers in the whole state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of your other bills allowed prescriptions to be filled across state borders. Another bill provided for the prevention of head injuries. The background on that one said that head-injury patients account for more than one-third of the patients receiving \$47,500 or more in medical care – a large amount. So you had this act known as the Head Injury Prevention Act which promoted seat belt use and helmets for bicycles and motorcycles.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They eventually become wards of the state and the taxpayers end up paying the bill for their care. That's the reason we insist on motorcycle helmets. The public pays. Kids up to sixteen had to wear helmets. That was before we

got the helmet bill back and Jeannette Hayner was the one who supported both of them. It was incredible. You have to do something. And kids were forced to ride motorcycles, little kids, and then we said, "You can't do that anymore."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have a friend who's a doctor who says if you wear a seat belt, wear a helmet and don't smoke, you've taken care of ninety to ninety-five percent of the things that are going to shorten your lifespan.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, things that are going to kill you. Now, if you can get the packing houses to clean up their act and not permit E-coli to get into the food chain, we'd be doing another big service. When we did the Wholesome Meat Act, I lobbied in Congress and that was a great bill. Then they had meat inspectors and the state of Washington picked up and hired a lot more. Well, when we were low on funds, they let them all go, so we relied on the Feds to do it, and the Feds are not doing a good job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody's not. You were a sponsor of another bill: changing provisions regulating occupational therapy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Created the ability for occupational therapists to do more things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had quite a few bills coming out of that committee which did pass. But you were still working on the disabilities trust land issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That has never been resolved. That's another one Representative Carrell got into, not knowing anything about it. They said I was trying to take away their sports fields and build condominiums. That was not true. I was trying to get the land back. The county wasn't paying the agreed amount. And among other things, the county failed to build a storage facility for the hospital and instead they built a house on the property to house their groundskeeper. It was supposed to be for the mentally ill. Western State Hospital was granted the land by the U.S. government to be used for the mentally ill and for no other purpose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I believe that went back to the territorial period.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Shifting gears now, I don't know if you did any work on this, but a really large bill discussed during the session was the Growth Management Bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't have very much to do with that. It was being done because Pierce County refused to do their job. They were dragging their feet and there were garages going up next to private homes and slaughter houses going up next to housing developments. It was really bad!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of chaotic sounding.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very chaotic. If you have ever driven out Pacific Avenue, beyond the city limits, it's absolutely a disaster. There are all of these fast-food places like Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonalds and the drivers are having to cross a busy highway to get to access to their homes. There are very few traffic signals because of lack of funding, a lack of caring by the county. And no ability to control it. For the County Council to take hold – or they don't take hold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No political willpower?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No willpower.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you support Growth Management, even if you weren't directly involved in this legislation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I recognized the need. You can't just let things happen like Topsy. Bad things happen and accidents occur.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Gardner had appointed a Growth Strategies Commission the previous year, in 1989, and they came back with this huge study. There were a lot of commissions in these years but it seems to be a good mechanism for gathering a lot of data. One thing that was very interesting to me was the leadership role of women in getting the Growth Management Bill through. Affectionately called the "Steel Magnolias" in the House by Speaker King and other people. There were six House committee chairs, all women: Ruth Fisher, Maria Cantwell, Jennifer Belcher, Mary

Margaret Haugen, Nancy Rust and Busse Nutley. What was also interesting was bringing together these committee chairs – that's a lot of different committees – and having them work together. That seemed like a new strategy. What did you think of this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was great. I decided that if you let women run the world, we'd have a much better world out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they pushed this one through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I had dreamed about more and more women in the Legislature, you know. It was always my goal to get more women involved, instead of waiting for something to happen, getting them involved in seeking election. It's always, "After I get through this, I will; when my children are raised; after, I'll do this; or when I get my profession started; and on down the road I will do it," but it never happened. You had to get women involved early and get them interested in running.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a powerful group, a little salty. Ruth Fisher, instead of being called the "Steel Magnolias" quipped she would prefer to be called the "Terrorist Society, plus Joe and Larry." Referring to Larry Phillips, who I guess was on their committee. The women liked this grouping together of committees; that was a fairly different idea, wasn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a fairly unique idea. I remember Mary Margaret coming over to testify before the Senate and Ways and Means Committee to explain something. We all knew what she was going to talk about and so and I don't know who was chair, maybe it was McDermott, he said, "Get on with it." She said, "Well, don't you want to know how to do it?" And he looked at us and he said, "Don't you know how to do it, you people?" It was incredible! She thought we were absolutely stupid, I guess. "Don't you want to know how to do it?" she said. I'll never forget that. We were way ahead of her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, some senators were less than polite. Senator McCaslin got bad press

because he was not very respectful of the women legislators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Bluechel didn't have that problem, but he wanted even stricter provisions; he was a real growth management advocate. There were a lot of different amendments.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bluechel was really a man before his time, too. He was really innovative.

I didn't agree with him a lot of times but he was a very good legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you sort out your own thoughts on all these different amendments and the different ideas? It was a pretty rich mixture of things that people were calling for.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never got involved because very few of those things happened on the Floor of the Senate. I was never on those committees. This was handled by Local Government or the State Government Committee. And the thing is that most of the senators have been there long enough that they had a little bit of knowledge about a lot of things, and if you were on Ways and Means you had a lot of knowledge about fiscal things. And so when I made that remark about Mary Margaret, she didn't have to explain the thing; we knew what she was after and we either agreed or we didn't agree. You know. And so that was the thing that probably angered or upset McCaslin, that they are going to explain things that he already understood. And that he didn't need that. And so what they were doing was probably appropriate in the House because a lot of the House members were new and needed background and other information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was overkill for the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Overkill for the Senate. And that's the whole thing. And I think that McDermott may have misspoken, although I can understand his frustration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in the Senate, was Senator Bluechel the leader on this issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so, probably. And he understood what he was doing. I think Nita Rinehart was involved with him, to a degree, on the Capitol Budget where a lot of this would occur.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because this was so complicated, would this be the type of bill where you would look to see who was sponsoring various amendments and just go with the people you thought were trustworthy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! And every amendment, if it was critical, would be discussed in caucus. So no matter who was sponsoring it, although there was a difference of party opinion, but if an amendment was good, we accepted it in the caucus. If it wasn't good, we discussed it. So everybody knew what was going on with any of these amendments. And if we agreed with Bluechel, that would be it. I think that he, in his leadership role, probably did a very good job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where would you put yourself on the spectrum of feelings about growth management?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it's absolutely essential. Planning doesn't just occur; planning is a process which has to go on forever and therefore becomes a part of growth management. Because planning doesn't just happen once, it's got to be a continuing thing. It's a process that you constantly go through. My husband was an architect, you know. You plan and you get everything down on paper before you start to build, because if you don't, you get change orders which cost money. So you plan. I was always supportive of planning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were predisposed toward this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I'm gathering you had no difficulty thinking this is a new area for the state to become involved with?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, it had to be done. And if you've traveled – like in Arizona where the planning has been done, you drive into a community, it isn't like a city; it's like the

country. It's beautifully done. And I guess North Carolina has done the same thing. A lot of more backward states have done great planning which we have not done here. And I think that we just grew. But because of the age of some of these states, they've had to go back and redo everything and usually they've done it right. But we're a newer state and we are still in the throes of making the mistakes which were made in the East many years ago.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ruth Fisher is from your district. Did you talk this over with her? Did you have a good working relationship with her?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Anything she sponsored in Transportation, I supported in the Senate and pulled her bills out of Rules. I think that generally occurs, especially if it's the same party. But even if you're not, I know some Democrats were pulling Republicans' bills for their seatmates in the House if they agreed with them. It's a nice thing to do because you try to not make enemies. Although you sometimes do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you share a district, presumably you have some of the same interests and needs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Same interests. And Ruth had served Pierce County on the Planning Commission. I agreed with planning and I knew she understood planning. So there was no conflict.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this achievement boost the careers of these women? Several went on to pretty big leadership positions. Maria Cantwell is now a U.S. Senator, Jennifer Belcher went on to be Lands Commissioner, and certainly Ruth Fisher had a very long career.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you know, one thing I observed in the House was that they all did what the Speaker wanted, otherwise they would not have had their leadership positions, believe me. I remember Ruth Fisher voting for a bill, giving optometrists a lot more rights and her former husband was a dentist. And she was like me, in supporting the ophthalmologists over optometrists and yet she went with this awful bill. I know that! And this happened when Joe King was Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have that kind of power? He had that tight a rein?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he had that kind of power. I watched it. I watched some other bad votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does a Speaker get that kind of power by saying, "If you don't vote for this, there will be repercussions."

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn't say it, but it was understood. Somebody said it, not him. I'll never forget those bad votes. That one bad vote that Ruth took. I said, "How could you?" She said, "You don't know Joe." Yes. But she didn't say he threatened her.



*In Joint Session, sitting with District-mate Rep. Ruth Fisher and Rep. Jerry Ellis from the Fourteenth District (Yakima)*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes you don't have to?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You don't have to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at any rate, this was an exciting time for women legislators. There was a sweet little Senate Resolution by both men and women, but certainly many women senators, brought forward by Senator Rinehart but signed on by yourself and several other people, on the Washington Husky Women's Basketball Team doing very well. You wanted to commend them –

this was a light moment in a long session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The women's basketball team got there because of a bill I sponsored. That was the sex in education bill where we said you have to spend the same amount of money for women's athletics and women's academics and offer them the same opportunities. That's the reason they got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was bearing fruit, here you are.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And also the women's baseball/softball team. And now the national team. There's a women's basketball team. They all got started because of that bill. And it was started by Congress and we were one of the first states to adopt it. Amendments to Title IX offered money to promote women in athletics and academics. And that was a bill I sponsored that we almost lost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go to these games?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been pretty exciting times.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They sent us some complementary tickets and invited us. I didn't buy season tickets because I didn't like driving to Seattle for evening games. I just go for the football games on Saturdays.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You went to several conferences that year and spoke in several instances about women. One of the conferences was about women in sports, strategies for the nineties, called "Choices, Changes and Connections." You spoke on enacting gender equity laws from the legislator's perspective. You, Ken Jacobsen and Representative Louise Miller spoke at this conference so you had a chance to remind people of where these bills had come from.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was on gender equity, yes. And why they happen and all the misery that went to getting the bill through. It almost died in the House and when it was sent back to committee of origin because of a Senate amendment that was rules outside the scope and

purpose of the bill. Oh, yes, Len Sawyer helped me with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then there was another conference in March of that year at the Pacific Lutheran University, "The Women of Vision Conference." You spoke there about women as legislators and what you've accomplished. You began your remarks with a cheer for the Husky Women's basketball champions – something that was very cheering!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was fun. And we actually saw it happen. Because we didn't think it was going to happen. And what started the whole thing was a Supreme Court decision on Wishkah, Washington. They didn't have enough boys to make up a boy's football team and a girl wanted to play and she couldn't because it was against the law. It went all the way to the State Supreme Court and a former intern of mine handled it, Mary Ellen Hudgens, presented the appeal and won a Supreme Court decision that she could play. And it all came about. It happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, here it is, coming to fruition. And a little later that year, another event, in October, there was a "Pat Thibaudeau Tribute." Was it her birthday or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was a lobbyist, a wonderful lobbyist. No, she was being honored by the Women's Political Caucus. And they didn't invite me. I made a point of that because Pat was a personal friend of mine. She's still a dear friend of mine. It was held at Pierce County at the Executive Inn – all the women in the state – and they forgot about me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were just somehow left off the list?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I guess I joined the Caucus and then I didn't join. I don't know, maybe I wasn't a member at that time. You get busy and you don't join all these things. And I was really upset about it. I think I ended up going. They invited me, then. Because the first time in Pierce County that a caucus was formed, I didn't join because I was busy. There were about six women in the Legislature at that time,

and they endorsed all of them but they didn't endorse me. I'll never forget that!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was an oversight.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. There weren't many women in the Legislature when I was first elected and then later other women were elected and they all got endorsed and I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But this event, it turned out? She had been a lobbyist for a long time. I think that you mentioned something about twenty years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. She lobbied for social issues, especially mental health. And then she knew someone with Anheuser-Busch and they asked her if she wanted to take a job; she took it for one session. It was incredible. She came to me and said, "What do you think about my taking a job with Anheuser-Busch? I've been offered a job and it's a great salary." And I said, "Take it." Well, she did for one session, but she said it didn't interest her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Her heart wasn't in it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Her heart was not; she went back to lobbying for social issues. She graduated from Whitman and then Smith College, with a Masters Degree from Smith. A marvelous lady.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Within a few years she was elected to the House in her own right and then in 1995, she came to the Senate. So she becomes an even closer colleague of yours.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. She's a very dear friend. I went because of Pat. I forgave them and I did appear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you then join?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I didn't. I send campaign contributions to women who I think needed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Murray, what was she like to work with?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was okay. She was kind of narrow in her interests sometimes. She understood educational issues, but I remember I went to her and asked her if she would co-sponsor a bill that I was sponsoring on funding

for kids who have dyslexia. And she argued with me; she said she wouldn't do it because she didn't think they should be separated from the main classroom. And I said, "I'm not suggesting they be separated from the main classroom. I understand there's a need to keep them with their peers, but we need to give them some special help because they can't read." I finally persuaded her and she went on the bill with me. I don't think we got any money that year. I got some money about four years later for "Another Door of Learning" which was working directly with dyslexic kids. But I was glad when she won the U.S. Senate seat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You do have another new colleague, who was, of course, no stranger. Sid Snyder was appointed to replace Senator Arlie DeJarnatt, who had died that fall. And then he was elected in his own right immediately.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He's been a real joy to have in the Senate. He's a wonderful man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He should speak for himself, but what was it like for him to transition from being a staffer to a legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He knew everything. He was so good. He was so good on rules. And we felt so comfortable when Sid came because if we ever got into a squabble over the interpretation of the rules, he was there. And having been Secretary of the Senate for so long – and he's just a joy to have aboard.



*Newly elected Senator Sid Snyder is "just a joy to have aboard."*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it fun to see him on the Floor rather than on the rostrum?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. It was fun to have him there. It was a joy to have him there; it was everything I can describe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He becomes a leader almost immediately.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a leader. He was a leader. And yet he was a leader who led by example. He didn't lead by being ostentatious or noisy. Sometimes you have to be, though. If no one listens to you for four or five years, and you keep battling, you have to be. And that's the reason I got that horrible nick-name, which I kind of like now. But Sid was my alternative; he was my alter ego, because he was so great. And he could always soften anything I said. It was good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a good team? Though your leader that session, Larry Vognild, was having problems, I guess. There was this odd resolution brought forward by Senator Thorsness against flag burning and it really played up all the patriot/veterans issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes, he served one term. He was a real jerk. He was a prisoner of war, which he never let us forget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, Larry Vognild, himself was a veteran. He had seen combat. But the way the resolution was worded and the way it was pushed through called for a recorded roll-call vote. And people who voted against it, it was used against them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We were accused of being un-American and not patriotic and all this other crap.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Larry Vognild was one of the twelve Democrats who voted against it, including yourself. But being a woman, I suppose you have a slightly different position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If women were all in authority, we'd never have any more wars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was targeted during the next election by the Republicans. Was he vulnerable?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, anybody's vulnerable. When they get targeted like that and an example like that is used against them. This happens. And let me tell you something, the other party is famous for doing that. Especially when Ken Eikenberry was the head of the party. He was the chairman of the Republican Party and he used every dirty trick in the book. He had a little manual which was awful: "The truth is never the truth and if you say it three times or more, people will believe what you say." This whole protocol was just awful, the little booklet. And he may have been the chairman of the party at that time he took on Larry Vognild.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This newspaper article said, "In Vognild's case, the state Republican Party dispatched a: 'We thought you ought to know' letter," with "Your state senator says, 'Let them burn the flag,' stamped on the envelope." It continues, "In the emotional debate that went on for parts of two days, Thorsness made the unusual request of asking for a recorded roll-call vote, rather than the standard voice vote."

**Sen. Wojahn:** So they could use that against Vognild and every other Democrat who voted against the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "At the time, Vognild, a Korean war veteran, told fellow law-makers that he smelled a political trap and in fact, he did, and was trapped by this." I gather that was a fairly dirty election? There were reportedly quite a few maneuvers of that variety.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was. They sent these letters out to a lot of people who were vulnerable. I didn't get one in my district, but I should have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering about whether this vote ever came back to bite you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not on that issue, but I was hit on one. But they never used it because it would have done them no good because I always got eighty-five or ninety percent of the vote, anyway. Anyway, the one they were going to use against me was a bill the pro-lifers had which said that a doctor had to make every effort to save every baby who was born. And I



took exception to that because doctors always make every attempt to save babies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they somewhat intimating that doctors would not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were intimating that doctors were murdering babies when they performed abortions. That's during the time they were talking about partial birth abortion. I voted against that bill. It was a terrible bill and I think I was one of the only ones who voted against it, because even McDermott voted for it. There were two doctors in the Senate at that time, Dr. Haley and Dr. McDermott, both medical doctors, and they both voted for it and I voted no. I got up and said, "In my opinion, as I have observed it, doctors attempt to save every baby and this is just a cruel hoax against them."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember that debate. I'd like to switch gears now and discuss this newspaper article titled, "Wojahn's Ploy May Preserve Tax Break," about your historic preservation work in Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The bill had been brought to us some years before by an attorney from Seattle by the name of Peter Goldmark; he wanted it for historic preservation for nonprofits to collect tax exemptions for the preservation of historic buildings. It was a very good bill. Senator Slim Rasmussen did not like it, but I did. I studied it for a while but recognized that we needed it in Tacoma because we had a lot of buildings with historic preservation possibilities, including Stadium High School for which my husband was the architect on the original preservation. And we have a lot of other historic buildings. Since we're a relatively new state, we don't have a lot of historic buildings in existence. So I was determined, after reading the bill and okaying it several years before – we passed the bill but put a sunset on so that it would eventually be sun-setted out and it would no longer be able to be used. I didn't particularly approve of that but it seemed the only way to go at the time in order to get the bill passed. Anyway, it was some years later and the sunset was about to be activated and we still had

historic buildings in Tacoma on which we could collect tax exemptions and we needed to use it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When people get these tax breaks, is the purpose to help them renovate the buildings and keep them up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. It also helps them to sell the tax to another group willing to buy it in order to renovate or rebuild. They can use the tax in any way they wish to use it. And it means money is available. We had attempted to remove the sunset on the bill so that it could be continued for a few more years. My seatmate in the House was Representative Wang who didn't agree with me and who had fought the bill in the first place. And so it became a tug of war between us. I kept sending the bill to the House of Representatives, or as amendments to other bills, and he kept removing them because he chaired the committee in which the bills were being heard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what was his particular objection to the bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't believe he approved of tax credits for anything. It was a philosophical position. He believed that a tax credit to one group imposed a tax liability on another group and that people could get hurt. He wasn't all wrong. However, I believed that a tax credit, if used wisely and rarely, should be available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was not that he was against historic preservation, he was against granting tax credits?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, just tax credits in general and he was firm about it. I was *comme ci comme ca*; I mean, I felt there were times when it could be used to advantage, and needed to be used and there were other times I didn't agree with tax exemptions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's one tool in your toolbox, so to speak?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a tool to be used, as you mentioned, in my toolbox to do the things that needed to be done, in my opinion, to preserve, or to assist Tacoma or Pierce County in handling problems. I knew I couldn't get it on that bill. I found a title it could fit under and I

went to Al Williams, who was from my party and asked him if he would be willing to sponsor the amendment and if he would attempt to get Ann Anderson from Bellingham and McMullen from Skagit County to go on it with him because they were from rather conservative areas and this was a bill which had to do with something in their area, as I remember, but the title was broad enough to accept it. So he got them to sign on; the three of them went on the amendment to the bill. When the bill got over to Art Wang's committee, I understand he said to his committee, "I wonder what Anderson and McMullen want for Skagit County?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he didn't recognize it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn't recognize the amendment title and so it got out of committee and got on the Floor of the House, eventually. And he got up and explained the bill and said there was this one amendment they always had to watch because bad things could happen if people accepted some of these amendments. And he made that statement, which made it even more abundantly refreshing to me that he hadn't read it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he was basically just looking for your name?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your name wasn't on it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My name wasn't on it. And Williams was for historic preservation as an architect. All I know is that the title was acceptable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The ruse worked then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It worked. And so it passed and I knew about it and Williams knew about it and Anderson and McMullen. But nobody else knew about it. And I said to them, "We can't talk about this because somebody will get wind of it." Well, somehow Art did get wind of it and he kept pacing before the Governor's office trying to get Governor Gardner to veto the bill. I guess the Governor found out about it through his attorney and was warned. He didn't call me; I didn't call him, but somebody got hold of his wife, who was in Italy at the time, Jean Gardner,

and said, "For goodness sake, don't let him veto that bill." And she called the Governor, several times and said, "Whatever you do, do not veto that bill; we need it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he find it a little odd that his wife was somehow in on it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He laughed about it. When he signed the bill, he was laughing still because she found out about it and he had found out about it, but she found out about it unbeknownst to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So somebody else, besides you, is working this pretty well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I know someone who found out about it; it was the attorney for the City of Tacoma, Bob Mack knew about it. And I don't know how he found out about it because I didn't tell anybody. I think Ruth Fisher knew about it, maybe through Bob Mack, but she didn't tell anybody and she was also the seatmate of Wang and so these two people kept their mouths shut, but it didn't come from me because the minute the amendment got on the bill, I forgot about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's a good thing that somebody else was working it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't know these things were going on behind the scenes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Otherwise Jean Gardner wouldn't have made the phone call?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And the Governor signed the bill and we still have the tax credit. The tax credit was used to help to preserve the Sprague Building, which is an historic building that abuts the Union Station downtown, part of the historic area of Tacoma. And they got \$1.5 million because they were able to sell the tax credits to Pierce County Medical Bureau. We had already gotten – through a straight arrow approach – \$650,000 to help the Sprague Building. So they got, in addition to the \$1.5 million tax credits, they got this money that I got on a straight bill, because Representative Wang would not put it on the Capitol Budget for the Sprague Building. So he resisted me in two areas and I was battling him on the Sprague Building to get that money, to not kill the bill

and my Sprague Bill. I didn't put it in the Capitol Budget – I wanted to, but he wouldn't accept it. So I just went straight forward and helped the United Way to get money for the building and then we were able to collect the \$1.5 million in addition.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which is a substantial infusion of money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Substantial. They have a plaque in the Sprague Building depicting that I did something for them, a "Friend of United Way," I guess. And that happened. It's the one time I got press; you know, I rarely got good press in the Tribune.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they applauded you. They liked the achievement and even though your fingerprints weren't on it, eventually they figured it out. That's a good story!

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to do things like that in the Legislature sometimes; if you believe in something strong enough, you do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you can't always assume that your area people are with you on every project.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you never know and I didn't tell my people I was doing this because if I had it probably wouldn't have happened. Everyone would have known about it and the people are now realizing the plusses which have occurred because of that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just keeping the spotlight off it is sometimes a good thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's better, it's better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, do you think Governor Gardner would have vetoed this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know; I really don't know. I kind of doubt it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know his wife is a big history supporter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think having been born and raised in the state, he does care about maintaining some of the history. We don't have much history because we're a new state and we need lighthouse bills like this to help us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's from Tacoma so he would have some knowledge of the area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He's from Tacoma, but it helps everybody in the state. But it was, in this instance primarily, to help with Tacoma issues and it did help. Sometimes people buy buildings in order to hold them up for future profit and that's happened now with the old Elks Club. A fellow bought it for a little bit of money and he's been holding it up for a lot more money, hoping to make money on it. The city needs to condemn it and get rid of it if they can't do anything with it and he's been holding out. Eventually, that's going to be torn down, I think, because nobody's going to pick it up and he won't sell for the price he's been offered for it. So this is a danger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least you saved one building. Another piece of history during the 1990 session: the annual Democratic caucus report that year was dedicated to Warren Magnuson who had just passed away. I wanted to take this opportunity for you to reflect a little bit on his contributions, if you could.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he probably was the best thing that ever happened to the state of Washington and the taxpayers showed their thanks by shoving him out when he was still a viable person. He was chairman of the Appropriations Committee in the U.S. Senate from whence all the money flows.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And, in his case, quite a bit.

**Sen. Wojahn:** For every ten dollars we sent to D.C., we got eleven dollars back in tax credits or assists and when he left, we got nothing! And from that time, we've had nothing but misery. The first thing that happened when President Reagan became President was they removed a lot of money from DSHS which we had to replace, about \$125 million was immediately removed. I remember that. The Legislature was able to replace that; we were able to handle it. We've always handled these things, but eventually, things come to a screeching halt. And without the help of Senator Magnuson – with a brand new U.S. Senator back there, there was no help. And then the following year, we

lost Senator Jackson, who was the third-ranking U.S. Senator. And so from then, everything came to a screeching halt as far as the state of Washington was concerned.

We wouldn't have the medical school at the University of Washington, we wouldn't have the medical grants flowing in to the University of Washington; we still rank second in the nation with grants on medical issues flowing through the Warren Magnuson Medical Group at the University of Washington. But we ranked first for a number of years with Senator Magnuson there available to help out. And the grants, of course, came through policy statements and grants made through requests of various research doctors at the University of Washington Medical School. And we've always been first and foremost in there. And from that has come a cure for Hodgkin's disease, a treatment for kidney dialysis through the Scribner shunt, and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center that brings the state into high rank in the world for stem cell research, all the result of Senator Magnuson's efforts. All these things occurred because of what he did for the citizens of the state of Washington. And he didn't always demand credit for what he did.

A lot of the consumer protection laws in the state of Washington flowed through him: the Truth in Lending Bill, the Truth in Packaging Bill; all these things happened as a result of his expertise in negotiations. He didn't sponsor them always, but he negotiated them. It was through him I was able to get the Garnishment Amendments through the Truth in Lending Bill. I received the first copy of his book – he signed it for me, *On the Dark Side of the Market Place*, written by Senator Magnuson when I was doing my consumer work for the state of Washington. And so it was a sad day for the state when he was defeated for re-election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you happen to go to his funeral?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I also went to Senator Jackson's.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there throngs of people there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. It was very sad. I don't remember much about either one of the funerals but I was in attendance at both. Featherstone Reid had worked for him; he was a committee staff for the U.S. Appropriations and then eventually worked for the state of Washington for Jim McDermott on Ways and Means. We go back a long way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Warren Magnuson and Henry Jackson were just giants. I don't think we'll ever see such a concentration of power in this state again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Jackson had a much bigger funeral service because he was still a U.S. Senator when he died. Magnuson was not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, Speaker Tom Foley – that would probably be the third big Washington presence in D.C.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew Tom Foley. I help him get re-elected. I was with the State Labor Council at the time. And we elected a whole body of new Congress people. He beat Walt Horan in Spokane. Tom Foley was the son of a Superior Court judge in Spokane and it was through the efforts of the COPE Committee of the Washington State Labor Council that he won that election along with Lloyd Meeds, who ran in Skagit and Snohomish County, Brock Adams in King County, and Floyd Hicks in Pierce County. We took in a whole new group – we took out every single congressman except for one representing King County. That was through the strong efforts of the COPE Committee. I still have the scars from that. But it was worth doing and we did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just seemed important to mark that passing. Senator Magnuson cast a long shadow.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the person elected after Magnuson tried to play down what he did by calling him "too old to run," you know. Maria Cantwell used the same approach.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess what goes around, comes around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Comes around, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the same time you were serving on the Community Protection Task Force as we discussed, you were also serving on the Long Term Care Commission, from 1989 to December of 1990. On that commission, Dennis Braddock, Jim West and Duane Sommers served, and Jean Soliz was also on the Executive Committee, although not a legislator. You did your work and there was a report released in 1991 in time for the session. I wanted to discuss with you your work on that Commission and your findings. Jim West and Dennis Braddock were the co-chairs, one from the Senate and one from the House. One of the issues which emerged was the new role of AIDS in long-term care needs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That became the key of the whole thing, I believe. I remember very little of that Commission; I wasn't the chair of the committee anymore; Jim West was. I don't remember being involved with very much that was done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Originally, the thinking in this area tended to be about the elderly who needed services, but with the AIDS population becoming statistically important, that changed the focus of long-term care issues. One of the trends in the report was there was both a growing number of people who needed long-term care – with elder issues, AIDS, head trauma, all the different things like that – but it was noted, there was a decrease in people able to care for them, primarily because women, who were the traditional care givers, were not there. They were at work, in increasing numbers. And they could no longer be relied on as the people to pick up the pieces and take care of various family members. Also, people were living longer so they needed the care for a greater period of time. These were really driving the numbers and the need – which is perhaps what provoked the calling of the commission.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that the spotlight really shone more on the AIDS problem than any other problem, as I remember. I don't remember us doing anything besides submitting a report, except that the public did something about it because from that came the extended living

areas. Not nursing homes any more, but assisted living and from that has come the various elements. The nursing home became an extension of a hospital in which persons who had had surgery were almost immediately shifted into a nursing home rather than remain in the hospital at \$4,000 a day – it is gradually building up to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's not very supportable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, and so from that came nursing homes picking up more and more of the surgery patients who were able to leave the hospital but needed extended care. From that came assisted living for people who needed help with their medications but could live independently within a group situation. There are several definitions now of extended care.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you have more gradations of care, depending on what people need, rather than the all-or-nothing model?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It used to be the hospital and nursing home. Now, in addition to the DD facilities, which have always been available, we are gradually eliminating the institutional care. We've developed all these as a result of that study, perhaps, but the focus of the whole study landed right on the heart of the problem which was AIDS. It called for long-term care for young people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The report pushed all the issues. You redefined what long-term care was all about. Who was the population who needed it, just to rethink the whole thing. It called for more nuanced responses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And actually, responses came because it was a way for various entrepreneurs to go into the business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, one point that was interesting – and I don't know if this is brand new, or just the recognition – but the discussion of people's long-term care needs were classified not by what disease they had but by what level of functioning they had, from severe and needing twenty-four hour care, for whatever reason, down to those who were fairly independent, but just needing a little help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just needed meals cooked, or needed a place to live with their meals provided and care for health issues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people who live with Multiple Sclerosis are quite independent and can do most things, but other people with the very same disease as it's progressed need much more care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It depends on their care-giver and the availability of the care-giver in the home. How long they can stay in their own home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I guess previously, if you had MS or Parkinson's or something else, that was it. There was no acknowledgment there was a huge variety of need within that setting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But as the report says, as you mention, with the availability of in-home care, through a mother, wife – that was disappearing, they had joined the work force.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a recommendation for more chore service support.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And now we actually pay relatives to take care of family members if they wish to do it, if they can do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The report acknowledges that it is work and valuable work. So that was an interesting committee service. This issue occupies a lot of legislative energy for several years; do these commissions focus attention or come up with certain recommendations that then people work on, is that how it works?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's proven to be true. The commissions call attention to problems and society picks up the problems, generally. Some things take longer than others, but eventually they are picked up and handled, so the commission only focuses on the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's a way to bring to attention? And bring experts together to look for solutions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And create solutions. Assist with creating solutions, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes people kind of make fun of these commissions and say, "That report is just going to sit on a shelf and gather dust."

**Sen. Wojahn:** But this one didn't. It was studied and used.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like a lot of legislation comes about from this sort of group effort.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Most of the commission reports don't sit on shelves and gather dust. Somebody out there picks them up and does something about it and that's the value of them. Especially if they are well thought-out and carefully delineated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, as a legislator who has sat on several of these commissions, does it also help you to identify who the experts are so that if you need testimony or you need some ammunition, you don't just have your own opinion? You have a very thick report and all kinds of contacts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That rests with the committee staff. The names of people who are available, people who understand issues; they are invaluable. The committee staff is one of the most valuable assets of the legislative process and it's so much better to have them available to us on a full-time basis than to have the legislative committee which used to function during the interim. There was a skeleton staff during session, but an extended staff during interim – it didn't work. We needed full-time staffs. And I believe that's true of any legislative body. That they cannot do it alone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, these are full-time problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are full-time problems; they require full-time assistance and a legislator who's being directed in many directions cannot sit down and concentrate on one. But with good staffing, they can turn their attention to the various areas and make value judgments and decisions based upon the staff work done for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That implies a great deal of trust in the staff.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! That is important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people worry that the staff really run the Legislature, and not the legislators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, no, no. When I chaired the committee, I relied substantially on Jean Soliz and Don Sloma who were outstanding and always gave it to us straight. And no one was denied access to them – no member of the committee was denied access. They could do anything for the committee members they wished to do. When there was a bill prepared, I wanted to see it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So who is it that hires the staff? Would you as chair have control of that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Usually the committee chair. I hired them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's part of the chairman's judgment?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. I hired Jean Soliz and Don Sloma. When I chaired the Banking Committee, I hired Marty Brown, but then he left and went with the overall staff. I hired Gail Ditlevson, for my attorney but I lost her when she joined the staff of the Lieutenant Governor. So then I hired another person and it all blew up within six weeks later when Senator Peter von Reichbauer bolted the Democratic Party and joined the Republicans. I lost him anyway when he went to work for a medical service group, Mel Sorensen – a brilliant young man. When I chaired the Commerce Committee, I had Bob O'Brien, who was outstanding. You learn to trust people. You learn to live with them. You are spending hours and hours a day with them. I always had Sharon Case working for me; she worked for us in the caucus and then she worked for me as my secretary. Then she went with me when I chaired the Commerce Committee and she became my staff director. Later, she became the Deputy Chief Clerk of the House and then she became a lobbyist.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She certainly knows the territory.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sharon Case was a trusted member of my team. She was always wonderful. Evie White and Myra DeLaunay – you rely on these people. And Bob McDaniels. They are your crutch. They were all invaluable. One of the wonderful staff people, whom I had as an intern working through the preservation of the Board of Health and then getting the Health Department moved out of DSHS, is now a practicing attorney in Seattle – Kathy Lynn. So these are all people on whom I have relied. They have been part of my right and left arms and my heart and my head, you bet.

## CHAPTER 21: "PROTECT, PERSIST, HAVE PATIENCE," 1991



**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1991, you had a shake up in your caucus leadership I would like to discuss. Larry Vognild, who had been your leader, was still in the Legislature but he left the Senate just a year later. He seems to have lost his leadership position, however. I'm not clear about that. There were some controversies within your caucus which are mentioned in newspaper accounts, chiefly to do with lack of election results. You were still a minority party by one in the Senate. Could we talk about internal caucus matters now?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a shake up. There was, you bet. There was a group trying to elect Pat McMullen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was apparently a contest for several positions: Mike Kreidler wanted to move up in leadership, McMullen did, and Larry Vognild, for whatever reason, was vulnerable and left the leadership.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember what happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The article I have from the paper quotes, "Embattled Senator Larry Vognild has stepped aside as leader of the fractured Senate Democratic caucus, paving the way for the election of Senator Marcus Gaspard and a

more aggressive team. Vognild has been under the gun for his low-key style after the Democrats' second straight loss of the majority. A number of caucus members have said publicly that they want a higher profile in Olympia rather than meekly acquiescing to Senate majority leader Jeannette Hayner's Republicans, who hold a twenty-five to twenty-four edge. Vognild and other caucus members said a three-way race has shaped up for the vacant post of caucus chairman." The leadership position was somewhat up in the air and so was the caucus chair position. So it seems like there is a lot of jockeying for place there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember any meetings, although there may have been little groups meeting. I didn't become a part of any of those. I seemed to have managed to avoid all that, I don't know why.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even if you stayed clear of it, how did you feel about this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** First, if there's going to be a change, I would always go with the person from Pierce County. I've always done that. When I first went to the Legislature, I went in with Len Sawyer and Buster Brouillet and I always retained my preference for Pierce County; there was Ted Bottiger, also. The only time I tried to change was when there was a rumble between Ted and Jim McDermott and it was threatening to really foul up the election and I got them together in my house for lunch and said, "You've got to stop it. Stop this sparing for the leadership when we don't even know we're going to get the majority back." And so they backed off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** First things first.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there was a knock-down drag-out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about Larry Vognild? Did you feel he was "meekly acquiescing?"



**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't think it was fair. I always stayed with the leader and up until the point in time where the actual separation was going to take place, I didn't take sides. And as I remember, there was a battle between McMullen and Gaspard and then Sid Snyder was also available. And I believed that one of the positions should go to Sid Snyder.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It did and I supported that. And it was tough to be there because my husband was in the hospital – he was dying – and I went there to protect Gaspard and Sid. And that's one time that Slim Rasmussen and I were voting the same side. And I remember I left there and went straight back to the hospital because my husband died a month later. It was just an awful time for me. I wasn't involved with any of this falderal ever. There are always people complaining and wanting more. And Marc had not expressed anything to me. He really remained pretty pure; he had not gotten into it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he emerges. Another part of the puzzle was that Frank Warnke, who had been in the leadership was not reelected.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was caucus chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pam Roach won the seat. Actually he didn't run again. His union challenged his position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** His leadership. So he couldn't run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rick Bender had also left leadership – he left the Senate at the same time. The other person who stepped down, inexplicably, was Nita Rinehart. Does she leave the leadership for different reasons?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She had tried to run against Larry when he was elected, number one, but couldn't get any support. Apparently, she was a part of this thing to get Marc elected because there was a battle between she and Janice Niemi for Ways and Means chair. And Nita – this is where it all came out at the Committee on Committees meetings when it was all over. Something happened that she had given Marc her word and Janice was a supporter of

McMullen. Ray Moore and I were both on the Committee on Committees and we wanted Janice to become Ways and Means chair because she had been Ranking member. And Marc denied her that. And that blew my mind. You see, I went with him and then he did that!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if promises had been made?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He didn't even talk about it. Wouldn't even accept a motion to bring it up for debate. I knew that Ray Moore was with me and I had other votes and he wouldn't bring it up. And so, that happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, that begs the question, what was going on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There are people always working behind the scenes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Marc Gaspard unify the party or split it even more?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He unified it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So members were able to come back together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, I could have held a real fat grudge there, but I didn't, you can't. And Marc sort of knew that I would always go with Pierce County. You see, I don't think he was a part of this whole thing. I think Nita was the one who put it together; I will always believe that. She was always fumbling for a leadership position – always pushing. Always there.

When she became the Senate staff director – this came later – she would not hire Don Sloma for our caucus committee. I tried and I couldn't – she never did. He was let go and he was probably the most valuable person we have ever had; he still knows more about health care – he and Braddock and Bill Hagens, who was there after Don; he went with the Insurance Commissioner for awhile and is now with DSHS – he lives in my district. Don Sloma had longevity over all of them and is brilliant. She had a grudge and would never hire him, in spite of the fact I got our whole caucus to sign a letter saying they wanted him. And that's when you feel helpless.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just couldn't make it happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He became chair of the board we saved from extinction with Mike Kreidler – the State Board of Health. Don is now with the Washington Health Foundation, a policy group.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, people who have talent never completely go away.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's fine. He's happy and he likes what he's doing. I was told to back off because I was going to wreck his career if I didn't stop. You know, it was one of those things. But that's what happens and when there's someone insinuating outside the scene and that you don't know about, bad things can happen. But if you keep it hot, worse things happen. So we came together as a caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At some point you have to let go. So then you had Marc Gaspard as your leader.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I helped Nita when she ran for Governor, and she still did it. She still wouldn't hire Don. You see, what goes around, doesn't always come around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, that's true. And Sid Snyder, who was, I think, only in his second term or so, became the caucus chair?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Wonderful, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rising at a rocket's pace. Your floor leader was Patrick McMullen and you were caucus vice-chair; so you were working right with Sid.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It all worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were happy with that decision?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I was. Although I was unhappy for Janice Niemi; she got left out, which was very bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your caucus had several new positions: a deputy leader, Al Bauer; an assistant floor leader, Mike Kreidler; a whip, which is not a new position, Patty Murray; and you have an organization chair, Phil Talmadge. But what does that position do? It's quite a title.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I haven't any idea. I think he sort of pulled everything together. He had an overall grandstand view of everything, I believe, and was capable of handling all of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was well-placed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very well-placed!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think he'd been in leadership before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was not a known leader, but he was a leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, now he had a title. And you had an assistant whip, Adam Smith.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we gave everybody something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering why you vastly expanded all these positions. Before you had kind of a tight-knit little group, and now you had all these new positions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we decided we needed to pass the slots around so that more people could participate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this a way of grooming new leaders and trying people out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably, but I don't know that was ever talked about. I think we were following the example of the Republicans where everybody got a title. And so we decided to try that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how did this work out? It expanded how many people were brought in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It seemed to work fine. I think everybody had a say-so before, but they didn't feel a part of the whole system and this made them feel like they were part of the whole and prepared them for their chairmanships – they eventually got chairmanships.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a training ground, bringing people in? Was there a conscious decision to mix this up a little bit more and have new people – new blood – people who hadn't been in leadership before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know that it was done for that reason. I think that with the new chair, he

probably felt he needed to reach out and find out more of what was going on in the state. And by bringing different people in, they would perhaps speak out more, with less reluctance, in caucus. And because the problems in the state are so diverse, if you don't bring everyone in, you never know what the burning issues are in any community.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there an attempt, then, to get a geographic representation? I don't actually see anybody from eastern Washington on this list.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we always had trouble in getting them. That's the reason, the next time around, that I really wanted to see Valoria Loveland from the Tri-Cities area made chairman of Transportation, but she didn't get it. She had been the county treasurer for Franklin County for years; she knew the problems of county government and local government. She was outstanding. And they gave it to Senator Brad Owen, which churned me up. I couldn't understand it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe they were trying to bring him back into the fold?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I felt they were bringing in all these different people and I was being left stranded because what I believed was right wasn't being listened to. But because I didn't complain a lot, I got what I wanted as far as my legislation is concerned. So you give and you take. But I was disappointed that Loveland didn't get chair of Transportation, although I didn't come out and insist, because Mary Margaret Haugen wanted it, too. And you know, what do you do?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Loveland eventually got Ways and Means, didn't she?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually, but not right away. They recognized her ability. They had left her out and they left out Betti Sheldon from Kitsap County. And I thought that was wrong, that both of them needed to be brought in. They got nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they have it now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right and so the next time around, we were able to straighten that out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, with this new large group, are caucus leadership meetings run a little differently?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody spoke. Everybody aired. Caucus time took a lot longer, but that was alright.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So was this a successful tactic for holding things together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was. I think it was a good tactic. In the first place, Marc Gaspard is kind of low-key and not demanding and it seemed to suit his personality better. And it worked. And nobody got mad at him, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is he more of a listener and a conciliatory type?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and Senator Snyder was between the two of them; it was a very good caucus. It worked well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are some of these other members a little more fiery?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I think that everybody was pretty subdued; it became fiery later. The only time it got into a real tangle was when Patty Murray wanted to not support Ray Moore for re-election; that was bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democratic caucus is always said to be disorganized, comparatively, to the Republicans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You needed to handle it with a real level hand and to keep everybody happy and everybody quiet. It worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Marching, more or less, in the same direction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the same direction. We still had our ups and downs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You still faced that one-vote majority of the Republicans in the Senate so you had that situation. The House was clearly Democratic, with fifty-eight Ds and forty Republicans. And you still, of course, had a Democratic Governor.

One of the very first things, when you open session, was the nomination of the President Pro Tempore position. In the previous years, the majority party would nominate their person and that would be that. The nominations would be closed but in this case, it was more complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because there were two people who wanted it for the Republicans; one was Bluechel and the other was Ellen Craswell. So there was sort of a split and to take advantage of that, I got nominated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you were nominated by your leader, Senator Gaspard. In his remarks, he discussed your landmark legislation: your work in consumer advocacy, health issues, gender equity, your recent community protection work, your winning of insurance coverage for breast reconstructive surgery for women...it was quite a list.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's an overall. It isn't one-sided.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He tried to touch on all your different areas of interest.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything that I've been deeply involved with. I never was a one-issue person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He also discussed your qualities as a legislator. He called you the "conscience of the Legislature."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I loved that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was trying to imagine your feelings as you are listening to this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I loved that, I loved that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And he said that you always asked the question: "Is it right? Not just for the issue, but for the state?" And he said that you had a "dogged commitment to fairness and a commonsense approach to finding solutions." I'm imagining these comments would be music to your ears, to be so recognized.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every time you have a problem, you've got to look for a solution, no matter what; you've got to find the solution. And that was the task I went into office trying to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were getting the recognition that that was so. For whatever

internal reasons within the Republican caucus, this was an opportunity for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I lost by one vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ellen Craswell then won on a straight party-line vote. I imagine you knew that you weren't going to make it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I knew that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She had been the Vice-President Pro Tempore the previous session and Alan Bluechel had been the President Pro Tem and they switched places. I don't think that happened very often.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it didn't. And that was the first time they had a Vice-President Pro Tempore; they'd never had one before that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More titles.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, more titles. They are the title entity of the Legislature – the Republican caucus in the Senate – everybody got a title. "I was vice-chair of the Senate." You know, it's just a way of using it for re-election purposes. And it worked for them, so I guess we decided to let it work for us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ellen Craswell was a fairly senior senator at this point; was this just a way of honoring her by giving her this position?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so, but Bluechel was also a very senior senator. He'd been there forever. He preceded me in the Legislature, even.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a long time. At this time, there was a sort of blast of newspaper articles discussing leadership issues in the Legislature and what the journalists perceived as a "lack of political courage, a kind of a drift, a reluctance to discuss big issues" and they said "people were just chipping away at things that were no big deal." Did it feel that way to you? Does this seem like an accurate portrayal?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it's getting worse. It may have started back then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly one of the Republican efforts in the Senate, essentially, was to prevent things from happening. That was their stated goal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had some strong leaders in the Senate. The Senate was still very strong, but it was becoming weaker and weaker, I believe, as I witnessed it with our leadership. The leadership simply was disappearing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder why that was the case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everything became more political as more and more lobby groups formed, more non-profits, all kinds of lobbyists. When I started lobbying, there weren't that many lobbyists in the Third House. But when I left there, there were five times more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So things are just getting more and more fractured?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And everything became political. Now why that happened, I don't know; but it did and I watched it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the Legislature "representative" in the sense that society was getting more fractured?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's true and the population growth in the state of Washington was increasing. More and more people were getting power. And you empower people by lobbying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the issues the newspapers mentioned was that you were getting legislators who are – timid is probably too strong a word – but more wary because of the increasing viciousness of campaign tactics coupled with higher election costs. There were some quotes – sometimes anonymous – saying people were afraid to stick their necks out because it cost them so much to get into the Senate or the House that they didn't want to jeopardize their position. The price they paid with these really sometimes ugly campaigns, they just weren't willing to give anybody fuel for any more fires. And so everybody had their heads down. Do you think that that was a real factor here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I do. I think that is absolutely true and as more and more people become involved in politics and more and more lobby groups are formed, the worse it is going to

become. Because every one of these lobby groups is a potential arena for raising money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was said to be frustration building in that the Democratic House was passing out a lot of measures, which were then killed in the Senate. So there was kind of a bottleneck. Members were discouraged and frustrated. Certainly, as we said, the stated goal of the Republican leadership was to prevent government action. They did not think that government was the solution; they thought it was the problem, famously said by another Republican. Their goal was to reduce government; that is, they didn't want to use government to solve problems. That was their stated philosophy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That probably was true. To an extent that the House was producing legislation, a lot of the legislation arose because of the two-year election process. There were always new members in the House, so we kept getting the same old bills coming over to us which had been sponsored for years and years and years with each new member coming in and so we were killing bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because history starts with them the day they arrive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, and so because there were more Democrats than Republicans in the House, there were more bills coming over that were assigned which didn't have Senate Democrats' names on them. And that may have been part of the problem, although it wasn't the whole problem. And Speaker Joe King also said that "the Senate is the enemy!" So he was part of it. And I know that the Republican issue was that you need less government, not more government, but let me tell you something: every time any one regulates anything, it's regulated because of a demand from a business. We don't regulate unless there's been a demand from the auto industry or something which needs it for protection. It's protectionism. So while they advocated less government, they also advocated for protectionism. And so, I guess I would say they wanted to limit the size of government to the things which were their ideas

– for protectionism – instead of things which are needed for the people. And some of the things which are needed for the people are social programs and health programs and they cost money. But the less money you have, the more you need them. So I think you have to screen all the issues to find out what's necessary and use your judgment and so it becomes a matter of judgment. And if you do things you believe are right and that are fair, then it's going to cost a little bit more money, but it's going to help more people. So that's my philosophy and that's what I always attempted to project. And I got incensed sometimes. I didn't talk on the Floor very much but when I got incensed I did and I probably wasn't very good, but they all knew how I felt; I didn't have to talk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They could see the steam rising?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, they knew. And that's the advantage of having been there a long time. And it's also the advantage of being a woman. You know, these certain elements that are credited to women more than men, I think: sensitivity to issues. Sensitivity to people. The ability to look at the long term. So many things are credited to the men too, but I think they are more issue-oriented. Women are more patient, and more protective and more persistent. And those are the three "p's" you need to have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there were more and more women in the Legislature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the more they see them, the better the Legislature will become.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet, in 1991, there was an initiative to the people on the ballot for term limits.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which was a terrible mistake.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I- 553. It failed. But it was quickly followed by another one, initiated by Sherry Bockwinkle of Tacoma, which did pass in the '92 election. Where is this issue coming from? Why do people think term limits is a good solution?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because they are not subjected to the political process. And they don't know

how long it takes to develop good legislation. You develop a bill, but ten years later, it's usually a much better bill than it was when you began. And so you find out; you learn by doing. And you can't afford to lose the historic memory of the Legislature. And the more the members are not there for self-serving interests, I think they are there to take care of the people, then they need to be sustained in office. And I think the people are bright enough to see that. I think they know when a person is not serving them right. And often they lose election. Sometimes we lose good people at the same time because of lies, but it's proven that we don't need term limits. That year we did an almost total change-over in the Legislature. We don't need term limits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, instead of this somewhat artificial fix, you would place a little more faith in people's ability to vote?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, in people's ability to figure it out. Eventually they will. Sometimes it takes too long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a bit of demagoguery, this "Turn the bums out" kind of rhetoric that you hear?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the bitterness people held for the legislators. I don't know where they get the word – "politician" has a dirty connotation. And it shouldn't. If a legislator listens to both sides, and then makes a value judgment, often they are right and it's proven out in the long term.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's why you need the long term?

**Sen. Wojahn:** So you need that for the memory; we've lost our historic memory in the Legislature because people are leaving. The only thing we have left now is Sid Snyder holding the line with the newcomers in the Senate. It's really bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a heavy burden.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a very heavy burden. Sid does know and he got so frustrated two years ago that he quit because they wouldn't listen. Thank God he came back! And that was at the

request of both parties. They knew what they'd done to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a shocking thing. I remember those headlines. This Sherry Bockwinkle, her name comes up again and again, does she have a business working on initiatives?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They collect money for signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is kind of the beginning of commercializing the initiative process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which is being dirtied up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what did you think of governing by initiative? What's the impact on the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that it has become a real burden to the Legislature. That people get to initiate things is appropriate, but if you recognize one thing – we do not permit them to amend the Constitution by initiative. They can try but it's never worked. I'm not so sure that it's all that good. Maybe we should require more signatures. Or we should not permit them to pay people to get signatures. That would probably stop a lot of the problems. I don't know. It's created the problem and now we've got this initiative conniver who's going to make money on it. He thought he could do it his way, but he found he couldn't. There are too many problems. He now has been charged again with trying to collect money on the side without admitting it. So I don't know what the answer is. I thought it was a great idea at one time, but it's proving to be not too satisfactory. But part of it is because of permitting people to collect money for gathering signatures. And that brings in out-of-state lobbyists, the special interests.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a very big thing in California, apparently. According to some articles, they are so boxed in with initiatives that many solutions to different issues are already closed off to them and they can't legislate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right; there are problems, total problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people worry that Washington is going down that road.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that that's probably fact. And it's kind of frightening. And pretty soon we'll only have people running for office who can be "yes" people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard to be creative if there's a pretty strict lid on things. There were two initiatives submitted to the Legislature that year for which you didn't take any action, and I wondered why. Did that mean that you felt that those things should better go to the vote of the people, or that there were no particular solutions that year? I-119 had to do with physician-assisted suicide. Washington was one of the first states to propose this measure. The signatures were gathered; it was sent to the Legislature and then you didn't act on it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oregon passed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it failed here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Legislature can always propose a substitute bill; then they vote to put it on the ballot, or if they change it, they have to put them both on the ballot. And that's been done several times.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to be clear about the process here. In this case, if you had accepted I-119, could you have taken that legislation and passed it? Was it your preference that the language was good and should go to the people? Or that it was too hot to handle? Was physician-assisted suicide something the Legislature didn't want to deal with?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I wasn't chairing a committee at the time and I don't remember what it was. I think a lot of us approved of it as it was; I did. I don't remember any discussion in caucus about it, particularly. The only one was the initiative on growth management; that was too hot to handle. But I think that other one was simply sent because the Legislature approved – the majority approved, I guess you might say, and there was no bill opposed that went with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if you had adopted it, does it then go through the normal committee process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you can go through the committee process and if there's no action taken, then it automatically goes on the ballot. In other words, if action is taken, a substitute bill is then submitted to the Legislature and then if that bill passes, they both go on the ballot. But if nothing is suggested, then it automatically goes on the ballot. It doesn't need any action by the Legislature. And then we can amend that with a two-thirds vote at any time within two years, and after that a simple majority. So it becomes the law after two years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Philosophically though, is this something you think is a good measure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Some of the things they want as a ballot issue I don't agree with and then I would fight like hell to get a bill which would counteract or at least soften the effect and put it on the ballot. But you have to be a committee chair to make that decision and get the committee to go along with you. I rarely sign initiatives; this is a legislative responsibility. I was ranking minority when the bottle bill went through, with Curtis as chair and we put a substitute on the ballot where we have these Ecology crews go out and clean up the highways and that's what passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In fact, I saw one of those today on my way here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are always out there. They are now using prisoners to do that sometimes – the counties and cities are using prisoners. The state uses paid people, the Ecology crews. It's good. It gives somebody a job or it puts people to work who are in jail.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another initiative to the Legislature that year on abortion rights which confirmed, on the state level, the Supreme Court ruling – the original one, Roe versus Wade; it passed, confirming abortion rights. We'll need to watch this initiative process and how it starts to really build; this is one of the early steps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There's going to be a lot of talk about that and maybe somebody will come forward with a proposal. Maybe the Disclosure

Commission will do it. They are the ones who have access to all the facts, and it seems to me that if they had a good commission, the commission would come forward with a proposal. But you've got to have active people, thinking people on the commission. If they are not, they will just rubber stamp proposals as written without trying to improve them. It's called research! So, we really need good people on state commissions to speak out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll have to watch that one. As you came into session, larger events were shadowing your work. The Gulf War broke out at that time. You mention in your newsletter there are ribbons everywhere on campus – big yellow ribbons. Quite a few people said they suddenly felt – not diminished – but that everybody's attention was elsewhere and there were much bigger things going on than whatever it was you were looking after. One of the first things that happened was Senator Kreidler was called up for active duty and had to resign from the Senate, or at least have a hiatus of some sort. His wife, Lela, was appointed to replace him. How did she do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was very good; we liked her. She was very moderate. She was more approachable; he was gung-ho on his issues. She was just a lovely, neat lady. And we liked her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The press pieces about that seem very moving. The Senate Journal contains special tributes to her service. A more problematic side of the Gulf War, perhaps, was that war protestors came to the Capitol, even though, of course, state governments have nothing to do with that kind of foreign policy. It's part of the mix of the Capitol.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a place to go to complain. You can't go to D.C.; it's too far. If they lived in Maryland or Virginia, they could go to D.C.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were protests on the Legislative Building stairs, speakers and masses of people. What was it like as a legislator to witness that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think I paid much attention to it. It's far enough removed you



don't hear the noise. I never heard the noise in my office. If I'd been in the front of the building, as some senators were, I would have heard it, but I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But as a state senator, you were not voting on those sorts of issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Couldn't do anything about it anyway. And to go out there and become a part of it and to speak to them would be unfortunate. I didn't want to get into that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did some legislators get involved?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember anyone getting involved with that, but there are always those who want to get up and make a speech before a group and that is not my interest. Never, never to go before a crowd like that. I only went when I had to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any way at all that the State Legislature addressed the issue of the Gulf War, or if it was just something that everyone held in their hearts as you worked during this session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The only way you could address the Gulf War was through a Floor Resolution or a Memorial to Congress and I didn't like them, either. I only did it when I really had to or felt it was important. It just takes up Floor time you need for other things. It never changes anything. But the ones you do for people are fun.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a form of recognition. Governor Gardner, in his State of the State address, struck a fairly somber note in light of the Gulf War. He used it – I wouldn't want to call it a rhetorical device – but as a focus of his speech. He didn't actually lay out any policy matters or ask for anything or put forward any kind of program in his address – which seemed a bit unusual. Governors usually say, "This session, this is what I want." He didn't do that at all. He talked about democracy. And he talked about his big concern that very many people in the country did not vote. And he pondered the implications. It was a very different kind of speech. He talked about your work there and what you could do to bring people back into the

process. And he talked about balance – needing balance – that seemed to be almost the only programmatic remark he made which, in itself, was extremely general. It was a beautiful speech and it addressed the emotional issues, but it did not lay out any kind of plan. Do you need the Governor to ask for more specific things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I rarely went to the State of the State speech. Usually, the Legislature does look to the Governor to suggest bills and the area of needs, oh yes. And I like a Governor who does that. Because you know exactly what their policy – what their stand is – what their politics are. And it's helpful. You might be sponsoring legislation they are going to veto. So, it's something – I always read their speeches, but I rarely went to listen to them unless I really had to. It's just a great big show. And while this was very good, maybe one of the reasons he did it was because people were falling away from politics. Even with Presidential elections; when they elected Jimmy Carter, he was not involved, particularly, as a politician. And maybe that was the reason; I don't know why he did it. Maybe he didn't have any ideas; I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He may have genuinely been in this somber mood, what with the war, and feeling much more philosophical than the usual sort of presentation. He had what many people thought was a really strong staff and I'm wondering if you could comment on their roles as legislative liaisons? He had Denny Heck and Dean Foster and Wayne Ehlers as his top people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Former legislators or staff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was certainly a powerful group. Would these three people work closely with you to help create programs and put forward initiatives?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I would think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember them coming and addressing you in any way? Say if you've got a big push for something, would they give you the Governor's point of view? How does it work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they usually did, but I don't remember any one of those people asking for anything. All I know is that I had been told that he had a larger staff than anyone in the history of the office of Governor, helping him make decisions. Maybe that's because he wanted to do things right. I don't know. But the only thing that he really settled on was education. And he's still doing it. I can't comment on that because I have no idea what was going on in his head or what he wanted. I know he adopted most of the program Jim McDermott had advocated when he ran for Governor. You know: health care for low income, a tax to help local government with their superstructures. These were McDermott's ideas. He adopted almost the whole McDermott program, which tells me something – it should tell you something that the man was not exactly full of ideas, but knew good ones when he heard them. That's okay. And McDermott was supportive of Gardner adopting his ideas ; it was fine. That's the role of a good legislator, who knows to step aside if the bill is good enough to pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As long as somebody is grabbing hold of those ideas? Definitely education was his stated emphasis by this session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the Legislature wouldn't give him enough money. Again, it's the same old story. We know what we need to do, but we don't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In this period, he uses a commission to set new standards and rethink a lot of educational assumptions about performance. One of the things he pushed was a rethinking of the whole way the state dealt with education. He wanted to shift state regulation from measuring "seat-time," that is, how many minutes you sat in a particular class and how long exactly you did this and that, to what you actually learned – shifting the thinking from all this minute regulation to creating standards for which people would then be held accountable. Like the Certificate of Mastery concept for graduation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We're still fighting over that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this whole new way of assessing students, the fourth-grade tests, the eighth-grade, known as the WASL, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning. This was a pretty big change brought in by these various commissions. He had the Commission for Excellence, Washington 2000; there were several. Some of them with a large involvement from the Washington Round Table and different groups. He had a lot of input from across the state. These were some of the things he came up with as he tried to rework the system. And there was a lot of resistance to some of these changes because they were pretty radical. There had been a push to require more from teachers. They wanted everyone to have a Master's degree, and then they dropped that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was crazy! We don't pay them enough, but require a Master's degree. I was very upset over that. I didn't like that idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot of ferment and discussion. Was the Legislature given enough information on this new thinking? How did you go about evaluating all this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Education Committee had a lot of background. I didn't serve on any education committees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you'd have to vote on these things, eventually.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, and you had to review. I resisted anything which did not have a dollar amount attached to it so that we knew that if we passed it there would be money to pay for it. Otherwise it was a no-law law, and that bothers me, still bothers me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides the perennial budget issue, of course, education was the sticking point that whole session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, let me tell you, the people, they don't understand what happens. The year we took over community colleges, and put them on the state system – removed them from local government – we threw all of those people onto the state government payrolls. That increased the number of state employees. People

complained about that. Well, the Legislature did it. I didn't want that to happen. I thought it should remain with the local governments because they knew best what they needed to do. That didn't happen. And then later on, we took over all of the voc-tech schools and threw them onto the state system. So there was no more local money going into it, but it was very oppressive to the taxpayer of the state of Washington with our unbalanced tax system. These were the things that kept happening. All in the name of education, but we weren't paying for it. And we were removing the onus from local government to pay for it and taking it on the shoulders of the state. This still bothers me. We didn't have the population to support that type of program. How are we going to pay for all of this? Because not only were we paying for their salaries, we're paying for all their fringe benefits, their health care, everything. And I fought it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was this very year, I think, that you were trying to defend Clover Park and Bates Technical Schools.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We tried to stop that from happening because at that time kids from all high schools could take part of their classes at the voc-tech school, even Bellarmine, which is a Catholic school. We opened the door. They could take Home Ec. for girls and woodshop or whatever they wanted for boys, and so the last three years in high school, they could take part of their class work at Bates or Clover Park, which worked beautifully. That's all gone. And I don't know what Eyman's talking about, but that's the reason we're in trouble. We kept taking on more and more education issues without explaining what we were doing to the people, or explaining it thoroughly enough, just saying, "If we're going to do this, it's going to cost you more money. The state's going to pay for it. It's not going to come out of local government; it's going to come out of state government. It's going to cost more money." Because as we did it, they expanded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, so does the population.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But not that fast. Population growth didn't expand as fast as our community college system has expanded. And then they took away all the night schools which were handled by the public school system, and threw them all into community colleges, so that you couldn't go to night school anymore; you had to go into whatever community college there was. And sometimes that was a fair distance, whereas local communities could do it within their high school system. Crazy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So everything was getting kicked upstairs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was getting kicked upstairs. Everything cost more money, more transportation for individuals to get to the school. Everything cost more money and yet we don't recognize that and tell the people what we're doing. That's the reason I wanted to tell everybody and I've been telling them all the time, but they don't listen, either. It's called "progress" with a big dollar sign before it and people need to know this!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hard for people to connect the dots? I mean, things were getting pretty complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They've got to have it simplified.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Late in the day for that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I guess if I were to run this country, I'd run it differently, or the state. And I wouldn't adopt a new idea until I tested the ripple effects of it. Because anytime you do anything, there's going to be a ripple effect and somebody's going to get hurt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think your comments are valuable. There were all kinds of budget battles over funding schools in competition with social programs. The Republicans wanted to put a lot of effort into schools that year, although not necessarily into Governor Gardner's reforms.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Higher education. They wanted it to go into Higher Ed. Still do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the Democrats were trying to hold the line on social programs. The

whole thing pushed along and then erupted in a twelve-day teacher strike in April which was ascribed to the teachers' frustration they weren't getting what they needed. Did that strike focus the Legislature's attention? Or was it counter-productive? Or did it have no impact?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't even remember what the result of the strike was, what they gained.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were said to gain very little, actually.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's my feeling, too and I think it was the frustration of the whole thing that they even went on strike. I know my daughter-in-law was part of that because she said, "Never again." She would never strike again, ever. She had learned her lesson on that. I guess that it didn't accomplish very much. The Governor had gotten in the middle of the whole thing and finally got it appeased and everybody went back to work, but very little was resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So does that add pressure to your deliberations, when the teachers are out picketing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But did it add enough to add more dollars to the pool? I don't know. That's the part that's so dismal. You don't do things which cost money if you don't have the money to provide, to do those things. If you don't have the means to do it. Or you're not willing to cut something else in order to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That strike gave rise to a bill you co-sponsored which passed, which replaced federal funding for free and reduced meals during the teachers' work stoppage so that, I gather, the kids who would have been getting fed at school were still fed somewhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we increased the food programs through various community service areas, like Boys and Girls Clubs. And we reduced the amount of money going into school lunches? I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see. The Legislative Report published at the end of session said, "Under federal law, school districts are prohibited from using federal funds to serve students free and reduced-priced meals when

students are not attending school. This prohibition applied to the period of the statewide teachers' strike, which began April 18. One quarter of the state's students are eligible for free and reduced-priced school lunches and breakfast. The federal government funds over ninety-five percent of the cost through the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program and the Special Milk Program. An appropriation is made from the State General Fund to the Superintendent of Public Instruction to replace the federal funding of free and reduced-priced meals lost due to the teachers' work stoppage." I guess you lost this federal money when the teachers went on strike, but you jumped into the breach to make sure those kids didn't go hungry. Did someone bring this to your attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think we did. Did we provide for the food to be served in other places? It seems to me we made money available through social programs where the kids could be fed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a few people signed on to this. A real mixture of people, some conservative Republicans and some very liberal Democrats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember that. I was on the Boys and Girls Club board at that time and we were already serving lunches for kids, one meal a day. And so that would still be going on and then they might have expanded it to other places, like up on the Hilltop we have a community center where they could serve lunches, and I guess any park community center could serve lunches at that time. And what we did during the school year with the Boys and Girls Clubs was to serve them one meal a day. We served them an evening meal during the school year and we served them lunches during the summer time. So those programs were probably expanded to serve them two meals a day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was a little bit of a structure there to build on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a structure to build on. It was through the Community Service

Groups. And so the money, it floated in on an individual basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just picturing you wrapped up in trying to figure out these other issues with the teachers' strike and then somehow it comes to your attention that there was this unforeseen repercussion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** As a result of that, no money. Yes, right. So did we get the bill? Whoever found out about it, who was the sponsor for that bill?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's quite a list, actually: Senators McDonald, Roach, Johnson, McCaslin, Gaspard, Rinehart, Murray, Hayner, yourself, and Snyder. It seemed like a sort of pure social justice type of issue. An easy one to get behind for many senators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You always get both parties involved when you have a bill you want passed. I always used the rule of thumb: If we were in the majority, I always got two Democrats and one Republican, if I sponsored. And you always have someone from the committee the bill's going to be heard in, and generally you always have someone on Rules Committee. So you have three sponsors, one of those can be on Rules Committee – and it always works. Three strong sponsors will do it; you don't need a whole long list of names.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just get your bases covered.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always cover your bases. And if I co-sponsored a bill, I would sometimes ask a Republican to sponsor it, or if I was doing it, I'd ask them to be second sponsor and they often did, you know. Sometimes I'd say, "You can have the bill; I want you on it and I'll be the third sponsor," whatever. It usually worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you read those lists of sponsors, it's impossible to tell whose idea it was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's not necessarily the one whose name leads; that's right. Sometimes we choose to not to be the lead, and if we were not in the majority, you don't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, as in the case with your preservation bill, it was much wiser to keep your name off it altogether.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! That's right. I was red-hot on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, interesting. That year you served on three committees: Health and Long Term Care, chaired by Jim West; you were still on Rules, and you were still serving on Ways and Means; the chair was still Dan McDonald. Of course, Rules was chaired by Lieutenant Governor Pritchard. So, you are keeping your interests; you're focused. Would you say health is still your big impetus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always mental health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a large number of things you did that year for health. It was becoming a national priority. Washington, I think, was ahead of many states. We were paying attention to health care issues here, but it was reaching that threshold that everybody was paying attention to it. And certainly with the coming Presidential campaign, led by Bill Clinton, it reached a pitch of national attention and discussion. Does that new spotlight help in these issues? If everybody's talking health care issues, when you've got somebody like a Presidential hopeful stumping the countryside talking health care reform, and everybody's aware that it's a big problem, does it actually help move things along on the state level to have that kind of attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it's all political. It depends on who the candidate is and who's in the majority, and where, and so it's kind of *comme ce, comme ca*.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Clinton certainly was an articulate spokesman for health care issues, whether or not you agreed with his approach.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was during the time too, that legislators were going to get federal money to protect kids with health care, even though their families could not afford it. And there was a move to provide that in the state of Washington for all children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least start with children, if not everyone?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, all children. And if you remember, that happened in Texas, only the Governor was Bush and he wouldn't permit it, because if he did, the children would be getting health care and their parents could then opt for public assistance. And he wouldn't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because it was like a wedge into more services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a wedge – the children got health care and their parents could then file for low-income public assistance. And he wouldn't do it, so the State Supreme Court mandated that it be done. Took it away from him. That actually happened. That's in that book written by that gal, the writer for the Dallas newspaper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Molly Ivins?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Anyway, I was a member of Women in Government, which is a national group, and we had one male member. He was from Texas and he was chairing the Health Care and Social Service Committee, and he went to the Governor with this bill and the Governor said he would do it and then he vetoed the bill. And this guy sat back and watched. It became a national focus for Women in Government. We knew this had happened. And then the Texas Supreme Court said, "You have to do it. And if the result of that is that people go on public assistance, tough."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's irrelevant?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Irrelevant. It happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, were you learning things from other states or from the federal level that you could use in Washington, by joining these groups?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably. Every year we were attempting to add more money to the budget for that, which was tough on a Republican administration. And then the Children's Health Care came up about that time and also the bill which took care of prenatal care for women.

That was coming about that time, where we were getting prenatal care for indigent women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The "First Steps" program?

**Sen. Wojahn:** First Steps, yes. As a result of that, Tacoma medical groups got money for First Steps Programs where the Pierce County Medical Bureau and the OB-GYNs joined forces with them with a little bit of money from the Legislature – which we continued to get flowing into this program so that any pregnant woman could get prenatal care.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly getting prenatal care is the key to preventing a lot of bad stuff down the road.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Underweight babies, infant deaths. Pierce County was leading the nation at one point with infant deaths. It was really bad. The state of Washington ranked high; Pierce County was terrible even with Madigan Hospital right here where service people could get their care. We investigated it and as a result, the Pierce County Medical Group and the doctors came together to form a triage to help women. That helped the county leave the list of places where the statistics were so bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes a terrible, dubious honor galvanizes people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Brings results and that was the one thing I focused on that year. But no bill, until Talmadge became chair of Health and we did the major health bill. At the same time, we established a commission which was a lightning rod for all the complaints; the Commission answered them. They were wonderful. That was done in 1993. And Talmadge had a marvelous bill, but it got repealed the next year. The Republicans took over two years later. And it was working. Prices were coming down; that's the part that's so sickening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In fact, you gave a speech to the Pierce County Medical Society later that year, summarizing the health care legislation of 1991. Even though you had several accomplishments, you likened the whole thing to "rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic." That you were kind of nibbling around the

edges, but you were not really grasping the nettle, shall we say?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not doing what needed to be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You remarked that, “In this environment,” –and I was thinking you were alluding to the Republican control of the Senate; you can tell me if I’m wrong – “We in the Legislature seem unable to make policy. We seem to be putting out a few brush fires. We seem to be involved in a few self-interest issues, instead of taking up systemic issues and concerns.” Is that the environment you were referring to? You’re nodding yes. Your accomplishments were mostly extensions of programs you had already been working on, or a little tweaking of this and that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tweaking, that’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were more abortion fights. In the Health Care budget there was money for family planning which did include abortions that Senator Jim West became very exercised about. But the Health Secretary, Christine Geddy stood up to him and demanded funding for that in her budget. These kinds of fights, how much do they interfere with getting health care funded?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They always interfere and could cause them to be removed from the budget if the right people don’t find out that they’re being removed. Otherwise they are just a brush fire that you put out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was abortion the only brush fire of that kind in health issues? Or were there other ones?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t remember anything. Sometimes there would be a rumble that “there’s going to be an abortion bill,” and we were always prepared for it. And I remember one big issue over abortion in which the cost of abortions was brought up and I reminded the Senate of the cost to the state of supporting those children until age eighteen on public assistance. I’ve taken some bad votes as far as some letters from constituents are concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you in such a strong Democratic district that you felt safe taking the hard votes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it wasn’t that. No matter what, I wouldn’t have voted for it. And I always stated that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were stymied that year and in 1992 by the Republican majority in the Senate. The House passed bill after bill over to the Senate, and only to see them die in the Senate. There were quite a few complaints about it in the newspapers that was nothing coming out of the Senate. It was just a standstill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very little was done. There were a few amendments to existing bills but no major legislation, when we really needed medical insurance and we needed medical coverage; we needed to do more as far as covering the minority and low-income people, and nothing like that was done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was an annual report from the Labor Council which talked about the issue at the end of the 1992 session; the editorial in their newsletter is called “Senate Republicans Do Nothing.” It said, “Doing nothing has been the approach of the Republican State Senate to government since they gained the majority. They don’t hold hearings, they don’t bring up matters for a vote; they simply duck and hide.” And then it goes on to list all the different measures which were blocked. I was a little troubled to hear that they didn’t even hold hearings. Did it feel like that? That bills not only were voted down, but were never heard in the first place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. There were very few Democratically-sponsored bills because usually they don’t go through unless they are sponsored by a member of the majority party. And I don’t think that many of us had bills in. I don’t remember anything I had in except my insistence on removing the state Health Department from DSHS. I think that that bill was in. But, other than that, nothing really happened and all we could do was complain. And complaints were no good. It just firmed up the animosities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it particularly painful because you were so close to a tie? Twenty-four/twenty-five?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that's true, but we were not permitted a lot of members on Rules Committee for instance; our numbers were reduced substantially. It was almost two to one, and on our Health Committee, I think that was very close but we didn't have the majority, so any bill that we might have sponsored, unless we had the core support of the committee or the chair was on the bill, it didn't get through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a lot of struggle within committees to get anything to happen? Or did you feel steam-rolled?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, we only got what the Republican majority wanted. And the other bills were not brought up. And it did little good to recommend that the bills should be brought up for consideration because we didn't have the votes to pass them. And after a number of years in the Senate, I learned that was a useless effort. You might as well just play the game, and try to get along, and to push for the things you believed in and let it go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So just bidding your time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bide your time. Remember, too, we had very little money. We were in a recession.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That always does make it a little harder. There were marginal improvements, as you say, little bits passed here and there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there was a turf battle, I believe at the time between the nurse anesthetists and the anesthesiologists – who are medical doctors, but I fought valiantly because I did not believe that I would want a nurse anesthetist giving me an anesthetic in which they put a tube down my throat to breathe for me; I wanted a doctor giving me the anesthetic who was knowledgeable of all the bodily functions. So I fought that bill and we managed to kill it in the Senate. But it had passed the House with a rather good majority and I think one of our members of the Senate committee

wanted the bill because he had experience; he's a physician and had experience with nurse anesthetists and felt good about their ability. And I had to take that into consideration, but I still did not believe that they were qualified to do all types of anesthesia, maybe some, for some simple procedures, but not for a major surgery in which a breathing tube was used.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm always surprised by what the Legislature gets into. Why is that not decided within the medical community?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We should not be getting into that; that should be handled by the professions themselves but they get into turf battles. And the Department of Health, even after we got it, didn't seem to help very much. They were granting, by legislative authority, items which should only be granted through education. I fought that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And yet, you legislators as lay people are asked to decide this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! We shouldn't be deciding. Only professionals should be deciding. And yet we still do that and legislatures throughout the United States continue to do that and I think it's very frightening. Pretty soon we're going to have medicine by para-professionals because they don't charge as much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can see that the pressure is going to go that way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. And I have nothing against the para-professions because they do their job well within their abilities. And I believe an optometrist does his job within his abilities, but that's to do refractions, to measure the eye for glasses, not to get into the medication of patients and diagnosing and treating eye disease. And that was the same thing with the nurse anesthetists; I know they can do good work and they do within their scope. But beyond that!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you gather information on this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we have hearings but it's hard to make an indentation on lay people who



don't understand the problem. They can talk about these various things, and I can talk about the things I personally know about, like our friend with cataracts who had been going to an optometrist who diagnosed him as legally blind and then he went to an ophthalmologist who told him he needed surgery to remove cataracts, that he was not blind. There are many diseases that can be seen through the eye by an ophthalmologist and the patient can be referred to the appropriate specialist, that is, a neurosurgeon. If you're skilled enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those stories really stick in your head. But what about legislators who don't have that background?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They don't listen. They say, "That's an old wives' tale." Or, "I don't believe you." I told those two stories because I know they were factual. It did no good. I told them the same story on the Floor of the Senate when we had the bill on the optometrists' right to diagnose eye disease. I tried to filibuster that, but it didn't work and the bill passed. And then I went to several of my Democratic friends, and said, "How could you vote for that when these things can happen?" And two of them said, "Well, I would never go to an optometrist."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's okay for other people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I blame a lot of the financing of campaigns on that. Acceptance of money – large amounts of money – from various special interest groups.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was just one of the issues which was part of the big push for health care. There was a Braddock-sponsored bill you wanted to amend, but it never came out of committee in 1991. You vowed to try again the next year.

Governor Gardner also recognized that health care was an emerging issue. He created the Health Care Commission which met for two years and then came up with a plan that we can discuss in a moment. There were a lot of issues swirling around health care. It seemed to be a terrific budget issue, for instance, because the costs are much greater than inflation – several

times greater. There was a huge pool of uninsured people – some people had insurance, but lots of people were without. Some people were under-insured because of pre-existing conditions or different types of employment. The Basic Health Care Plan, though, was a foundation piece, you could call it. Trying to establish some kind of baseline below which people should not fall. But there was still this gap between people who could get assistance and people who could afford their own, and then the great middle who were seemingly stuck without anything. You gave some talks about several ways to address this issue. One of them was that people should make more appropriate personal choices. They should, for instance, take better care of themselves.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, wellness.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you also raised the issue of high-tech care, which is very expensive – all the different ways of diagnosing people, for instance. You called for people to be a little more responsible and not ask for every test possible. To not insist on the most expensive care first. Reading the text of your speeches, you seemed to be saying that it can't be legislated, but would need a cultural shift in thinking about care issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Education is the only way you can encourage people to take better care of themselves. I introduced the wellness bill in the Legislature which would require each government agency, at their own expense, to sponsor wellness information for their employees. I was approached by the Director of Personnel, Leonard Nord, to do the bill and I thought it was kind of silly, but on the other hand, it made a lot of sense. And so you start small with big agencies, and then you have to expand that into the general public. The idea has to be adopted before you can do it.

People get medical care or medical tests that are not needed. We needed to control that and to look to other sources. And about that same time, there was a problem of TMJ which needed to be treated by dentists, not doctors. But the doctor would refer a person to a dentist but the dentist

couldn't collect from the insurance companies if surgery was required to be done by the dentist, because dentists were not covered under medical insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some things were insurance issues. Appropriate care got scuttled for insurance issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All kinds of things: people were going to the expense of looking at their back when their back was bad because of TMJ. It can affect your whole spinal column. Doctors were sending people for expensive tests, MRIs and cat scans for muscular problems in the back, and it wasn't that at all. And to avoid that type of thing, we decided more care needed to be taken, more observation done by individuals into their own lives, and more communication with doctors. And from that thinking came the basic health bill in which we established a referral basis for family practitioners and internists, hoping to stem the tide. Well, it really didn't do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was one of the pieces driving health care costs, and all these multiple tests, anything to do with malpractice insurance, which was reputedly skyrocketing then? Doctors were looking over their shoulders and worrying?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, it is. And it's back with us again, now. If they don't call for the right tests, they can be sued for malpractice. And so it's all part of a circle and how do you get to the right point in the circle to make things happen and come out right? I don't know. And the cycle is repeating itself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Appears to be kind of a cost-spiral heading off to the stratosphere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doctors are now threatening to leave the state because of their high malpractice and their low payments through Medicare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of a double whammy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A double whammy. And our state is one of the lowest Medicare/Medicaid states in the Union because we've done a good job of maintaining our health; we have been penalized by the federal government by non-

payment or a little less reimbursement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The reimbursement rates, yes. There was one success story we touched on: the First Steps Program. There's a nice photograph of you visiting the Tacoma/Pierce County Prenatal Clinic. You were able to help those people bring down the infant mortality rate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's, "Little drops of water make the mighty ocean."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly proper prenatal care follows that child throughout life. If you can get them started off right that takes care of a lot of health issues right there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We've been able to sustain that amount in the budget up until last year. I don't know whether it's in there now or not. I'm frightened about it. I did what I could, but there's not much I can do now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you have to pass the baton at some point.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But no one wants to pick it up. No one wanted to pick up that issue – yes, Pat Thibaudeau to a degree – but I had so many issues that I was involved in!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. One really heartbreaking area of prenatal care – or natal care, in this case – with which you were involved during these years was trying to get help for "crack babies," so-called. The drug-addicted babies born to cocaine-addicted mothers. You showed me several pictures of you visiting in hospitals, learning first-hand about the babies. Could you tell me about that experience? How you got involved in that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it became really serious and we talked about penalizing the mothers for using crack and endangering the baby. I actually had a bill in which followed a Minnesota bill which would have brought criminal charges against the mothers. I was talked out of that very fast by knowledgeable people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because then they wouldn't get any care at all? They would be too afraid to come in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what the reason was, but their position was that it doesn't do any good because these women are caught in something they cannot get out of without help. You need to help them to get out of this, rather than penalize them for doing it. And so, we focused our attention at that point, and eventually a lot of the crack babies who were born in Tacoma were sent to Seattle – Renton – because there was a special unit established there for them and they were able to come out of it. The problem, too, was that the babies cried all the time. Even foster parents didn't want to take them because they were such a chore. This new establishment was done with the help of Representative Margarita Prentice, and it was a blessing in disguise; there were no crack babies in Tacoma because they were immediately moved out of Tacoma General into the other facility.



*Learning about care for at-risk and prematurely born infants*

And so I saw some preemies, some tiny, tiny preemies, but they were not crack babies. They were no bigger than a minute. I watched a doctor do open-heart surgery on a preemie – a tiny, tiny preemie. I didn't actually watch the surgery; I saw the baby after the surgery. Doctor Mulligan took me through. It was incredible what they could do. The baby survived, and survived without becoming blind, because earlier doctors had determined that oxygen was causing the blindness.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The babies in this special program, were they given back to their mothers? What happened to them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. That would be left up to DSHS. I was too busy doing other things to ever find out whatever happened to these babies. I presume that eventually they were, if the mother became clean.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty hard to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, even if they didn't become clean, they were observed as a part of DSHS follow-through. That would be, maybe, what is causing some of the problems out there today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking it would do little good to hand a cleaned-up baby back to a drug-addicted mother.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Things occurred, too. One time I had to unravel a situation for a family who had been given two children – I think they were both under five years old – a little boy and a little girl. They had been given to their grandparents because the mother was on cocaine. The grandparents were supposed to get the money for the children, but all of a sudden it stopped; apparently DSHS believed that the mother was okay because she had lied and they were giving the money back to her. The grandparents called me and we got on it. They found out that the money was not going to the grandparents and they got it eventually. These are things you do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They still had the children?

**Sen. Wojahn:** For the children. These are the things that they need to follow through on. If they don't do it, a legislator can pick it up if they are alerted to it. I don't know whether all legislators do; I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how many people would think to call their legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I think I established enough of a rapport with the district that people called me on every kind of a problem. They were elderly people and living on Social Security and didn't have any money, but they had enough information and courage to call and say, "Can you help us?" And I could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would have thought that would be just the kind of population, though, who wouldn't know to call their senator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I think they do. I think they do. And maybe, sometimes they're told by DSHS; we had a very close relationship. I don't know. Nobody ever said. I just did. And they finally got the money. But that happens and it probably still happens. These are just experiences I remember. I can pull more experiences out of a hat than you'd have time to listen to, but these are things that happened all the time. Thirty-two years of it. They still call.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a long record of service. Was your interest in cocaine issues and then a slew of anti-gang legislation you were involved in that year, was that because your own neighborhood was changing? Was that "coming home" to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had, in my own neighborhood, real serious problems. We had five drive-by shootings three houses from my house. Three houses separating me; it was across a side street – but it was only three houses away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Close enough!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Close enough. It was between two gangs and apparently, at the same time I found out that there was a battle going on between the Bloods and whoever the other group was called and the drive-by shooting was against the Bloods. The man who lives in that house was supposed to be a member. And it kept going and it finally stopped, because the fellow who was doing it, they were playing Russian Roulette and he shot himself. The fellow who was initiating the action, whose sister had been injured, shot himself. And so it all stopped, but we didn't stop; we continued to go after them and eventually got them. It's a long story. The house the people – the Bloods – were living in three doors from my house, was rented. We, as a neighborhood, wrote to the owner of the house asking him to move him out of there. Well, the owner of the house was unwilling to do that because he was getting good rent for the house and wasn't going to

move him out. So we finally brought an action. I did a bill to take care of that problem. And we got him out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senate Bill 5986 requiring landlords to evict tenants who committed assault or destroyed the property of neighbors or used firearms? It passed in the Senate, stalled in the House, but you definitely got on this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And from that came the Safe Streets program. So, something happens and you do something and something good happens through that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Eventually, yes.



*Celebrating signing of Safe Streets legislation with Governor Gardner, Lyle Quasim, Tacoma Mayor Karen Vialle and other supporters*

**Sen. Wojahn:** The police then became more attentive. We had Channel 7 there one time showing them the house and taking them around the neighborhood. One of the gals who lived next door to this house became a City Council person after that; she was active in the neighborhood, and then the overall neighborhood – more than I – eventually got some attention. And got it stopped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a couple of anti-gang pieces of legislation that year. Besides this Senate bill, you sponsored one to create intervention programs; it was a pilot program. I'm not sure, would that be in the schools? To intervene so these gangs don't form in the first place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember that bill. I guess I was just striking out, at any port in the storm that could stop this practice, and I don't remember what I did there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It passed with huge majorities. But I noticed it had this phrase, "Made contingent upon funding in the budget." There was no appropriation attached.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was put on in the House and it wasn't funded. But we got attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another bill which tried to address some of the ripple-effects of gang activity; one of them was through school transportation. Kids were walking to school through some very unsafe neighborhoods and so you wanted to refine school transportation definitions by geographic region: normally, if you were within a certain area, you couldn't ride the bus. But you got that redefined, that if you were in an area where there was gang activity or drug sales, or even environmental dangers, schools had to provide transportation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that was amended onto another bill which mandated that school buses have those "arms" that come out to prevent kids from going in front of the bus, where the driver can't see them crossing. If I recall, some child had stepped in front of a bus, the bus driver couldn't see that he was there, and started the bus up and hit him. So this was part of a safety measure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Kind of added on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were using that opening to address the gang issue in this way. Probably helped some poor little kids get to school.

While we are talking about kids at risk, we should discuss your long-time involvement with the Boys and Girls Club. Do you remember when you first started working with them?



*Enjoying her involvement with the Boys and Girls Club*

**Sen. Wojahn:** I started in about 1969, I think, a long time ago, with the Eastside Boys Club. I eventually became president of Eastside and then I was on the overall board of the two Boys Clubs in Pierce County until they redesigned the whole thing. Then everybody was out and they started going after major industries to send their participants in order to provide more funding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different way of raising money. What all did you do with them? What did you learn from that experience?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was a wonderful experience. I believe it eventually got opened for girls. That was after I started, that we got the Boys and Girls Clubs. We wanted to do it out here in the state but we were threatened with losing our charter with the national Boys Clubs if we admitted girls in the clubs. But we insisted, and eventually they accepted girls. I was getting calls from mothers of girls wanting to participate because there were no outside activities for kids in our neighborhood, except through organized groups like this. We were able to eventually to bring in the girls, not as members, but as just as participants. Eventually it was opened up for everybody. A lot of boys don't want to do sports. We found out a lot of boys like to do arts and crafts work and they like to do cooking. And so, we eventually opened it

up for all types of activities for kids, where it was not longer totally focused on athletics.

I became interested because my son was interested in playing baseball and had to ride clear across town to find a baseball team to play with when he was ten years old. He had a bike and he rode across town to get to the South End Boys Club in order to play baseball with that team. We eventually got our own team on the east side, and then I was on the building group to build additional Boys Clubs at that time. I had to contact the dentists and they were very helpful in getting additional money – that was my assignment – the dentists. And then eventually it expanded. We got an expansion into our club and we built two new clubs and we are in the process of doing an additional one right now. And so they are doing a great job.

Eventually, through the Boys Club, I met my friend Bill Callahan, who I mentioned was the superintendent at Cascadia for adolescent juvenile criminals and eventually went to McNeil Island. I told you he wrote the first draft, applying for agriculture funds, to provide lunches for kids. Eventually, through my food program in the schools, we got breakfast programs. They could get dinner at the Boys Club or lunch during summer, and breakfast at schools during the winter time. And that's been going on forever, providing one half – they said one-third, but we try to do a half – because some kids didn't get that many nutrients. And those were all initiated through our efforts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if this sort of grassroots involvement helped keep you in touch with all kinds of people and what was going on down in the street.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It always did. In the Boys Club I continued through till about ten years ago. And so that was one entree, one area in which I was involved. Also, before I became a legislator, when I worked for the State Labor Council, I was involved with the YWCA and so I became known through that. I had contacts with all kinds of people, including living in a neighborhood which was a very-low income neighborhood in which these terrible tragedies

were occurring. So you see, all kinds of things that people from silk-stocking districts never know about. And sometimes it's hard to sell because they don't understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unless it's happening right in front you, it is hard to fathom?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It happened right in front of us when my husband found out that the neighbor across the street was committing incest on his daughter. That happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that can happen in silk-stocking districts, too. Although you might not know about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. But this kid came out and cried and told my husband. He told me and we called the police. It was awful! We saw some tragedies I don't even want to remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All your experiences informed a great deal of your career as a legislator, being in touch with these sorts of things, because of your interest in children and health and other issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** From my work came the social group called "People First." I used for a campaign slogan that year, "People come first." And I said that "People are not statistics, a statistic is a human being." And I used that as a theme and from that eventually came this program, People Come First. It's a social program dealing with developmentally disabled people and it's incredibly good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it's important to note when a legislator has these connections because it's bound to be a big part of the way you look at the world and what legislation you think is important. You have that built-in sensitivity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And even if it isn't your bill, it's important, and you work like hell to get it. Regardless of the sponsorship. I remember Slim Rasmussen sponsored a bill which I just loved and I couldn't stand him, and I was just dying to kill the bill, but I couldn't do it. You know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, occasionally even someone you disagree with...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, eventually, sometimes, you agree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You worked with Ray Moore on his bill addressing hunger and nutritional problems, expanding WIC programs, speeding up the granting of food stamps. I know he was very interested in food banks.



*Working closely with Senator Ray Moore on hunger issues*

**Sen. Wojahn:** He got the food bank in Seattle, right. He was very interested in that. We worked together with that, but worked against each other in gambling because he believed in open gambling and I didn't. And he didn't like a lot of my legislation; he used to scold me all of the time. He really meant it. He wasn't kidding, he meant it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But yet, you can come together on things that do matter to you as well. You had a lot of different kinds of bills that year – some of them very serious and some of them, I think, perhaps not quite as serious. There was one you cosponsored for designating the state tartan. What was that all about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, my husband's mother was born in Dundee, Scotland and so he was a McLeod. I always loved tartans and I just liked the Scotch people and I just wanted the bill because it was fun. I don't remember what we did; I don't know what kind of plaid we talked about or whatever happened to the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It passed. It seemed to be some kind of promotion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was to bring in the Scottish games, probably, which are held every year now up at Enumclaw.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Highland Games? Anyway, I just thought that was a little more fun than some of these other things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was adopted so I never knew what my nationality was, so I could sort of adopt the Scotch too, if I wanted to, and my husband was half-Scotch. His mother was a full-born Scotswoman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, everybody is Irish on St. Patrick's Day; I guess if you really want to be Scottish you can be. Back to more serious issues, one that was coming to the fore was that the timber industry was going through a downturn. Some people blamed the Spotted Owl issue and other people thought it was a bigger problem of a changing industry. But you had a bill to provide assistance for timber-harvesting areas, and you had some follow-up legislation the next year to help people in those areas. Was Tacoma much impacted by the decline?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we have, because we had the headquarters for the timber companies St. Regis and Weyerhaeuser and several small mills. Yes, we had a lot to do with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your position on the Spotted Owl controversy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, what I felt we had to do was to provide retraining for all these former timber workers any way we could, through the community colleges, through the voc-tech schools and to extend their unemployment compensation to partially help them get through this period of time and to encourage the seed farms. There are some large seed farms in the state of Washington which grow Douglas Firs. When I sent the Douglas Firs to the Azores, I found out that trees have to grow in the same latitude and climatic conditions in order to thrive. We wanted to encourage Weyerhaeuser seed farms to continue to expand their services and their programs. I don't know – anything that we can do to generate help for the timber workers. At the same time, I believed in the

Spotted Owl theory. Spotted owls live up in the mountains, close to the headwaters, in the dark, thick forests of the mountains and you don't want to destroy that timberland up in there because you will destroy the headwaters for our major rivers. So it's very serious. I believed that you had to maintain these dark, deep forests.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Spotted Owl is a marker species, an indicator of the health of the whole area. Their presence says that the whole ecological system is healthy – or not. They are present when it's healthy and extinct when it's not.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was just a token. Same thing with that Snail Darter down in the Tennessee Valley Authority. It is the ecological system which can be destroyed. But you know, at the same time, we were watching this timber company which went into northern California and cut down all of the Redwoods – that destroyed the land.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There has to be a way of harvesting the lumber without that level of ecological destruction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Reforestation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a very thorny issue, though. People have lived there for generations and done that work and they don't necessarily want to change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a family-oriented business and is still going on down in Cosmopolis and in the Weyerhaeuser plant down there. But it's limited.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That year was rather long and full of heavy-lifting with all these complex issues, trying to get the budget through. George Sellar, a leading Republican, was having a lot of health problems and eventually had to go for heart surgery. I understand the Democratic caucus got together and said they would not take advantage of that situation. Can you tell me about that discussion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that we would supply the votes necessary for any major piece of legislation which needed our vote. That we

would not give any more, but they would be given the necessary votes to cover for him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that because everyone respected him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he was a very much loved and respected state senator. It was that and we really needed to maintain and sustain a sense of camaraderie in the Senate. We couldn't destroy it. If that's destroyed, nothing will happen. I think it's been destroyed now and that's the reason we've had all these problems. I really believe that. You have to maintain a sense of right and wrong and a sense of humor on things and take things not as seriously as politics would maybe require. And so we just decided that we would do that and we told the Republicans that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how did they receive that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't know. I think they would have liked to have taken advantage of it but I don't remember any time in which they did. Except sometimes it required more than the one vote needed. I remember Al Bauer having to vote for a tax increase and it took about three Democrats to do it: Ted Bottiger, and Bauer and I don't know who else, Shinpoch maybe; I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But this decision seemed to draw on a special relationship you had with George Sellar.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Any one of us would have done it for him, but not for other members in the Republican leadership. And not for anybody seeking re-election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand there was another Republican missing from the action, but for a slightly different reason. Jerry Saling, towards the end of the special session, took a trip to Hawaii.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was gone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And therefore his vote was missing. Senators seemed less forthcoming for him.



**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he wasn't ill and he chose to do that. And it wasn't an emergency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He said his travel tickets were non-refundable.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doesn't matter! You don't go. We've all had to do that. You just don't plan anything during a legislative session and you don't plan anything for a month afterwards because you might not be able to go. I remember McDermott had a trip to Africa planned but he couldn't go. You know, it happens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you apparently did not extend Senator Saling the same courtesy as George Sellar.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, there's no reason why we should. If he had been ill, we would have done it, believe me. But no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think the Republicans would have extended the same to you if one of your members had been ill? Was this customary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always had the feeling they wouldn't. Especially in the time when I was there; I don't know if they would do it now or whether they would have done it the last year I was there. But before that, yes, I think they would have. Because we always had an ace in the hole. We always had some good people who went with us. We had, I remember this senator, on health issues, the doctor from Spokane: John Moyer. And we always had several who were liberal enough or had common sense to go; there were about three of them. Shirley Winsley has always been good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not every issue is partisan.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Depends on the issue. Senator Sellar went with us on the Basic Health bill. He was the vote we needed and he went with us. And so we always had him and Kiskaddon and Zimmerman; they were all really good legislators, regardless of party. And so in the same way, on our side of the aisle, you know, there were people who would help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have to have that give and take?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to have the balance and on important issues, some things have to happen. Some things you have to do. And the Senate was always going to make it possible. I can't say the same for the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The House is so much bigger, was it harder to get right down to individuals?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. And there are some real hard-heads over there. Probably from silk-stocking districts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Occasionally, you get quite the opposite, if someone has a safe district, they can vote a little differently, more courageously?

I wanted to ask you about an interesting little side-story which shows up in your newsletters; your relationship with pages. Your newsletters indicate you had quite a few kids sponsored through your office in the page program. Can you tell me how that works?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I usually take them from my own district. But on occasion, like with my grandson, I took three from my grandson's district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So those were some of his friends?

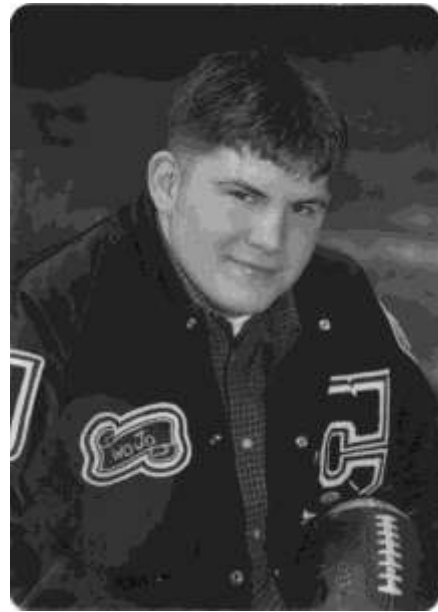
**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, his friends. Grant and Sean Miller and Thaddeus Law, whom we called Tad. And they are all good-looking kids. Yes, they are darling kids.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are pages generally kids who are somehow connected to the Legislature in some way? Some sort of acquaintance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really. No, the first time I ever had any member of my family appear in the Legislature was when I hired my oldest grandson, Rian, to be a page. Grant was never a page for me – he was an honorary page – he didn't get paid. He was there for one day. And these other kids were there for one day. I did offer him a job, but he couldn't come because he was too busy with athletics. But normally, these kids wrote to me and asked to be pages, and when I talked to various groups, I would



*Rian Wojahn*



*Grant Wojahn*

suggest I had some page slots if they had children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, that they could page for me. And so I had a lot of pages who were unknown to me. They had to get an application signed by a teacher and the principal and then one other person, not a parent, to prove that they were able to come and not miss out on too much school work. I used to keep my pages for two weeks, because the first week they were scared to death. They usually didn't get on the Floor of the Senate, but by the second week it was fun and they loved it. And so I kept them for two weeks always, until the last five years when the school districts kept pressing them to be in school. And the first alert I had on that was when I got a letter from the principal at Bellarmine High School telling me that I shouldn't keep kids for two weeks, that it was hard on their education. I had Jack Petrich's grandson as a page that week and Jack said, "Baloney." His mother said, "Baloney." And I wrote back and said...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably not "baloney!"

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I said the parents had asked that they be given two weeks and I was going to honor their wishes, but that in the future I would consider the position of Bellarmine High School. And so, anyway, Jack Petrich's grandson got to stay for two weeks and after

that, I think, only one week for the other kids. Jack was a former senator and then was an appellate court judge when he asked me to be a page sponsor for his grandson – I had three or four of his grandchildren.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were part of the family tradition?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is true. I tried to alternate as much as possible. Sometimes I got a dearth from some school and sometimes I got several from the same school. But it just worked out that way. Sometimes they wanted to come with their friend and they were shy and so I let them come with their friend. And especially after the one-week got instituted. It made it easier for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does each senator have a sort of pool of pages that they sponsor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they are told at the beginning they can sponsor five youngsters or ten or however many, however long the session is going to be. And then sometimes, I'd do a favor for Mike Kreidler, the senator from Olympia, because they had so many kids wanting to page and they were right there in the Capital. Because pages were coming from out of town, some had to live with a volunteer page family. One of the Supreme Court justices, Dolliver, took pages quite often and sometimes

they would take a page of mine. And I tried to spread my sponsorship throughout the Tacoma and Fife school districts. I had orientals and blacks, but not so many Mexican-Americans; they didn't seem to ask. But I tried to find them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you made an effort to get different kinds of kids?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted all different kinds, yes. If I ever spoke in front of a high school, I told them I wanted a variety of pages, boys and girls.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you consider it part of their civic education?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's a really good education for them, part of their civics class. Especially for children who were not outstanding. For children who had average school grades who were struggling. They needed that. And it really gave them a lot of plusses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how much relationship would you have with the pages on the Floor? Would you be able to check in with them, or keep up with them somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they always came in at first and I told them that my office was always open to them. If they needed to call their parents, they could come in at any time and use our telephone to call their parents and to feel like it was home away from home, because they weren't living with me. My grandson and his friend lived with me at that time and I used to take them to dinner or lunch, but they had so many activities. And then that unfortunate incident occurred with Red Beck and that page and I decided after that I didn't want to get too close to them. Because you never knew what they were going to do – or their parents. And I didn't know most of their parents. Only some of them, I did. I seldom went outside my District, but I once had as pages the daughters of a dear friend of mine who had grown up in the Twenty-seventh District, but her daughters were raised in Seattle. Katie and Meghan Hartmann – I had both of them. And I did take them to dinner.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you would know them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were darling kids. But that's the only time I ever went outside the city

for pages. And then I went out of my district for the honorary pages this one day and then for my grandson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that many or most senators pay as much attention to the page program as you did?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I think so. They all want them. A lot of them want their own kids. My kids were all grown. My children were going to college; they never worked in the Leg. No member of my family ever worked there while I was a member.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've heard some legislators wanted their kids because it was a way of seeing them during session. The ones who lived a little further away.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true, and that's okay. If I had lived there and had children, I would have had them paging. There is no question about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that your kids can at least see what you are doing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I would never have gotten them jobs like in the Bill Room. I don't think that's right. I just think we should leave that open for the general public. We used to have patronage and then it was taken away from us and we didn't do it anymore. But during patronage time, I guess I got a driver once and I think I got someone for the gallery once, but that's all.

I never went to legislative meetings outside the state – I mean national conferences; I thought they were a waste of time. Unless I was participating in one of them. I think I went to five in all the time I was there. I didn't do it. It cost money, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Photos of pages were so prominent in your newsletter. I thought we should talk about it. It's a special part of being a senator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My last session there I used a whole stack of pages. I tried to get them in my newsletter every time and I think I did, pretty much.

## CHAPTER 22: "THE YEAR OF THE WOMAN," 1992

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's move to the 1992 session. You still have the one-vote Republican majority that you were working with. The House had a pretty sizable Democratic majority, fifty-eight to forty. And it was the last year of Governor Gardner's term. But that year was an election year so you had a sixty-day session and no special session. You were out of there on time, which was unusual.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't have a special session? We didn't need money, then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a bit of a tough year in its own way. Several people in the Legislature were said to be running for Governor, or thinking about it: Dan McDonald; Sid Morrison, who was a Congressman at that time; Gary Locke from the House was beginning to think about running for Governor; and Joe King wanted to be Governor. Actually, none of these people become the Governor in the next election, but I was wondering what kind of impact on the session does that have, when several prominent leaders are looking for higher office? If there was some extra grandstanding?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember it having much of an impact at all. If we could ever help them with legislation, we always gave them the bill. It was a question of who got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they needed it more? To make their names?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They needed it more. That may be the year that Gary Locke got my bill on gun control, where the Chief of Police in Tacoma wanted me to sponsor legislation which permitted the police to confiscate guns picked up in a felony, instead of selling them back to the public. He asked me to sponsor a bill in which the police could confiscate them. And I had the bill and Gary got the bill. It was my bill. I was in first, but he got it and his bill passed. Our bills changed places. Mine was over there in Rules and his was in Rules in the Senate and he got it. And I let it go. I really wanted that bill, but I let it go. Because it was a good bill and it

changed the whole landscape, pretty much because the guns wouldn't get back in circulation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand they had to auction them, because the police, of course, didn't own them. It just seemed a frustrating situation for the police. To gather these guns and then have to let them go again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right; they were very frustrated over it. Auction them back off again. And I remember the Chief of Police calling and saying, "This has got to stop."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was the last year of Governor Gardner's administration, and also, Dennis Braddock, who was so active in the House on health care issues, had at some point in his career, pledged to serve only ten years. So you are reaching a turning point in leadership on the health care issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and he got out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Braddock had put a term-limit on himself in a way. That was going to be his last year. I was wondering if those two wanted to accomplish something big before they left? If that would have pushed the issue, as well?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Braddock was absolutely pro health care. He was outstanding in that area. And I think he would have wanted to see the Basic Health Care plan adopted. I recall, he was able to get a resolution adopted for a study, but not a comprehensive bill. He lacked the time to see that implemented. He was able to see it in the next session but it was Phil Talmadge who connected, who got the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I had this feeling – I mean, it's only human nature that he had worked so hard for it – that he wanted it as the lasting legacy of his service.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had his own agenda. He knew what he wanted to do and he always has done it. He set a goal to get out in ten years, and he did. Then he did the insurance for the low-

income, he started the community clinic, they were going – they are still going. He’s done a miraculous job and he’s still doing a miraculous job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He’s back in government now – 2002 – in a different capacity as head of DSHS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. He’s a visionary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What happens, though, to something like health care reform when you lose a fighter like that? Did you experience a little tension, yourself, over this idea that he wasn’t going to be there anymore?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, because someone always picked it up. And Phil was waiting in the wings; he was going to pick it up. He wound up as chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dennis Braddock was such a strong voice in the House for that. Who would be his match in the House?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think there was anybody who was as strong as he, but I think the chair of the Health Committee now is Eileen Cody. She picked it up and tried to carry on. But I missed him. He’s the one who saved the Board of Health for me. He was my hero, freshman hero!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you try to talk him into staying?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I may have broached the subject, but I didn’t...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was clearly not going to fly? Governor Gardner had been touting himself as the Education Governor, but in this last year or so of his term, he switched to health care reform as his number-one priority. In the State of the State address at the beginning of session, the only specific he talked about was health care reform. He made the point that if the state didn’t accomplish health care reform, there would be no money for anything else. There would be no use talking about education if all the money was siphoned off into health care because of the escalating costs. It wasn’t a diversion; you had to take care of the issue because the costs were going to gut the entire state budget if you didn’t.

And he had statistics to prove it. So you had some players on the national level, the statewide level and your own legislative level talking about this issue. Do you think the general public was also right there with you on this? Was this something that people discussed widely?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know. I never figured that out. The hospital administrators and the doctors seemed to be getting on board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They wanted health care reform?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. And I’m sure there were those who didn’t want it, but I think they knew that something had to happen. The young people, I don’t think, were taken up by this very much because they were healthy. And I guess those who were not healthy, they were too sick to talk about it, or were ambivalent – I don’t know – or afraid. But the young people really weren’t interested because they did not need to buy health insurance until they have a family. They could not afford it and if they could afford it, they didn’t wish to afford it unless they had children. And then, of course, many of them were supportive of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many young people can’t afford health insurance. Then you get to the “sandwich generation” who have both elderly parents and children to take care of. Those people certainly were getting hit at both ends.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then they become responsible. And then they are concerned. I don’t think people are really concerned, even now I don’t think they are concerned. And we’re in serious trouble right now. And I don’t see the concern out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps people don’t know how to express it. If you’re sick, that’s just not the time to write to your legislator.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If they are sick, they can’t afford their medicine and don’t take it; they just die. Or they struggle to take it, but take it every other day, because they can’t afford every day, or they give up food in order to buy medicine. It’s out there!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The medical community, you were saying, seems to be recognizing something had to happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They recognize it. That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Consumers, or clients, you call them, are either ambivalent or not very well informed. What about insurance companies? Where are they in all of this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they just want to sell insurance. They are not willing to look for a solution if it excludes them. And I've always believed that. If we were to do it right, we would exclude them. We would do a one-party pay, and handle it through the state and save money in the process, and provide insurance for every man, woman and child. But they wouldn't be involved. And they are not helping! And so, because they are not helping, it's not a "all one for one, one for all" situation. And whether the press is picking this up or not, I don't know. They are not doing much about it; they don't talk about it. You don't hear it on television, except for consumer groups. And now Consumers' Union has started a health issue and they are pleading for people to take the magazine or the paper in order to be able to survive. Harvard Health Care and the Mayo Clinic and the University of California all do health letters. I've subscribed to the University of California – I've subscribed to all of them – but I like the University of California best. The Nutrition Magazine – there are all kinds of health issues out there that are making money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would the people making money off of health care, would they be the main group resistant to change?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they would be for it. I mean, the ones who are making money on it by sending health care letters, they make money off it, but the insurers, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who is the chief lobby preventing health care reform, I guess is what I'm trying to ask?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The insurance companies, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And are they powerful enough to drag this out and prevent change?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They are powerful enough to throw a monkey wrench into it and create questions. And that's what they do. They create questions which are hard to answer and everyone's afraid to move. And it's going to take an overwhelming effort to do it. If the bill I sponsored was to be passed and we had to add a one-party pay, the strike would be insurmountable, because it's going to take an upheaval of the whole system. And when you do that, you make mistakes. And so, I guess we need to go easy. First, we need to establish the one-party pay and ease out insurance companies. Ease them out! And then go to the income tax. It won't happen. It will take years to do, to get it perfect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there was a lot of talk this session. Health care reform was the big issue. You were still on the Health and Long-term Care Committee, still chaired by Jim West. The other members were: Linda Smith, the vice-chair; Mike Kreidler as the ranking minority member; Janice Niemi; Pam Roach, and Susan Sumner, who I believe was new.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't even know her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A Republican. I don't think she was there very long. And yourself. The House committee, of course, was still headed by Dennis Braddock. What position did the Republicans on this Senate committee take on health care reform? What did they want to accomplish?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I never figured it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were not able to do much. The Democrats weren't able to really push this through in any way. A lot of things died in that committee. Do you remember what the tenor of the discussion was? Is this one of those committees where the vote just doesn't come up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can't remember anything being talked about except AIDS on that committee. I can't remember anything being done on that

committee. I can't remember even going to a lot of meetings. And I don't know why I wasn't ranking minority, but I wasn't. I guess I didn't want it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you discouraged? These are years where not a lot is going on. Why was AIDS the only focus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were just maintaining the necessary funding for that program and others. I don't remember doing anything in that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Washington State Health Care Commission had been appointed earlier by the Governor, and was scheduled to give their report that November after session. So, was there just a waiting period there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were listening. And the next year was when we did implement the Basic Health Care plan. Because that was the next year the Commission was actually organized.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a great deal of discussion about health care, but not a lot of outcome. Dennis Braddock and Governor Gardner worked together. Dennis Braddock favored the single-payer plan, but Governor Gardner pushed pretty hard for his pay-or-play concept. It was kind of a catchy title; can you explain a little bit about pay-or-play? I think it was something to do with employers having to either pay their share of the health care costs, or they paid into a fund.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It worked like Unemployment Compensation. That would be it. I think that's a great idea, but employers don't like it. And of course, unemployment comp is a federal program, you see. It only worked because the Feds initiated it. They told employers throughout the United States, "You either pay into an unemployment compensation fund – to sustain it – or you pay a tax in lieu of the fund, and the tax in lieu will be more than the amount you pay for the fund." And so that was the idea of that. And it didn't go. It could hardly go without the support of the Feds. Because so many businesses are inter-state businesses and you can't enforce inter-state business in an action like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Gardner was using this as a model, saying, "Well, we've got to go this way."

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I liked him for that. And it's a truth. But we couldn't do it alone and we couldn't force Congress into doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Gardner gave a speech expressing his view where he said, "The people who we have to be concerned about – for this issue of how to pay for health care – are the small business people." And then he said something I hadn't heard before. I certainly had heard of the screams from the small business people, but he said, "About half of small business people do pay health care and that you should make everyone pay because otherwise it's not fair..."

**Sen. Wojahn:** For the few who do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He said he wanted a level playing field and only if everyone paid would employers be on the same footing with each other. It made sense.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And his theory was that if you are a good employer, all you cared about was your employees and you wanted the best for them. And consequently were willing to pay, but then there were those who didn't care. They were just there to make money and they didn't care. So you need to bring them in, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Make them care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But they never will. And so, it was a ploy which didn't work, but it's too bad. Congress should adopt the same thing. Or do a one-party pay, which I favor, and take it away from private business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was actually appealing to small business people, saying, "You're the good guy; you're willing to pay, but your competitor down the street is not paying, and that's not fair." Rather than neither of them paying, bring them all in. But still they were tying health care insurance to employment, which left out a lot of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the small businesspeople organization fought it. Fought him on that even

though they were buying health insurance. You know, they weren't the "white hats" we thought they were. Some of them were, but...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he's trying. So you say you admired him for that; did he really come into his own with this issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think he did. And also, he was great on education. He was basically right and I think he has a good heart. I think he had struggles when he was small and I think he recognized that. And he recognized that people needed help. I think, basically, he's an honorable person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was in for two terms by this time – this was his last year. Did he become a more effective Governor over time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I never disavowed his interest in helping people. I just disavowed his interest in helping certain people. And you know, he wouldn't help me at all. I helped him to be elected county exec and also, I lost my position with the County Labor Council because I spoke out in his support and they threw me off the board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** High price!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I took my licks because of him, but he didn't take his licks because of me. And I felt that was grossly unfair. But that's neither here nor there. He was a good Governor. But we had added all these layers of people at the colleges who became state employees and added huge payrolls which costs more money when you do that. People don't talk about that, they don't think about that, they don't recognize that and they bitch. And I bitched because I didn't think we should be taking in all these things before we had a large enough population base to accommodate new ideas. We were just creeping and instead of creeping for awhile, we tried to walk and we weren't ready. So we have different philosophies. When you force things, they cost – in humanity or in fees, it's going to cost. And if we had forced small business into paying for this, it would have cost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing Braddock and Gardner did agree upon, even though they had

slightly different ways of paying for this, is that there should be some kind of commission which would oversee health care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The implementation of any program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To implement it, force competition, open up certain things, push certain things. For both of them this was a very key provision.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That eventually happened. It was formed with Talmadge's Health Services Act. That was a great Health Care Commission which took the heat for the Legislature. They were the lightning rod for health care for the state; they were bringing it about and they were doing it. And they were doing it well!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, according to that labor article, the Senate Republicans refused to hold hearings. They refused to vote on the issue. They refused to bring it onto the Floor, so not a lot happened this session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You know, you can't fight it. And as one person – a minority-party person – on that committee, you can't fight it. I had too many other things I was worried about to even try to fight that, because it wasn't going to work. McDonald was Majority Leader; he had been on the Health Care Committee and he wasn't going to let anything happen. He understood the committee, he knew the workings of the committee; he served under me when I was chair of the committee, and I knew my limitations. I knew what I could do and couldn't do. And I couldn't do anything as a minority member. And to beat on them over it, it wasn't worth it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's another route to legislation, and that's the initiative route. In that year, Initiative 141 was filed and pushed by Dennis Braddock. When he retired from the Legislature, he filed this initiative and headed that drive. The short title – initiatives have a huge text behind them – but the short title was: "Shall a cost-controlled health benefit system publicly and privately financed, as designed by the Governor, cover all state residents?" As it



turned out, he wasn't able to collect sufficient signatures for it to be brought to the 1993 Legislature. Initiative drives are complicated, expensive things to do, but did his failure to complete this initiative process have an impact on the debate? Was it a kind of public temperature-taking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know that it had any impact on the debate. There were not enough organized groups behind that to let it pass. The insurance companies would be battling it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was it premature? An under-funded campaign?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what it was. It probably was under-funded because he didn't have enough organized support for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When a person goes out for a big initiative drive like this, for their project they have been trying to get for years...

**Sen. Wojahn:** You better get your ducks in a row before you ever start to do it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then when they don't make it...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that can happen, no matter how good the thought is and how excellent the idea, but if you don't have your ducks in a row and your financing organized and in place before starting it, it's not going to happen. He needed labor behind him on that; he needed all of the liberal groups, including that prepaid health care group...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean Group Health Cooperative?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Group Health. I don't believe they were there. These are the big groups he needed behind him to even pass that and Group Health probably would have fallen in if it had happened, but I don't think he had them and maybe they didn't have the money. They'd have had to generate the money through their unions or their organizations and I'm not so sure even the AFL-CIO organization would have enough money to put behind that. You don't know how many of these unions have people working for

small employers, you see, so it wasn't going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is health care is so complicated people kind of shy away from addressing it through the initiative process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you see, when you have a big initiative going on – when we did the initiative on “twelve percent is enough on the usury tax,” we had them all behind us. We had the AFL-CIO, we had Group Health, we had the energy people. They were all there. And we could do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Should health care reform be accomplished by initiative? Or is that more properly a legislative concern?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It should be done legislatively. It is public and it's probably the one issue which is the closest to everybody's heart, even if they wouldn't admit it. Because if you don't have your health, you have nothing. And it should be the number-one issue before everybody, even education! Because if you don't have your health, education is no good. It's got to be health. And if you can't entice the American people, or the people of the state of Washington behind you, what else are you going to do? If you can't persuade them, educate them that it's important...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But as an initiative, the wording has to be just so and then it's a little harder to amend than normal legislation. Is that a danger? If this had passed, would that have locked you in, in a way which might not have been as flexible and responsive as if it had been a normal bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think an initiative to the Legislature would probably be more desirable in an issue like this because then something has to happen. The Legislature has to either accept it, reject it and let it go on the ballot with their rejection, or put a substitute out there to vote on it. And so something has to happen. But with an initiative, nothing has to happen, unless you get the signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, unfortunately, he didn't. Did nay-sayers take that failure as any kind of indication of anything?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. The insurance companies on the sides may have said that but they never publicly did anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wondered what the fallout was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** At least I never heard of any fallout. I may have had my head in the sand...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think so! Well, this was something that obviously went through the whole session and beyond.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the next year we did something about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. We were talking about the Senate Republicans sitting on programs and not really wanting to bring things up. That approach seems to show up in the budget issue as well. You had a rather large deficit that year and the Governor and Senate Democrats wanted to use the Rainy Day Fund to help staunch the flow, shall we call it. Senator McDonald and other Senate Republicans didn't want to use any of the money. Senate Democrats wanted to use all of it – which wasn't even enough; it was not even a third of what you needed. But the Republicans didn't want to use any of it. Was that some of the same idea of holding the line?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Republicans have always avoided spending money for public use. They are private-industry oriented and they would like to see private industry taking over everything the state government does, including the prisons, so it's there, it's clear as a bell. It's not clear as mud; it's as clear as a bell that they don't want to use the money for anything. Because the longer they can stall, the longer it's going to take to ever pass legislation to use the money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would the tactic be, if you wait long enough, those programs will just have to be cut?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They will go away. Otherwise, we are going to have to raise taxes and they

don't want to raise taxes. They are committed to private industry and to not raising taxes. And that's the most positive thing they do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a compromise reached and somehow you got the budget out, but it was one of those ideological battles which also shattered the whole session. This Rainy Day Fund discussion, would that have taken place in the Ways and Means Committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would have taken place in caucus first and generally have been smoothed out before it ever got into Ways and Means.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It took the entire session to reach the compromise. How did you go about arguing that one through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a give-and-take there. I don't remember what we were able to get in order to take what we wanted. I wasn't a part of the discussions on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Being a member of Ways and Means, would you have any role in the deliberations?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was as a member on the conference committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, that's where it would have really be thrashed out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If it did go to conference. It went to the Floor, the four corners. They were doing it. So sometimes you had a conference committee, sometimes you had the four corners doing it. And I think it was probably four corners then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor seems to have played a role as well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Well, they would have – the four corners met with the Governor and battled it out. And I was never a part of that, ever!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard to tell exactly who does what on the Ways and Means Committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You just hold your own against what your leadership doesn't want. And vote for the things they do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you basically have the same role on the Rules Committee, trying to hold the line, or push your particular agenda?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there it's real simple. You pull your bill and you've either got enough votes or you don't have enough votes. And if it's a particularly unpopular issue for you, you debate and talk against it and you try to kill a bill from ever getting on the Floor. But if you've got enough votes, you win.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These years that the Senate Republicans were sitting on bills, was that another place where they would be killing bills, in Rules?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think generally, the bills didn't get into Rules. If they get into Rules and they are controversial, they just barely pass or they don't pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They never come out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if enough people don't like the bill – and sometimes Republicans didn't like a bill that we didn't like, and once in awhile you'd get one of them to vote on your side. Rules Committee is a very democratic committee. I think it's more democratic than the

four corners really, because that's where the people had their say. And any issue that came up on abortion, I would always talk against it. If it was anti-abortion, I would always talk against it. Or if it had an implication of that, or if it was a bill which was discriminatory of a group of people, there would be groups who would talk against it. We picked up a Republican once in awhile. And sometimes the Republicans would pick up a Democrat. You know, it happens. So that's the reason you are cautious on your selection of the Rules Committee, very cautious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were saying that you really had the Rules Committee stacked against you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't have Senator Rasmussen on there anymore, you know. He was a loose cannon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were vastly outnumbered?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Vastly outnumbered there; we didn't win many. If they wanted a bill, they could get it on the Floor. We could always vote against it on the Floor and expect the House to kill it. So there were all the negative votes on the Floor, and the House killed the bill and the

bill was dead. Or if it was so bad, and the House had passed it, we could usually go to the Governor, if it were really, really bad, and explain to him why it was bad and get him to veto it. Or get him to veto sections of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were not completely helpless?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it easier in years like that to prevent things than to create things? You could, perhaps, prevent



*"I was always pro-choice and vigilant to protect abortion rights."*

some bad bills, but you'd have a much harder time passing your own ideas?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Unless it appealed to both sides, forget it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to mention that you were still the caucus vice-chair. In fact, I think it might be your last year in that position. Were you thinking of making a change?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was going to run for Pro Tempore next time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were hoping for a majority next election? Let's talk about some of your bills from this session; you had a fair number. There were a couple that looked particularly interesting: you had one you co-sponsored to protect whistle blowers. It seemed to grow out of a particular instance or group of events. Do you remember that one?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember the issue, but I don't remember the event that precipitated it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I believe there was a whistleblower program which had been in place for several years. It was run through the Auditor's Office and it seemed to have quite a few problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It never worked. We may have just been trying to clean that up. I think there's a desperate need for them to be protected – not to lose their jobs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the issue of retaliation. Your bill passed, tightening up the whole program.

**Sen. Wojahn:** All you can do is tighten or loosen bills when you're in the minority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also co-sponsored and pushed through a bill to create a bone marrow donor program, which was primarily educational, but there was more to it than that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We wanted to encourage people to sign up to be bone marrow donors. We knew at that time that bone marrow transplants have been proven to be successful and then we had to find a way to encourage people to sign up for the programs or to volunteer if called upon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a national program and the summary of the bill said, "The intent of the Legislature is to establish a state-wide bone marrow donor education and recruitment program in order to increase the number of Washington residents who become bone marrow donors and to increase the chance that patients in need of bone marrow transplants will find a suitable bone marrow match." This was to be done through the Department of Health.

**Sen. Wojahn:** This was done, primarily because the Fred Hutchinson center developed the bone marrow transplant program internationally. It's internationally famous and it seemed appropriate that we push that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mentioned a special effort to educate and recruit minorities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The minorities were particularly hard to match.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were successful, then. I think we talked a little bit about your first attempt to pass a bill to expand the duties of tenants. This session you had another anti-gang effort you conducted through the Senate Committee on Law and Justice. It says, "The Residential Landlord-Tenant Act lists the statutory obligations of the tenant. The Act also allows a landlord to terminate a rental agreement and evict the tenant who violates any of the enumerated statutory obligations. It is suggested that the list of statutory tenant duties be expanded to include a prohibition against engaging in gang activities which endanger the premises or any neighboring premises or persons."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a bill that we did to stop landlords from renting to people who were gang members. And that passed. That was a good bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was one bill which also passed that built on the HOMEBUILDERS Program you had worked on in the past, titled "Providing family preservation services..." Senate Substitute Bill 6111 had to do with foster children, helping strengthen families so that children could be returned to their families.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator Craswell approached me to sign onto the bill. It was supposed to be a further expansion through DSHS of family preservation, which we had gotten the money for under my HOMEBUILDERS bill in '79. It had been proven very effective in Pierce County – in fact, their success rate was about ninety-five percent, which was incredible. And because of that it had gotten funding for a minimum amount to bring it on board as a state program; it was implemented in 1979 at the time that Pierce County approached me with the proposal. The services were going to be confined, pretty much, to King County, but it was a pilot sort of program with no expiration date. Because of the success of that program, it was to be expanded to other counties, including where it had been started in Pierce, and then expanded to King County; it was expanded to about eleven other counties. It seemed like an appropriate idea to bring DSHS into doing the same thing to further expand the money. It sounded like a good idea. It was also sponsored in the House, I was told, by Margaret Leonard, who chaired Children's Services in the House. It proved to be a disaster as far as I was concerned, but when it first passed, everyone voted for it, including Phil Talmadge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it misrepresented?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I believe that it wasn't misrepresented, but they were able to get a change of terminology put in the bill. I think it was done in the House, that the department could solicit available federal and private funds for family preservation which would further take away from money we didn't catch which was being used by the HOMEBUILDERS. And, at the same time, it could generate opposition to children in foster care – who were being taken care of in foster care, because “family preservation” would take precedence over that. There's always been a barrier between the right wingers and the fundamentalists over who should take children away from their families and put them in foster care. And foster care was not a great success, I might add. We've had lots of problems with that, so it seemed like an appropriate move, but proved not to be. And

then it became a battle between “safety of the children” and “the best interest of the child.” The latter is a much stronger term.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So to get this straight, this was money which went to programs to keep children in families, even at their peril, as it turned out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, by having a twenty-four hour service sent in to review and to help the family figure out what the problems were. HOMEBUILDERS used highly-skilled psychiatric social workers who went to live with the families – or were on call twenty-four hours if there was no place for them to live with the family; they worked with the family for one month – contracted for one-month service. Then they reviewed the problems which were causing the friction within the family and were able to ameliorate that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what was the disaster part?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that DSHS, in the first place, did not have the funding to bring in these psychiatric social workers who were so skilled, and probably – and I don't know that this is true – but I assume the staff they used instead were not highly skilled in family problems or not skilled enough to know what needed to be done. It soon became a battle between the family preservationists and DSHS over the safety of the child and the best interest of the child. And I think that is still going on. I think we gave a double signal to DSHS, which was unfortunate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that the sort of philosophy which leads to children being returned again and again to abusive families? Eventually, sometimes ending in rather horrific cases?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I think it is true. And pretty soon then DSHS is getting sued because of the lack of ability to know when a child should not be sent back into the home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that was due to the difference in training levels?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believe so, I believe so. I believe that Jill Kinney who originated the HOMEBUILDERS program had highly experienced, dedicated and knowledgeable people doing this. But, eventually, I think

HOMEBUILDERS had been reduced in funding. How much funding is there now, I don't know. But we did not do HOMEBUILDERS any special services by doing this, hoping to save money. But by the same token, it was brought to the attention of the sponsors that it would be a further service to HOMEBUILDERS and we could expand it throughout the state. We were only in, let's see: King, Spokane, Snohomish, Kitsap, Whitman, Yakima, Thurston, Skagit, Jefferson and Clark. Eleven counties with Pierce.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that the proponents of this, like Senator Craswell, believed that they were augmenting the HOMEBUILDERS Program? Or were they trying to do something else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believe they thought they were. But two things in here bother me, and that was that the Department could seek available funds through the Feds or any private company or any family preservation group. And then it was "subject to available funds." So that should have not touched HOMEBUILDERS, but should have touched DSHS. Whether it did or not, I don't know. This is the danger of playing with something that is doing a good job. And how far HOMEBUILDERS is available now, I don't know. Jill Kinney left and it was taken over by another group. It was retained as a first-class operation and further reviewed by other states, because nearly every state in the Union adopted the program. So I'm sure that it's probably still going on, but "subject to funding."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how quickly did you realize this bill was not what you had thought it was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** When we got into a battle over the "best interest of the child" as opposed to "safety of the child." The Senate held for best interest of the child; the House, through June Leonard, held for safety.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, "best interest," that's a sort of code word in these programs. What does it mean?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is much more comprehensive than safety. And it split because the Senate insisted and the House insisted; Phil Talmadge was right in the middle of it and I don't remember what finally occurred. But I'm sure, with the lessening of available funding, that we didn't gain anything in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't do these things on the cheap.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, you cannot. Anything you do requires funding and money and the source has to be there. It cannot be "subject to available funds."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If it's intermittent, will a lot of people fall through the cracks?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It isn't a continuing benefit. To be a continuing benefit, it has to be funded. And with the changing of the parties in the Legislature, it can't happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** DSHS seems to be the place everybody goes to find money when they want it for something else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's where I went for funding when I needed money for HOMEBUILDERS and it worked. And it was an incredible program. It was so incredible that every state in the Union eventually adopted it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's one of those things which can't be diluted? Otherwise it loses its power to be effective?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, interesting. Ellen Craswell and some of the other sponsors were very vocal about preserving the family over preserving the child, you might say. In their published statements, they saw the child as a unit of the family, not as an individual having particular needs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, not as a single entity. I don't say that they are not sincere, but I say that they are dead wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly some of the outcomes from this shift in policy emphasis...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Have proven to be deadly! And DSHS has been caught in the middle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With that very mixed message.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and somehow that's got to be changed if it has not been already.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's certainly been discussed, after some of the worst cases hit the news, that DSHS had a double mandate. And that it was impossible to both preserve some families and care for children. Not all families are healthy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't do both. In order to come out of it, we have to strengthen the foster care system. Because foster care has gotten a bad name and it was well deserved. Foster parents need to be given training and education. They need to be paid an adequate amount, but not so much that people will take foster care to make a living. Foster parents should be parents who love children and want to take care of them with their best interests at heart. And safety is not enough; it's got to be best interest of the child. And as long as there are two parties with splits within parties, right wing and fundamentalists, there are going to be problems. The state has to observe those problems and handle them. And it's got to be done in the policies of the state, through the state Legislature. And as long as people misrepresent or see the truth in different ways, there are going to be problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are quite different ideas of "the family" in back of this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right: "Spank the child, beat the child; it's okay as long you're the parents."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different sense of parental authority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, parental authority. And there's a difference in opinion and values.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, I suppose, some people within the "spank the child" camp are mild versions of that approach, and then there is the overtly abusive version.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It's not black and white; it's a gray area. "The adults live in a democracy, but the children do not." And until we believe that children live in a democracy, we're going to have problems. I remember someone in the school system years and years ago on the staff of the District Ten administration, saying, "Adults live in a democracy, but children do not." And no words were ever truer as spoken.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Occasionally it's downright tyranny, so as a society we have to watch for that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one of those measures that kind of got by you. Unintended consequences.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and everybody voted for it in both houses. Because we were all misled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the last issues of that session we need to talk about was the Mariners baseball team. The team had been put up for sale and people were worried they would leave the state. A group of investors was found to purchase them, but included in that group was a Japanese businessman and some people were equally concerned about that issue. There was a veritable blizzard of bills trying to address this issue. Do you remember just why the Legislature got involved in trying to save the Mariners and what eventually transpired there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, all I know is that there was a need for public money, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people wanted money; some people just wanted changes which would allow a foreign person to own the team. They thought of it as a discrimination issue. Some people wanted the state to sue the owners of the Seattle Mariners so they would not be allowed to move the franchise. Some people wanted the state to buy the team – including Phil Talmadge – and to impose a new tax to do so. That seemed to be one of the more out-there suggestions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That didn't go over very well. Was it the fellow who owned Nintendo, yes,

wasn't he the one who bought it eventually? Was he Japanese?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was a Japanese citizen but his son or son-in-law lived in the United States, in Redmond, wasn't it, where the company is located? But the real money was coming from Japan. Or at least through a Japanese corporation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. I don't think the state should even have gotten involved in this whole issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislature does seem to get tangled up in it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I love baseball, but I didn't get tangled up. It seems to me that this is a private business and we should not be involved. I do not believe that we should loan our public support as the Legislature to private industry, especially when the private industry charges so much for a ticket that poorer families like the ones who I represented cannot partake of it with their children. And I don't think I ever got involved because I didn't want to be involved. I love baseball, but not to the extent I thought the state should have an ownership in a baseball team, or build a stadium or anything else. And I never supported it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it just "hit the fan." It was one of those big flurries.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was not part of any of it. Because I couldn't see how that should become a part of state government or state policy in any way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it like baseball fever took over the legislators all of a sudden?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. Slade Gorton was a part of it too, you know, as a U.S. Senator. Because he was still angry over the loss of the Pilots who had been bought by Milwaukee, and changed to the Brewers; I believe they changed their name. But it seemed to me that it was wrong and I stayed out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were many legislators caught up in this debate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because baseball is this special thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Baseball is the national game, they say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's more like a national religion for some.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They all got caught up in it. Mostly men, not women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it kind of throw the session into a tizzy? All the accounts are rather breathless.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there was an undertow, but it didn't throw us into a tizzy. But there was an undercurrent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe that comes later with the stadium issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. If a Japanese person wanted to buy it, so what? You know, business is business. And international business has become national business and we're all in this together. So I couldn't see why it even came up. I still don't know why it ever came up. Now we've got Japanese players playing baseball and they're good and we like them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you seem to have settled it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. But I didn't believe we should put public money into building stadiums.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure we'll talk about that. One of the other undercurrent issues of that session was all the discussion about campaign finance reform. There were two main approaches: One was a lid on contributions and one was a lid on campaign spending, which was a much more controversial idea. You could put a dollar figure on how much a business could give or an individual, but how much a legislator could spend all together seemed to be a much tougher issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't put a lid on campaign spending.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine each district is so individual that it would be difficult to put a dollar figure on campaigning in Seattle, as



opposed to say, Moses Lake; different places would require different things. One area is very dependent on television; another area would be more shoe leather. What would work for each district. I imagine that's one of the things that makes this quite difficult for legislators to even look at, is that their situations are so different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never believed you needed a lot of money to run a campaign. We didn't spend a lot of money running a campaign. And anything I had left over, I gave to charity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever use television?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that would save you a lot of money right there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't think that the salary of a legislator is enough that you need to spend a lot of money running a campaign. And you shouldn't. This is my view. That if you are known in the community, because you've volunteered in the community and are willing to spend time doorbelling people, that you didn't need money, you needed votes. And I never figured that dollars added votes. That's a different philosophy, but I still think that if you're a strong candidate, and if you've volunteered in the community and given to the community, that people know you. They may not know you through the newspaper, but they know you because they know you. And if you're willing to get out and doorbell and even having fundraisers is good if you can keep the cost down. I don't believe in thousand-dollar or hundred-dollar-a-plate fundraisers, or two-fifty. I did this once. But only once and that was an expensive fundraiser. And that's when I chaired the Health Committee. But other than that, I never tried to raise a lot of money. I got a lot of money, but I got a lot of money from everybody. A little bit from everybody, not a lot from anyone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was an initiative filed in 1991, Initiative 134, for contribution limits. It was certified and the Legislature took no action. It went to the vote of the people in '92 and passed. It was considered a big step forward in

this area, but it's still a perennial issue. It's one of those things people will always struggle with, seemingly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** People will find a way to get out from under any kind of a law. A loophole. When there were loopholes and people accept huge amounts of money to run for an office which paid a limited amount of money – which is crazy – they knew damn well that there was going to be money given to them during session, through the back door. Or you assumed that it was going to happen. Some candidates got \$50,000. I would never have accepted that, ever!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't that compromising, to take large sums of money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, it is. Of course, it is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's awfully hard to forget where the money comes from.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And some who did it are still in office. I never did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this, for some, is a burning issue, but I gather not for you? You were already a candidate following these ideas? This reform wasn't for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another interesting issue from that year, which perhaps demonstrated the shifting political culture, shall we say, is that sexual harassment issues in the Senate and House, and in the federal arena, suddenly were getting a lot of press and attention, partly as a fallout from the Anita Hill allegations against Clarence Thomas during his nomination hearings for the Supreme Court. That case occurred in October of '91 and then seemed to spur a whole campaign season of women running for office under the rather blunt statement: "A lot of old white guys should not be running the United States Senate, House, and various other bodies." Patty Murray, for one, rode into the U.S. Senate on that cause. The "Year of the Woman" as it was called, had a big impact on the state level in different ways. Some more subtle than others. Four women were elected to statewide offices that year, which was a new record. And there were a lot of

new women in the Senate. Was this something that was palpable, you could tell that the culture had shifted and that women were taking a heightened role?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have an article here contrasting this development to how things were a few decades back. This story talks about the “Leg of the Day” award.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A certificate awarded to various staff people or visitors to the Capitol – all women, of course. The signers of the one featured in the article, many of them are still around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Tom Swayze, Sid Morrison, Bud Pardini. All Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that acceptable back then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was funny! We just had a lot of fun in the Legislature at that time and I guess we weren’t very sensitive. I wasn’t very sensitive, either, to that. It had been done in the seventies, but not in the eighties or nineties because we didn’t do it by then. But what we did one time, when we were in the majority – this was in the House – we had our likes and dislikes with the leadership and I remember we liked Bob Charette, but we thought he was like a Banty rooster. He was always jumping up and talking – we didn’t really resent it, but we just thought he was a little too noisy. He always wanted to preside; I don’t think he was Pro Tempore but the Speaker could appoint someone to preside from the group, as I remember, and Bob Charette was presiding that day. And he always flitted around; he was the kind who had a lot of nervous energy. He was a good attorney; he became a judge later, a nice guy. But anyway, Gerry McCormick, who was my seatmate, and I decided we were going to pay him back for things he’d done which were funny things and we had laughed about, but we kind of resented, too. Remember I told you the story about the hearing aid bill, when Bob yelled across at me, “It’s called the Ma Bell

bill.” And I said it and I was so embarrassed, and then I had to apologize. But those are the kinds of things he did. He’d been a senator and then he’d been redistricted out and had run for the House. He’d done all these various things, and I never forgot. So anyway, we went on a luncheon break and Bob was still going to be the presiding officer, so Gerry and I got together and asked the Sergeant at Arms for a pitcher of some ice, no water, just ice. And he gave it to us and then we poured a bottle of vodka in it and took it...and Bob was fooling around and being funny again and he reached over and poured himself a glass of water and took a great big swig, and he damned near choked! We cracked up! We only told a few people that we’d done this. Nobody knew it was happening. We did those things. I’m not proud of them, but it was fun.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was a different era!



*Working with Representative Robert Charette in “a different era”*

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a different era. We used to have “wildlife” parties. Everybody went: senators, lobbyists, everybody. And we were all friends; we were still dedicated to our positions but we got along. And if it was a good bill that the Republicans needed a vote for and it would help my district, I went with it and they did the same thing. It wasn’t as partisan as it is now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what about this aspect of chauvinism? Do you think women staffers thought it was funny?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody thought it was funny. I think when it began to become bitter was in the early seventies when they had a protocol that women couldn’t wear pants on the Floor and that’s when it began to be serious. We were wearing pantsuits and the Senate outlawed it and said you couldn’t do that. I wasn’t in the Senate yet. And I thought that was ridiculous. I wear pantsuits. And they finally rescinded it. But the Senate was much more sedate; they didn’t do this kind of thing. I would never have thought of putting vodka in the pitcher of ice in the Senate. In the first place, we weren’t allowed to have any water on the Floor. You know, we didn’t even have water on the podium. You went and got a drink of water if you needed it, but you didn’t have it there. So, it was always sedate and controlled. John Cherberg controlled it and he was very much a gentleman and everybody there was “a lady and gentleman,” which isn’t the same anymore. But the House was always rambunctious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what does it do for women – I’m not talking about jokes but about real harassment? What was it like to work there, for women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don’t know when that occurred. A lot of the women working there were patronage and they were brought by legislators as girlfriends. Honest!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of atmosphere does that create, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very bad. I remember one time when I chaired the Commerce Committee in the House, and I needed some copies made of

something and I sent my clerk out to have them made but the duplicating machines were tough to run at that time. We were meeting through the lunch hour or it was a little after eleven o’clock. I sent my staff out to get some copies made and the gal who was supposed to be making them had gone to lunch with one of the members. And she was challenged and she said, “Well, So-and-so insisted that I go to lunch with him.” So she was caught between a rock and a hard place, except that she didn’t have to go; she could have said no, but she didn’t. Now that actually happened. We didn’t get the copies. I was roaring mad. I was furious; this was in about ’73. And that went on.

And that’s when the Fly Open started – the golf game in Spokane where the men – legislators and lobbyists – all went. And they took their girlfriends, not their wives; they called it the Fly Open. And the women legislators and lobbyists, jokingly, but still dead serious, started the Double Cup. And so that’s probably the beginning of the whole thing. The Double Cup started after the Fly Open had been going on for several years. And the wives all knew this!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was it changing a little as gradually there were enough women involved to counteract some of the old ways?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was slowly getting more, but the Fly Open was there a long time before the Double Cup. I think the Double Cup didn’t start probably until the mid-eighties if maybe a little bit before that. The women were beginning to come into their own and say, “Hey, this is crazy we’re letting these things happen.” I think women did not take their boyfriends, I might add. But that was an opportunity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking for such an article to appear in the newspaper, for one thing you never had the language for sexual harassment before. It was certainly happening, but there was no word for it. Was the issue already being addressed before it appeared in the paper; was it finally safe to talk about it because people were already aware of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. I think that's very true that this had stopped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a statement that the Legislature was already saying, "This is not okay."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes and the perpetrators were the leadership on both sides of the aisle. And they were moving on. Tom Swayze moved out and became a judge, Morrison had gone to the Senate, and who else was there? Bud Pardini had been given a position and Bob Curtis had left. They were all decent people and good legislators; I liked every one of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I didn't mean to single out those individuals because they were actually saying this is not okay.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Others had moved on; they'd gone to the Senate where this didn't happen. They'd moved into other positions or other elective offices and the newer people didn't think it was such a great idea. But I was of the old school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of the newer people are women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was just beginning to happen, but just barely, the beginning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By this election it was substantial. This was the famous "Year of the Woman."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was called the women's year, 1992, yes. "The Year of the Woman." So that was happening, but those of us who were of the old school who had started way back, laughed. We thought it was hilarious. Because we didn't realize then what they were doing to us; it was insulting. When I first came to the Legislature, first as a lobbyist and then as a legislator, I knew you could not back down if you knew you were right. Women had to hold their own in debate or they walked all over you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had learned to deal with it. That was the context.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We'd learned to deal with it. You either laughed and got along or you didn't get your bills. You were stuffy and you didn't

get your bills. So you went along with it and didn't challenge it and actually when that article appeared, I still thought it was kind of funny. But it wasn't. It was demeaning. And as more women became legislators, I think – and as I say, one of the things which brought it to a head was the fact that they told us we couldn't wear pantsuits. That was dictating and that offended us. And then the little "dollies" started disappearing because they couldn't do the work. We shared a secretary when I first started and those who were unfortunate enough to have to work with a legislator who brought his dolly as his secretary, didn't get their work done. You know, it got to be pretty bad. And so as that changed, as we each got our own secretary, things began to change. And then as more women came in, things began to change and then sensitivity training started coming in to make people more sensitive. That was in the early nineties; I think the sensitivity training was going on all over the United States.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly the Clarence Thomas hearing brought a lot of attention and got it on everybody's radar screen. That was an exciting election year. Besides people like Patty Murray going to the U.S. Senate, there was a Presidential election. Bill Clinton was winning on the national level.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But before that we had Geraldine Ferraro, running for vice-president.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, earlier. So chipping away at these things. Now, a part of what was interesting, there were so many messages put out there during this election campaign. Ross Perot was getting about a quarter of the votes in Washington State. That's some kind of statement but I'm not sure what it is. How did you interpret that movement?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you remember, he was the one who sent a group in to assist his employees who were caught in Iran hostage crisis and he got them out. He became very popular because of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At this time he had quite a different message. He was stumping the country...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Now he was running for President.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Talking about the deficit and getting people's attention. A third party candidate, or even no-party. It was an extraordinary thing to get that many votes. Is that part of Washington State's famous independence? Or was that an expression of something else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I never thought about it. I think we're rather a unique state stuck up here in the northwest corner of the country, where no one pays much attention to us. Until John F. Kennedy ran, nobody even knew we were here, I don't think. Because Henry Jackson became popular or known then. I think that we've always had a genius for being independent and that's evidenced by our primaries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The direct primaries?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we don't want to change. I would suggest that this is caused by the very nature of the population of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a highly mobile state. A lot of people live here who were not born here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are wandering in because we don't have an income tax. I sincerely believe that a lot of them are here partly because of that. I wish they'd go back to where they came from. But a lot of Washingtonians were born and raised here too who are still here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I mean proportionally, compared to some other places, it's a pretty mobile place. And we seem to have a fairly volatile economy. Boeing going up and down...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, because of the tax system. It's volatile because we don't have a sustained basis of money. And when we have a recession, people don't purchase large items.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It hits us in a different way, it's true. Well, even though Ross Perot had quite a showing here, of course, Bill Clinton was elected. Now, for your purposes, of course, one of his big campaign discussions was on health

care reform. Did that help build the profile that was useful to you in trying to get health care reform?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that no, it was the other way around. I think that Clinton and his administration adopted a lot of the proposals – his plan or Hillary's plan was almost identical to the Washington state plan we had put forth first. We had sent the information back there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the whole discussion when it becomes so current, does it help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It became focused because of that. And if it had been left alone, at our state level, we would be out of the woods right now, I firmly believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think people shift and start thinking, "Well, it must be a federal issue; we don't need to do anything on a state level."

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to recognize that we could not have. We passed the bill, but we had to have federal waivers and we hadn't gotten them yet. But I think the waivers would have come through eventually. We would have been home-free. And I think that the conservative element in the state of Washington took it upon themselves, along with conservatives throughout the United States, to hit on Hillary Clinton because she was a woman and because they said she was taking over the Presidency. It was done in an ornery way to discredit the whole administration. And enough people – enough of the old boys out there – reacted and then we lost everything. And this is my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the state health care reform get wrapped up in the federal controversy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that got wrapped up and then the next year we lost the majority in the Senate and they repealed the whole bill. We tried to save the Commission and I'll never forget that Quigley was the chair of the committee and he wanted to remove the Commission because he said, "If we don't do it, they are going to an initiative." "Well, let them go to an initiative," I said to him. "Let's keep our Commission." He had a bill which would

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remove the Commission and I moved to amend the bill to retain the Commission in committee and won. I took it to the Floor and then he voted with the Republicans to eliminate it. He did more damage to the Democratic Party – and I mean this very factually – he damaged the image of the party and he damaged the health care system in the state of Washington. Because he was afraid that they would go to an initiative. Keep it as long as you can, and let them go to an initiative, I said. I don't think it would have passed. We were finding at that point that health care costs were being reduced because competition had been established and prices were coming down. Health care insurance rates were being reduced. We didn't have a chance to improve. Now an individual can't even get insurance unless they can pay an exorbitant monthly fee. Or buy insurance that's no good, which doesn't cover anything.



## CHAPTER 23: PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE, 1993

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had several former colleagues of one kind or another moving on to the federal level, Jim McDermott earlier, and then in 1993 Patty Murray went to the U.S. Senate and Maria Cantwell, Jolene Unsoeld, and Mike Kreidler became members of Congress. That's quite a shift out of the state level.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It opened up a lot of opportunities for people in their districts to run. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And on the gubernatorial level, we saw Mike Lowry winning the primary over Joe King, coming up against Ken Eikenberry, the former Attorney General who had beat Dan McDonald and Sid Morrison in their Republican primary. That was quite a race.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Eikenberry damaged Sid Morrison, lost him the nomination and then Sid Morrison and his people supported Lowry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's unusual. Was Sid Morrison more of a centrist candidate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. He was centrist. He was a very good senator, very good House member. I served with him in both the House and Senate. He was very fair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then he went to Congress.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then he went to Congress and would have been a good Governor. But he did me a favor, I remember, two times. One time when I had a bill before the Senate on the Pantages Theater. The City of Tacoma had already funded a substantial amount of money to preserve the Pantages but we needed \$1.5 million from the state and that went in along a bill which contained \$1.5 million for Olympia, for their performing arts center. I wasn't the prime sponsor, but I was the second sponsor. The Olympia senator, Del Bausch, had been getting vibes from Olympia people that they were not too interested in the bill, but I couldn't cut loose the Tacoma part. So I pushed for the Tacoma bill to get the money for Tacoma. I was recording the votes when they were counted,

and Sid Morrison came over and said to me, "Do you have enough votes?" And I said, no, I lacked one vote. And so he changed his vote and voted yes and the bill passed. You see, so that was participation from both Democrats and Republicans – they did come to the aid of each other and it was friendly. Another time when I was trying to preserve Cascadia – the Indians were trying to take it away and they had surrounded the place and were kind of embargoing people going in and out. The state was using it as a juvenile corrections facility and I thought it should go back to the courts to decide. I would be willing to accept that, but I was not willing to accept the Indians taking over because we had bought it from them in the first place. I was not on Ways and Means, but they were having a meeting and I was allowed to sit in with them because it was my bill to save Cascadia. I listened to both sides and then Sid Morrison said to me, "What do you want, Lorraine?" And I said, "I think it should go to the courts; whatever the federal courts say, I will abide by gladly. But I don't think, by default, we should give it back to the Indians." So he voted to do it. And it passed. Those were two times that he accommodated me. And I've never forgotten. And others did the same. Our people voted for the tax increase in '91 when the Republicans did not have enough votes. Al Bauer voted yes, Ted Bottiger voted yes. Because some Republicans would not vote for it and we did not want to let them off the hook, but it had to be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, sometimes you have to take the larger view.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So you do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So Sid Morrison was eliminated from the Governor's race. What about Dan McDonald, what kind of Governor do you think he would have made?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I always liked Dan McDonald and we agreed on some things. Some things we were violently opposed to each



other on, but he was always very much a gentleman and some of the time would agree with me on things even on a vote. He served on my committee on health care and he was a very good committee member, I might add. But I saw him becoming more and more conservative and more and more fundamentalist as time went on and it kind of bothered me. So what kind of Governor he would have made, I'm not sure. I have to reserve judgment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Ken Eikenberry?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I felt he was way too conservative. People in the state of Washington would not have liked an administration under him, I don't believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it turns out to have been quite a contrast of extremes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an extreme contrast, the same as the time Craswell was running. The fundamentalists simply cannot win an election. Washington is too independent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They can win a primary, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, because it's the same thing when they were in the majority in the Senate. Jeannette Hayner demanded obedience, demanded it! But I think there may have been a cross-over vote on that too, that Democrats voted for Craswell because they knew she couldn't win. You don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They might have; people talk about that as a possibility.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't know. The Republicans, I think, do it all the time, but I'm not so sure the Democrats are that sophisticated. You know, I don't know!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what about Mike Lowry; did you know him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I knew him. I always supported him in everything that I could when he became a Congressman. I sent him money when he was in Congress whenever he had to run. I always supported him, all his elections. I gave him a check for \$1,500 when he was running for Governor. A personal check.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's quite an amount. I gather you preferred him over Joe King?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wouldn't walk across the street to vote for Joe King. He had insulted me when he was Speaker of the House. I thought he was power-hungry. I thought he demanded strict obedience, just like Jeannette Hayner did in the Senate. And they were very friendly. They were always back and forth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are dozens of articles talking about their friendship.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and I remember the first time it happened. Jeannette Hayner and the Senate leadership, which was Republican controlled, and Joe King and his leadership from the House came over to meet in the Senate dining room. She had them all in tow; they sat with them and they didn't speak to any Democrats and we all sat there with our mouths open and thought, "What next?" So, I had absolutely no respect for him as he had shown no respect for me. I thought he was a loudmouth and I wouldn't have voted for him. He was recommended to become a member of the Board of Trustees at Washington State University and I helped block it from coming to a vote on the Senate floor and I was very pleased. That's as nasty as I can get.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if this is a fair question, but if it had come down between Joe King and Sid Morrison, I gather you would have crossed over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I probably wouldn't have voted the race. No, I might have voted for Morrison because I respected him. I don't think I'm very fast to anger, but I don't get mad, I get even.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And as it turned out, you weren't forced to that decision. Mike Lowry did beat Joe King in the primary.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's probably one of the reasons I gave him \$1,500, to beat Joe King. And I handed the check to him personally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democrats regained the majority in the Senate, quite handily. You were back up to twenty-eight members to twenty-one Republicans. After many years of teetering back

and forth between the two parties, you were off the knife-edge and solidly in the majority. Perhaps this will be a year you can get a few things done. The House is also overwhelmingly Democratic, sixty-five to thirty-three. That's a pretty big number, with the Speakership going to Brian Ebersole from Pierce County. So it looks hopeful for you. You're back in the driver's seat. You had a very activist Governor with a lot of plans, a lot of energy; he wanted to do everything "right now." Did it feel exciting? I mean, did you feel like this was going to be a big session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we were elated to be in the majority and have the Governorship. I figured that we'd have things the way we wanted them for awhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did have a whopping deficit, unfortunately, a big budget hole. That was the only cloud on the horizon. One interesting thing, you had a big change in leadership within your caucus. Of the previous members, Marc Gaspard and Sid Snyder are the only ones who remain. Patty Murray left for the U.S. Senate; Patrick McMullen who had been in leadership also left the Senate. Al Bauer, Phil Talmadge and Adam Smith all left leadership positions for different reasons.

**Sen. Wojahn:** To take chairmanships. Adam Smith was getting the Judiciary chairmanship, Phil the Health chairmanship. Bauer wanted the Education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had been caucus vice-chair and you left that position. Five new people came in, four of whom are women: Harriet Spanel, Margarita Prentice, Betti Sheldon, Voloria Loveland, and Jim Jesernig. That's a huge change. What did these new people bring to leadership?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Loveland wanted to be chair of Transportation because that was vacant and it was given to Brad Owen instead, which I'll never figure out why. I don't know. And Betti Sheldon wasn't given much. She came out of a tight race to beat Ellen Craswell and was involved with the Chamber of Commerce and should have been given, not a chairmanship –

probably a chairmanship – but something, even though she was new – that she wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She does head into leadership which is something. She became assistant majority floor leader.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the first year out, they were not given much of anything, as I remember. It was still the "old boys" controlling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They do come into their own, a little later. Jim Jesernig became majority floor leader. Why does he rise so quickly?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was an attorney from Tri-Cities, a very qualified guy: quality.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Suddenly, his name was on everything. You left your position to be elected to the President Pro Tempore position. Was that something you sought?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had always wanted it but I didn't think it was possible. Phil Talmadge is the one who nominated me. He'd nominated me the year before when Ellen Craswell was running.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought it was Marc Gaspard who nominated you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that he nominated me because he was the caucus chair but it was Phil's idea. Marc was good. We are both out of Pierce County, we worked together well. I always wanted to be on Rules Committee and I'd be vice-chairman of Rules, which is a big plus because the President was absent quite a bit and I got to preside a lot of the time. I got to push bills which I wanted. I pushed two bills once!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's very handy. Joel Pritchard would have been the Lieutenant Governor then, the President of the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a good guy. We worked well together. And if it'd been anybody else, I don't know if I would have wanted it. But he was good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was always touted for his fairness, I've heard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very fair, always fair. But you know when the abortion bill was passed and he was right in the middle of it in the Senate at that time, it was very popular with Republicans. Remember? But then when it got bitter, he still remained. He didn't freak out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, he was pretty solid about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you're always afraid that someone will change. As I mentioned before, I watched Dan McDonald changing after Jeannette Hayner, and it was kind of sad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you describe your duties as the President Pro Tempore?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, preside over the Senate in the absence of the President, and be vice-chair of the Rules Committee. And you become a member of the Facilities and Operations Committee, which is a nonpartisan Senate position. That's about it. But you have a lot of latitude. You can usually go anywhere you want to go, take any trip you want to do, where others are limited to one trip a year. I never took advantage of it, but the whole time I was in the Legislature – from 1969 when I was first elected – I think I only went to conferences about six times. I didn't do that; I just felt I didn't get that much out of them. But I could go do anything I wanted. I didn't, but I could have. And that's one thing: you are never limited in what you want to do because you might want to do something for the Senate. You are elected by the Senate; you're not a part of your caucus anymore. And although they always honored me by having me sit at the head table, I had no voice in the caucus except as a state senator. Which I always had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's kind of an interesting position; you're stepping out a little bit. Are you like the vice president?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Like the vice president, presiding over the U.S. Senate. But in our office, it's the Lieutenant Governor and then the President Pro Tempore in his absence. And then there's a Vice President Pro Tempore, so there are two below, and both the President Pro

Tempore and the Vice-chair Pro Tempore do not hold leadership positions in the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a pretty good trade-off for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, oh yes, because you have a lot more latitude to do what you want to do. You have more latitude in negotiating with the other side than you would have as a regular senator, or anything below the Majority Leader in the caucus. And they listen. You could lobby them for issues. I lobbied them heavily on the trauma bill and got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it give you a special platform from which to work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I could have. When Barney Goltz was President Pro Tempore, he worked with the Canadian government to start the World's Fair up there. He became a real prominent part of that because he was from Bellingham, and that worked out. So I could have had a platform to do something special I wanted to do. I had no burning issue to aggrandize myself. I wanted some things done; I wanted the trauma bill passed and I wanted the Patients' Bill of Rights passed and I got both of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As an office, are you like a special care-taker of the Senate in a sense, where one of your charges is to think about the Senate as a whole?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, because that's where Facilities and Operations Committee is. And it's very much a part of that and you're listened to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would you work a lot with the Secretary of the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just trying to figure out where that position fits in the administration.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Secretary of the Senate always was available at the Facilities and Operations Committee to offer suggestions. I could have offered suggestions. I was always in charge of the cafeteria, too. But then someone else wanted it and eventually I gave it up. You make the rules there, or help to make the rules.



*"I was always in charge of the cafeteria." Posing with Senate cafeteria staff (L to R) Jose Juarez, dishwasher; Robert Gomez, waitperson; Executive Chef Terry Taylor; Sous Chef Edward A. Lintott*

But it's a ceremonial position mostly. But it's definitely a good position to be in, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The person presiding over the Senate, do they have power to recognize or not recognize people and somehow influence legislation that way? To a degree, say?

**Sen. Wojahn:** To a degree. You rarely do it. You rarely do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But would there be instances where you were in the right place to make something happen or not make something happen? Were there ways to use that opportunity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the only way you could make things happen would be to approach the Majority Leader and have them make the motion from the Floor that you would accept or reject. But you can't initiate anything yourself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, I mean, there are lots of stories of the Speaker of the House, for instance, gaveling certain things down, or ignoring people or doing whatever. I just wondered if this position was similar.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's the same thing, exactly the same.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You don't hear much about it, though, in the same way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, because they are unobtrusive, in a way, except to the members of the Senate. And the only time that I ever

exercised that was one time during the dying days of the last session I served on, it was the year 2000. There was a little clique in the back of the room, led by Roach that was so noisy we couldn't hear and I gaveled them out and said, "Would you please either talk quietly or leave the chamber." You know. You are the presiding officer of the Senate and you can tell them to shut up! And Governor Cherberg used to scold people for getting too close into the chamber. If their toes were in, he would say...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lobbyists, and people like that? There's a line there, isn't there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lobbyists, yes. There's a line. With him it was always. And you can call a person out of order, even before someone jumps to their feet to say that. You are entitled to do that. I rarely did that. I waited for someone from the other side to suggest it. And you make rulings. You are supposed to know the rules, except you can get tangled up on the procedures. Although you would have witnessed it for many years, you'd know it by osmosis rather than sitting down and memorizing it. But you make rulings subject to the review of the attorneys. And there are two attorneys always looking on everything.



*Presiding on the rostrum, gavel in hand; supported by Senate Counsel Tony Cook and Secretary of the Senate Marty Brown*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that's a good support, isn't it? Did you look to your attorneys for a little guidance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If there's a question brought up on the Floor, you look to them for advice, unless

you know the answer. And rarely do you know the answer. And then the other thing is whenever a vote is taken, and the vote is announced, I had a very fast gavel. If it was a bill I wanted, I gaveled it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, no second-thoughts allowed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if someone came in after that, too late. Especially if it were controversial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you vote yourself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, because you're a senator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Lieutenant Governor, of course, can't.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He can, but only to break a tie, but I could. I always did. You're the last to vote. I was the last anyway. No, I wasn't the last to vote because Zarelli came in. He was after me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty close to the end, though. Is there anything else we should know about you being President Pro Tempore to understand that office, that role?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think one thing that the present Pro Tempore needs to do, just as the Lieutenant Governor, you need to keep order in the chambers and that is absolute. And to correct a situation. One of the things I did, after I became President Pro Tempore, I noticed that the pages, in the opening ceremony, the boys were always carrying the American flag and the girls were always carrying the state flag. I thought that was a little bit one-sided. And so I brought it to the attention of the body, and said, "It seems to me that we're a little out of quirk here, that the girls should be allowed to carry the American flag some of the time because after all, it was made by a woman, Betsy Ross. And it seems to me that ..." And I laughingly said it; I wasn't nasty, I was laughing when I said it. I wasn't firm at all. I said, "I think we ought to reserve that honor for both sides, boys and girls." And the Deputy Sergeant at Arms was so offended he quit. He got mad! Everybody was cracking up, but he was offended. He said, "I don't need this." I did it as lightly as I could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess I'm a little astonished! He just couldn't take the change?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was astonished, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, that sounds like a funny thing to quit over.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was unhappy about it. Well, maybe he'd been going to quit, anyway; I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, it seems like such a non-issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It came back to me that he quit. Maybe other things were bothering him, and that was the straw that broke the camel's back, I don't know. Maybe he'd been criticized. I wasn't criticizing him; I didn't realize that the Deputy Sergeant at Arms was the one who told them what to do. He was responsible for the flag bearers, apparently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were interfering in his domain?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's probably what happened. And in the Senate you don't do that. I wish I had known. Everybody has a place and everybody knows his place. But in the House we were alternating, I remember that. But whatever was happening, the boys were always carrying the American flag.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a habit, it's an assumption.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Until someone points it out as a pattern, nobody notices. Interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess I made an enemy there, I don't know. But it happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There must have been other things going on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I very rarely – I've been all business, and there wasn't very much levity in what I did, but I tried not to be bossy or insensitive. I always waited a long time for everybody to vote. And we would call if they hadn't voted, so we gave them plenty of time to vote. But after the vote was taken and it was

recorded, I would gavel it, because sometimes someone would jump up and want to change their vote. They can always move to reconsider.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you do anything special to learn all the little intricate rules?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, and I didn't know all the intricate rules. No Pro Tempore ever does, I don't think, except John O'Brien, because he was there so many years and he taught parliamentary law. But you get into kind of a rote and it becomes easy when you get into the rote. Before you get into that, it's very difficult. And it's difficult to stand before and look at all those faces and not get kind of quirky and nervous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Speaking of that, did that give you a different sense of the Senate? Standing up there looking from the rostrum, which is a very different place from being on the Floor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you think to yourself, "I love every single one of you." And then pretty soon there are exceptions coming in where they try to do things to you! But generally, you feel expansive toward all of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a highlight of your Senate career, to stand up there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was, it was. And I was

very upset sometimes when some of my own caucus members didn't come through; you know, it happened several times. I made a remark at one time and it got published in the paper, that I shall not talk about here. After a night meeting, there was a split in our caucus and there was a group who wanted to bring up some issues on the Floor. It was the night before we were closing down, and this renegade group led by Lisa Brown had gotten together and they wouldn't come on the Floor and vote. They walked off the Floor and didn't vote and so we lost the Patients' Bill of Rights that I had got through that session. I was angry and I had a right to be. We got it back the next session, but we lost it that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been very frustrating! Your own issues aside, it's interesting to think of you up there on the rostrum. Did this position bring something new to your perspective about the whole institution of the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. You feel differently about it, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel ready for that honor? I mean, you'd been there quite a while.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You never feel quite ready. No, never feel quite ready.



*Looking out at senators as President Pro Tempore with Senate Counsel Tony Cook and Secretary of the Senate Marty Brown in foreground*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any competitors for this position? Did anyone else want this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Al Bauer wanted it. They made him Vice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your career was quite comparable in years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but I was there before he was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that counts in this case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I guess so. I had the advantage of being a woman and we were surrounded by women,

although women didn't always vote for women, I might add. But there was an advantage there of being a woman which I had helped to promote during my whole career there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've heard that there were getting to be so many women that women were now individuals in the Senate. Not "women senators" first, but just senators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I found that out after they were all elected. I thought it would be easy to get things I thought were important that were sexist slanted, and it wasn't easy, because they were still individuals. It's okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Women are just like men on the Floor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right. And where I thought it was going to be easy, it wasn't easy. Women are not as confrontational as men, but if they are, they're worse. A confrontational woman is worse than a confrontational man, I believe, at least as far as I was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A very important woman leader retired that year. Jeannette Hayner left the Senate, retired from politics, or at least that sort of politics. How did that impact the work of the Senate? She had had a pretty tight rein for many years in her caucus.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, she did. Did the Republicans take over after she went? Did they have one more crack at it? I can't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I believe so, later. They were now led by George Sellar, Irv Newhouse, Ann Anderson, Emilio Cantu, Linda Smith, Gary Nelson and Pam Roach. A different group of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sellar was a jewel. He was very, very much a gentleman, a very good legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you compare his leadership with that of Jeannette Hayner?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Softer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Different approach? Was he equally good at keeping it together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was softer and that's the reason there was a move to take him out by their caucus, promoted by Jim West, as I understand it. And eventually he did lose out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, his health becomes an issue at some point.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that was later. But they were pushing on him. I think that he was under considerable stress by his caucus because of the factions there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Strong personalities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was just a kind gentleman who cared. He was one of the few who gave us a vote for the health care bill, you know. He said it was right and we needed to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different kind of change: Senator Slim Rasmussen died just before the session began. He had been many things for many years. Was that sad? Or a relief in some way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was kind of sad because, well, he was kind of a loose cannon on the ship all the time because you never knew whether he was going to vote with the Republicans when we were down to a one or two-vote majority and it was kind of dangerous. And he was cantankerous sometimes. I remember one time in caucus, when we were talking about the bill that was up on the calendar, that removed the Department of Health from DSHS, and I'd had him up-to-here with some things he'd done to me, he said, "Lorraine, what does this bill do?" And I just glared at him, and I didn't answer him. And he said, "Well, I was just asking," just meek! I mean, "just asking." It was really funny. We didn't like each other very much. We didn't actually dislike each other. But he would sometimes say, "How do I vote, boss?" He sat across the aisle from me. Or, "Did I vote right this time, boss?" He was kind of cute about it. I never hated him, but I wanted to kill him a few times! He was missed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He sounds like such a character. Did you go to his funeral?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was closed. They didn't have a big service.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand his wife had died just the previous year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She had died before that. Anyway, he had just a private funeral.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certain people cast long shadows.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he was an activist and he was a good legislator in his day. He had lost and had become pretty mellow. He couldn't decide whether he was a Republican or a Democrat at the end, except that he was always with labor and with the working man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was kind of a populist type?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very definitely. Yes, definitely. And if it had anything to do with labor, he was always there, never a question. Or industrial insurance or unemployment comp, he was always there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another passage, although not of that kind, was a fall-out from redistricting. John O'Brien lost his re-election bid to Jesse Wineberry. His district boundaries changed and tipped it to his opposition.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was incredible! He was a CPA and a national leader. His background was great and I always went to him for advice. We traded a very fine legislator for a nothing! Wineberry was not a good legislator. He was self-serving and it was sad, because John O'Brien was not that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was probably the longest-serving legislator ever. Something like fifty years. He came in the thirties, I believe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Jesse Wineberry was out of law school, he could never pass the state bar. He tried to get a special dispensation. He had a following and they are the ones who upset the apple cart. And I don't think they ever realized what a mistake they had made and what a bad legislator he was, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a special dinner for John O'Brien; did you happen to go to that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I went. And Jim McDermott came back from D.C. It was really a nice night. And it was held at the big hotel, anyway, the large ballroom.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it kind of sad?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was a happy time. He had accepted it and it was really a glowing evening for him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps he was getting a little bit tired?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he was in his early eighties. And he'd written his book. I always treasured John O'Brien. He was a total gentleman and outspoken in praise. I remember when he was on my committee, the Commerce Committee, when we passed the extension of credit to women and he said, "This is one of the finest bills I have ever seen," and he said, "It is beautifully written."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is praise indeed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he was very complimentary. And we had no problem getting that bill through the House. I never heard him say anything bad about anybody. And he'd been through that terrible indoctrination when there was a coalition government, you know, in 1963, at which time he lost. And he remained a gentleman and didn't seem to hate anybody. Always was concerned and he always taught the rules. He always agreed, whenever he was asked to do anything, he did it, as far as I know. He was a real loss. So people talk about term limits, but when there's a great legislator, you don't want to lose them under any circumstance. It's just like Senator Magnuson; losing him was a great loss.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And yet term limits passed that year as an initiative.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know it did, and a lot of us voted no. But thank God for Tom Foley who got it thrown out at the federal level and then the State Supreme Court threw it out at our level. It was very, a very bad bill. But Tom lost his next election for that effort. And that was bad.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have been hanging over your own career. You had served more than the allotted years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I ran two times after that. I would have retired if the Tribune hadn't taken me on. I would have left at that time and I'm very frank to say that. But I was so upset over what they did to me. I do know who wrote that editorial and I always wondered why it was never stopped by a higher authority, except I do know a proper investigation was never held prior to the editorial's acceptance. It deeply hurt my family at the time. But after that, I got the trauma bill through and the Patients' Bill of Rights, two major pieces of legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But when you look at the composition of the Legislature, if term limits had stayed in place...

**Sen. Wojahn:** We'd have lost everybody! There would be no historical memory in the state of Washington of anything there to refer to; no one would know what they were doing. The lobbyists would take over because they would be the most knowledgeable with what was going on. And we'd have to hire more staff people to compensate for what the new people didn't know. It would have been a very costly procedure and it wouldn't have worked. And I'm sure that the other states which have adopted it, are finding that a fact now. And all the bad bills that we killed in the Senate would come forward and they'd be passed. You know, we review the House bills they were always putting in, bills which had been dropped in years past which wouldn't work, that were constitutionally wrong, or would cause adverse ripple effects. And the Senate had to kill them because they often appeared to be a good idea; they'd come over to us and we'd just give them to the chair, and the chair would drop them on their head. End of the ball game.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is supposed to be the role of the Senate. A little bit slower tempo, more hearings, a longer memory.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. You needed a good memory in the Senate and that was the one thing

that Rasmussen did have. He was a champion of the people and the underdog.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there were certainly all these shifts and changes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we weathered them pretty well in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had a whole new group in leadership. For your committee assignments that year – we've talked about you being vice-chair of Rules – you also regained the Labor and Commerce Committee, which you had not been on in ages.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They insisted that I go; they needed four committees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ray Moore was the chair and you were a member, which brings you some issues you hadn't looked at for awhile. You were vice-chair of the Health and Human Services Committee with Phil Talmadge being the chair. And you were still on Ways and Means with Nita Rinehart being the chair there. Quite a range of issues to be involved in.



*Conferring with Senator Nita Rinehart*

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had never specialized in anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were more involved with health and human services these days, but it's interesting to see you come back to Labor and Commerce after all these years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had a broad view. During the time I was in the House, I had chaired the Commerce Committee and was more business oriented and so I had a broad view of

legislation, which is good. But they put me on the committee; I didn't ask for it. They needed to have some people take four committees in order to distribute the load because some Republicans only wanted two committees and they would only take two committees. So we had to add more Democrats on committees and it was kind of bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a lot of duties!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I didn't think I was ever going to get through it all because I had eight o'clock meetings in the morning and I had 3:30 to six o'clock at night. They were long days because Ways and Means always met at 3:30 and continued until all the business was completed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And presiding on occasion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And presiding and trying to learn the rules of the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a certain level of attention somebody sitting on the Floor doesn't have to pay.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they don't have to do that. You have to cover an awful lot. That's the reason I wasn't in the meeting the day I didn't sign out this gal to be on the Liquor Control Board; the meeting was at eight o'clock in the morning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you can't be everywhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't be everything. And they were all hard. Ways and Means is a tough committee and Commerce – he had incorporated all those committees together. Financial Institutions and Insurance was thrown in there. We had abandoned that committee and that was thrown in also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's why Ray Moore was the chair?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We had merged several committees into one committee and I always felt that Labor and Commerce should be separated, and never under the same chair. It's crazy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have opposing points of view, as you've said.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! And so I would never take the committee. I kept being offered the committee before I was Pro Tempore or anything else. If you are a committee chair, you can't be on Rules Committee. I would have taken Commerce alone, but I would never have mixed it with Labor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who makes the assignments?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Committee on Committees. And I was on the Committee on Committees, but we needed someone on that committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were stuck?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was stuck. And I knew about it; it wasn't like I was going into something brand new. Ray Moore was for gambling, you know and I was anti, so it was like putting...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oil and water?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Like putting honey and vinegar together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm not going to ask you who was the honey and who was the vinegar! We'll just leave that one alone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Whatever!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was quite a session. You had Governor Mike Lowry coming on full steam ahead. How much did the Governor set the agenda, when he's really got an agenda? He was no laid-back Governor like Booth Gardner.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He just puts his bills in as executive requests and anybody who believes in them signs onto the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that he did a lot more than put bills in. He was down there talking to legislators, and twisting arms and doing much more lobbying face-to-face than Booth Gardner ever did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And he had Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dee – that's what Ray Moore called Becky Bogard and Kathy Sullivan. Tweedle-Dum was one of them and

the other was Tweedle-Dee. And they were always twisting arms, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you had all these things going for you, you did have a \$1.2 billion deficit to deal with. You had health reform kind of dangling out there; you had education reform. A lot of things had been started but not really finished.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of them had a codicil on the bill, “subject to available funds,” too. That was coming over from the House. Democrats in the Senate never did that. The House did it and the Republicans in the Senate did it. It was always to make people feel good. They were no-law laws. Make them feel good! It doesn’t solve problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dennis Braddock had launched an initiative for health care reform as we discussed. And as it turned out, Lowry, as a candidate, spoke against that initiative. Other people did too, including Governor Gardner, Senator Talmadge, and Speaker Ebersole. The newspapers weren’t too sure exactly how to handle that. Lowry cited the other experience of the defeat of the Children’s Initiative and was worried that if this didn’t pass, that it would actually set back the cause. Somehow he seemed to think the initiative was too high risk of an activity and that was not the way to pass this legislation. Dennis Braddock felt somewhat...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Differently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But as it turned out, they didn’t have enough signatures on the ballot and it didn’t go anyway. Governor Lowry was worried Boeing and other large businesses were against it and would put up a huge war chest to fight the initiative.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the Boeing Company was continually reducing their benefit levels.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not to mention, laying off a lot of workers just at this time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a kind of weak position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they didn’t want to be told what to do but the reason that Dennis put the initiative in, I think, was because a lot of the health care programs people were entitled to in the Boeing Company were being lost. And they were losing their ability to be covered, which showed that the Boeing Company was not interested in their employees’ health. But I don’t know that that was a good enough reason to oppose the initiative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t know if those sorts of statements slowed the initiative drive; I’m not sure how to analyze what happened there. What did you think?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know what happened with the people. There were so many Boeing workers that if Boeing speaks, then Boeing workers believe it. I’ve always believed that. They believed that Boeing was a benevolent dictator. Well, it was not a benevolent dictator! The bottom line was a buck.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, in the end, the initiative turned out to be a non-issue and Lowry, as the Governor, came forward and wanted to push health care. Right in his inaugural speech, he was saying, “We’re going to get it this year.” He’s not saying “sometime;” he’s saying “now.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pushy, pushy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lowry put that right on the front burner. There were many bills – I didn’t even count them all. There were four pages, single-space type, in the Journal listing bills dealing with health care issues. Not all health care reform, in the big sense, but just bill after bill after bill to do with health care. It’s evidently the issue whose time has come. You were involved with some of the really big ones: Senate Bill 5000, with Marc Gaspard and Phil Talmadge and many others, as well yourself. This was one of the very first bills pushed through re-authorizing the Basic Health Plan. That was McDermott’s plan, right, from the earlier days? Created in 1987, that was scheduled to sunset that year. You pushed that right through to terminate the sunset. And that was important. That was kind of a baseline.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Good policy. That was going to help people to help themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then the next one, the really big one for the year is Senate Bill 5304, again brought forward by Phil Talmadge and you were one of the co-sponsors. That was the big Omnibus Bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a comprehensive bill. And by 2004 it would have been resolved and management would be paying for health care for individuals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was said that Phil Talmadge wanted to regulate the health care industry somewhat like public utilities were regulated: to set the rates, control the industry.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I presume what he meant was they would establish fees for certain elements over which a physician could not charge, unless there were extenuating circumstances, that he would have to go back to the utility to see if he could increase the fee. So it was controlling cost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were more choices for co-payments and other mechanisms to try to ease the load on employers, but the entire system was still based on employment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I don't think that was ever clarified. We could have moved into the area of employment security and put on a tax. You see, the federal level would determine that. Now, employment security is a federal program, but it's administered by the state and we developed a trust fund to take care of unemployed people. And that trust fund is based upon employment in the state. Employers pay into the trust fund. If they refused to pay into the trust fund, they are



*Senate Health and Human Services Committee hearing with Senators Phil Talmadge, Karen Fraser (behind), staff Jannel Anderson (foreground)*

taxed for an amount greater than they would pay as a tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you get them one way or another?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and we could have done that with health care. And maybe that would have happened, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that seen as too coercive, somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we talked about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you trying more for a partnership type of arrangement?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think maybe it would have moved into that eventually if it didn't work. We were going to encourage employers – or force them – to insure their employees without doing that. Because we couldn't do it without a waiver. And it would have to be federal. That's the reason you need a federal health plan. States have trouble administering a plan. And states have trouble because of insurance, because the insurance industry is the only industry in the United States which is not regulated by the Feds. We regulate banks, we regulate car dealers; we regulate everything. The only major

industry in the United States not regulated is insurance. And we should do it! That's the reason you can't control rates. You try to. And that's the reason the Insurance Commissioner has a whale of a big job. And I'm glad he has a good attorney. And he does with Scott Jarvis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Talmadge envision some kind of commission that would regulate this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. To control the costs. And I think that he believed in throwing in also, to cover costs, the medical aid, that everybody pays for with industrial insurance, the Medicaid funds, all of the funding for state employees health care, into a big pot. And it would have worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't that part of the concept here, that is, if you get a big enough pot, it brings down costs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody wants it. In other words, if you are a doctor, you want that contract. Or if you're a medical service plan, you want that contract and you're willing to sharpen your pencil in order to get it because you're going to get it all. My approach to it would be, rather than going to a commission, it would be to have it handled at a state level.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One payer?

**Sen. Wojahn:** One payer. Phil's was not. His was going to permit various insurers to insure people. But the money would be pooled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a kind of half-way plan, not going as far as single-payer, but...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Mine goes all the way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were more of the Dennis Braddock school of thought? His model of health care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But I really couldn't get it. You know, you get a half a loaf if you have to in order to get it started.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This model tried to address different issues, one of which involved bringing everyone in, making sure that everyone was insured. People with pre-existing conditions, all those different things that knock people out of

health care insurance these days. By having this big umbrella or tent, everybody would come in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, come into it. The way we'd get them in – and this is what we talked about – that if they went into an emergency room in the hospital, they had to sign up for insurance before they could be treated. That was the mandate: if you go into the emergency, you've got to sign up for health insurance and we have to make it possible for them to pay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would be figuring out where the line is, who could pay and then the ones under the line would be covered under the plan?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could go under the Basic Health Plan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then they would be subsidized if they couldn't pay? And would there be a sliding scale?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure – yes, that would be worked out. Based upon your income, you'd be expected to pay so much. The lowest amount envisioned was ten dollars a month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wanted to beef up the role of the Health Care Authority in regulating health care. And they wanted to bring in a "uniform benefits package." It's a whole new vocabulary for health care. They wanted to set a minimum standard, below which no one would fall; everyone would get at least this minimum or this "uniform package."

**Sen. Wojahn:** A physical once a year free and attention to details. We were suggesting that they contact their doctor rather than emergency rooms and hospitals, which becomes very expensive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, it just drains the whole system. This package included what was called "age-banded community rating." Now, that's quite a mouthful, if you're not in this field. I gather that health insurance is based on large groupings of people, upon how much care they need for their phase of life?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Every community would be different, but you have to have an overall community rating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Elderly people need more than people in their prime?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Below which they could not go, right. And that was the basis for it all. And that's what a lot of people objected to, of course, was the community rating. And yet one of the physicians in Tacoma, whom I have a great respect for, said that you can't have good health care without community rating. You can't have a proper type of health care without community rating – that was Doctor Whitney.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would different people pay different amounts, depending on what group they were in? Is that how that works?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it would be paid for by their employer, or partially by them and be based upon the median so that people would get everything that was called for by that particular community. Or if it was a state community, it would be based upon that so that they could not give less than the rated amount.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were other ratings based more on health habits. Would that be things like if you smoked?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is already a criteria with state health. If you smoke, you are given less consideration and they can't affect your diet. But that's the reason we started the wellness program, to try to get state employees to take care of their health and to recognize the symptoms of bad health, which could include smoking and not exercising enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this a kind of back-handed way to put responsibility on people for their own health?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Say, "You've got to pay a little more if you choose to smoke," or if you choose to practice some other health habits that aren't very helpful?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Drinking too much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Although I'm not sure how you would monitor that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you can't. I think one of the questions on the health was, "Do you smoke?" And you answer that and I don't think I ever took mine off; I stopped smoking in 1990 and I don't know whether they ever got that off or not. But it was always a consideration. And until we moved to ban smoking in public places, we really couldn't use that as a weapon. Seatbelts now are a weapon because you can be arrested if you don't. And so there was criteria on which you can base things. But it's still elusive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure, these are kind of broad-brush things that you are trying to do here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And women who produce fetal alcohol children, you know, that's another symptom that is recognizable now. And every year new medications are developed and the standards rise more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this is a great deal more than half a loaf; it's quite a bit, although it's not as simple as some plans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a good bill and the Commission members were outstanding. They did yeomen's work. Bernie Dochnahl was the chair, wonderful! She represented small businesses and was highly respected; she was outstanding. We had Don Brennan, who had been head of the Franciscan Health Care internationally, a brilliant man. And a doctor from Spokane, George Schneider, and Tom Hilyard, from Tacoma, and Pam MacEwan from Group Health. They were all highly capable people. Lowry did a tremendous job of appointing a Health Services Commission, because they were good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's key, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely key and they were doing it. They were doing a great job and telling doctors, telling hospitals, "You can't do this. This is what you can do; these are the parameters." And taking the brunt of it for legislators. They were the lightning rod for the Legislature. We didn't have to make the

decisions; they were doing it for us. It was incredible! And it was working and prices were coming down. They were doing it right; we wouldn't have known how to do it without their guidance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was the big thing. The cost of health care was just ballooning. It was one of the reasons you had this huge budget deficit. So to solve that...you solve a lot of other issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Everybody works together. The reason we had to have a national program was because it could then be run like unemployment compensation or employment security.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Didn't you also have to have federal waivers? Permission for Medicaid and Medicare and those sorts of programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So we could use that money. And we hadn't gotten the waivers. We were still anticipating. The precedent was established. Hawaii had waivers – they had always had them, you know. I think Oregon was on its way to getting waivers to be able to move into some of the health care issues they wished to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And were you cheered by having President Clinton be such a supporter?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. They were calling our staff on the health care to find out how far we had gone and what we were doing. They were contacting all states, I'm sure. But Lowry had just come from D.C. as a congressman and he was aware of the tie-ins there, which was good. And that was the reason he was so valuable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he was familiar with this on both levels?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very familiar.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very well placed, then. Anyway, you were putting all these pieces together and had a pretty good, comprehensive package. However, you take issue in the way it's going to be funded. Phil Talmadge wants to rely on what are called "sin taxes" to raise the

money. So this was going to be funded by an increased tax on liquor; was it also on tobacco?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can't remember all the things but it was a sin tax, yes. Did we have pop in there? I thought it was a shame to pin a tax on pop to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can't recall. But one of the exceptions, they weren't going to put these heavy taxes on micro-breweries and there were a couple of other things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were just getting started. And wineries, I don't think we included them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Obviously some special pleading had been making a difference there. You weren't hitting anything which was an industry within the state of Washington. Just hard liquor, which I guess came from somewhere else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the micro-breweries, they were kind of like cottage industries – that's what they called themselves; you don't destroy your cottage industries. I'll never forget the battle with micro-breweries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the lobbyists from micro-breweries come to the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't even know that they had a lobbyist; I don't think they could afford one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just the little mom and pop breweries would come to you and say, "You're going to kill us."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It went right to the heart of the issue. The sin taxes didn't bother me as far as hard liquor, that was the most important thing. Wine was a beginning industry and so were micro-breweries in the state of Washington and to tax them would have hurt them and then they couldn't produce and be competitive against other states and nations. So I didn't like to see them taxing wine and beer, and I hated the idea of taxing pop; I think we tax pop to pay for street violence. And I think we added a tax on pop to help with health, I'm not sure of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's all part of Washington's patchwork of taxes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which we have to do because we have no income tax. So when they put the tax on pop to pay for city streets and safe streets and things like that, I thought that was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard for people to understand what the connection is.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There's no connection. Now, with liquor there is and cigarettes there is, because they are bad for health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think this is the first year you began to talk about the one-percent income tax plan as a funding mechanism for health care, instead of relying on these sin taxes. In one of your newsletters you talked about it quite a bit, about how volatile the sin taxes are and also, if people begin to pay more attention to their health, they are not going to use those products so the very thing you need is going to diminish. You pointed out the irony of making people sick to earn money to buy health care. Promoting bad health habits for the sake of health!

**Sen. Wojahn:** So you're going to run out of money with a sin tax where you don't... I always knew that we could do a one-percent without going to the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the constitutional threshold?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the threshold. You can't go more than that, but you can do it without going to the people and it wouldn't hurt anybody because it wasn't that much. I came up with that and said "We could use the same things that we're trying to do with what you're doing Phil, only let's impose a tax, one percent, on people and at the same time let's try to get a waiver from Medicare to throw that into the pot. And let's take L&I and medical aid, which everyone pays into and throw that into the pot, and let's throw the state employees benefits into that pot. And then we'll have a pot big enough to pay for it, provided we have a one-party pay."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Get rid some of that administrative cost?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Well, it didn't go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you just pass that as a normal measure in the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A normal measure which does not take a two-thirds vote. It's not a constitutional change because we're allowed to tax at one percent as property. It's okay, but over one percent we cannot go without having a two-thirds vote in both Houses and then going to the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was this not an attractive idea to others? The word "income tax?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** People get glued to the ceiling. They just don't like it. One percent would not hurt anybody. And we could take that off of our federal tax. This method would remove the burden from business, especially small businesses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wouldn't be more paperwork?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would be a little bit but they could take it off their income tax. And I've never seen people who were afraid of paperwork if they could save a penny. I think the average American is willing to do paperwork in order to save a few pennies. And this would save money. And everything I paid in, for my one percent, I could subtract from my federal income tax. And people who are getting money back would get more money back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was just the terrifying term "income tax?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** "Income tax." Dan Evans tried it. He went door to door practically, trying to do it. Booth Gardner tried it. We've had several commissions talking about it. One was headed by Ray Moore, he tried it. There's another commission now talking about the same thing, headed by Bill Gates, Senior. They're all trying to get an income tax and the people are so stubborn and so stupid. That's the only time I call voters stupid, but in this I call them plain stupid. We're one of six states which does not have an income tax. One is Nevada where they don't need an income tax because they have gambling money. One is Texas; it's behind the door anyway. And the other is Florida. There's



Texas, Florida, Nevada, Connecticut, Washington and Tennessee. But Tennessee has a corporate income tax and they have a tax on food so everything you buy is taxed in Tennessee. Those are the only ones that don't have it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You pushed your idea hard. You gave lots of speeches.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did the best I could. Never got much press on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little, but not much. You didn't give up the idea, either. I can see from year to year, that idea is still around.

**Sen. Wojahn:** After the Republicans repealed health care – got rid of everything – I put my bill in. That was about six years ago that I first put it in, or it's eight years now, but it was two or three years after, in fact, I talked about it, but didn't do it. Finally did the bill. We still have to get waivers for use of Medicare funds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you never know with these ideas, maybe someday.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Someday people are going to get wise. The whole idea is that we need an income tax, period. But that will be the first step and that's what people kept saying, "It's the first step."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And is that what frightened people off? The slippery slope?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess so. We could go one point without a constitutional amendment. It was just the idea of a positive talking wedge. "See, it didn't hurt that bad." I finally got a hearing last year; it went to Ways and Means and got killed. But I got it out of committee after I had left the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hey, small victories.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it's all there. I sponsored the wellness bill, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Washington was one of the very few states that actually placed improved health status at the center of its health care reform efforts." That's a quote from one of your speeches. What does that mean, in effect? What

would be the difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we recognized that there were people who could ill afford to purchase health insurance, the working poor mostly, and made it possible through the health benefits program for those on limited incomes to buy health insurance, based upon their ability to pay. So that could be as little as ten dollars and up to a percentage of their take-home pay. And then we allocated money to back that up out of the general fund, which did not take care of everybody, but it was a great start into total health insurance coverage for everyone. And then every year we intended to add more money to it. Sometimes we did, sometimes we didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that add more people to the plan? Or more care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Add more people to the plan. And then we contracted out with local health agencies, such as Blue Cross, Blue Shield and the medical service plans throughout the state to accomplish this – and let them write their own rules within reason.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The phrase, "improved health status," would that mean you would include preventive care and things that other plans didn't?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The bill actually took into consideration preventive care so that a person would go to their general practitioner or internist and then would be referred out if necessary. There was a screening so that people were not going directly to a specialty, which can be very expensive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were other state plans not looking at it that way? Were they looking at just specific procedures rather than the person themselves?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think other states even were considering these things at that time. It was one of the first plans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington was certainly a leader in that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and from that also we took care of retirees to a degree, to the degree that we could, giving them a little bit of a break on their insurance so they could buy into the state insurance plan, along with the state employees who were presently working. And when they went into retirement they could continue their plan; it would be a little more expensive but we assisted them. Women in Government got into that and we didn't find any state represented in that group which had any kind of a health plan for retirees. They were left to their own resources. That's been a long time ago, of course, maybe fifteen years ago, or maybe not quite that long, but very few, if any, of the states had any plan at all. And this was McDermott's plan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So right when you are the most vulnerable and needing the most health care, you wouldn't have anything?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. They would go to the emergency rooms. And at that time emergency rooms were collecting from the people with insurance to help pay for the emergency care – in order to subsidize the working poor who had no insurance, and business decided they didn't want to do that anymore. They were the ones who clamped down and said, "You can't do this because we are not willing to pay for indigent care based upon our employees insurance." And that was a start of the beginning of the end. Now, some states may still have been doing that, I don't know. But Washington was a leader in many ways, and was also a leader as far as industry is concerned, and business. And they were protecting themselves. And so that's why that came about. So we were really forced to do something to try to assist people, especially the working poor and business. They were trying to help themselves. And that was the McDermott push when he was Ways and Means chair. Governor Gardner gets the credit but it was all Jim McDermott. Remember, that Jim McDermott is a medical doctor. And I think that was the model which was almost ninety percent adopted by the federal plan which got taken apart. But we were beginning to see the results

of that the following year when the price of insurance had dropped substantially. It was beginning to work and that's when the Republicans regained the majority and dismantled it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How closely did the Washington State plan depend on the federal plan to be in place? Weren't there some provisions where you couldn't really move forward without the federal say-so?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had to approve the use of Medicaid funds to be used, so we had to get approval from the federal government for waivers. We never got the approval because the bill fell apart in Congress. If Congress had passed their bill, which was closely allied to Washington State, I think the states would have been given the approval they needed to go ahead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And when the Clinton bill did not pass, after quite a long and grinding process, did that prevent Washington State from moving forward?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that didn't prevent it; we lost the leadership. We got the bill through and then the Republicans dismantled it the following year. And that's what happened. In the meantime, Hillary Clinton was being accused of taking over the Presidency; it was all these things that normally are done by one party to another party. Finding fault with everything that was done, as they continue to do. Even now. Now they've won, they are still finding fault. And I wish they would shut up because it's to draw attention away from the mistakes that are being made, I'm sure, regardless of who's in office. But I don't believe the Democrats carried on quite as much as the Republicans have. They dunned Clinton from the time he entered office; they were on his back. And they're still talking about it. They can't forget! They forget about Watergate which was the most heinous crime ever committed against the Constitution of the United States, they forget about that and Iran-Contra. And the new wave and the new President Bush are still doing it. They are rah, rah-ing around the fringes of government

and razzing the Democrats and sometime it's got to stop. Fact is, I think that the press is getting onto it now; they are getting a little bit annoyed by it all. There was an article in the paper the other day, Dave Broder, who writes for the Washington Post, took them on. So it's happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These things seem to go in cycles.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you have to understand that the press is controlled by a Big-Five, all conservatives: there's Murdock, the Hearst publications, they are all controlled. The only one there was any hope for, and now he's sold out, was Time-Warner.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ted Turner?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Ted Turner. I think he was a little bit – after he married Jane Fonda, it became better, but now he's sold out. But otherwise the Big-Five don't permit anything to be published they don't like.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they are corporations; people forget that the news is a business operation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, that's right. And then the Washington Post was beginning to be good and the Boston Globe; I always looked to them for some temperance as far as issues. And Ellen Goodman, whom I like, and some of the New York Times people. But I can't stand that Michael Kelly. His assaults on President Clinton and Vice President Gore in the Washington Post were awful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not good for the blood pressure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not really. You know if you read them – the only person worse than Kelly, in my opinion, was Westbrook Pegler and you don't remember him. He was so awful! And the editorial that the Tribune printed against me was just like Westbrook Pegler, except worse; it was personal. Directed personally at me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He always had it in for Eleanor Roosevelt, so maybe you're in good company.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is probably true. It was smarmy. If I've ever read anything before, it was the worst editorial I have ever read. It wasn't just because it was me; I would have been offended no matter who it was. It caused an awful lot of letters to be sent to the editor, I know that, which they didn't publish. They published a few, but my friends told me – one of them told me I should sue them, and I could have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Suing the press is kind of difficult, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you don't sue because they can buy ink by the barrel. But I can say what I need to say in this book and I'm saying it. That it was the most rude, smarmy, personally-written-against-a-person editorial I have ever read. It was worse than anything I read by any editorial board, with the exception, perhaps, of Westbrook Pegler. And I cannot forget it. They did not even investigate or check the facts by calling me. That's not the first time they took me on. They took me on over a bill I sponsored at the request of the Pierce County Medical Association and adopted by the American Medical Association, that would have had printed on the medical application for a marriage license that "no one has the right to abuse their spouse." Which was very good because it was a warning that you can be challenged in the courts with this. And it was very good to try to stop it. You do everything you can to stop things. It's like giving out free needles against AIDS; you do everything to stop it, no matter what. Because it's so dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, prevention is always better than trying to patch up things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And this was prevention as far as domestic violence was concerned. It needed to be said because children are watching this and they become abusers themselves, unless they are treated. So they did that to me again. So you see, they were constantly looking, looking. And they found some things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were elected year after year, so it looks like it had very little impact on your career.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But it hurts your family.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, nobody likes to be attacked.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Especially when the story was full of lies and a lack of investigative research to find out what it was all about. They didn't bother. That's what constitutes good reporting; if you're going to be that kind of reporter, you'd better learn your facts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dig out the real facts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then relate them, call a person. You know, you have to get the facts, get the truth and apparently the Tribune doesn't care about the truth. They are getting better, but they are trying to cover for their past errors, I'm sure. They have a new publisher and that probably helps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the root, usually. Let's get back to talking about health care. Governor Lowry was highly involved in these health care issues that session; he was really stumping the state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He did a great job. He did a great job and he appointed the commission that was outstanding! It was a broad-based five-member commission who were outstanding. They were taking all the heat and it wasn't bad. And he had to keep them and if we had kept that, even repealing certain things, we'd be better off than we are now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that help an issue, when the Governor really gets out front and becomes a spokesperson?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it does. He became an advocate, a strong advocate. And he had been in Congress prior to that, you know, during the time that we were passing the Family Independence bill. We got a lot of help from Lowry when he was in Congress. Jean Soliz was my attorney for the Social and Health Services Committee that I chaired and she was in constant contact with his office over that bill. But it went down the tube, by the Republicans, too. It was a good bill but we were supposed to get waivers from the Feds and supplemental help and then they turned their back on it

because of the Republican brouhaha at the state level. And we were involved with the advocate for children from the Children's Defense Fund, who was wonderful; she's still there, at the national level. And we were getting places with that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Marian Edelman?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Edelman, Marian Wright Edelman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She's an impressive person. So, you do get somewhere with this bill this session, but there were still several issues that are left unresolved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are left dangling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Long-term care, mental health, and chemical dependency programs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We needed to get into mental health and that's never been tackled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to talk a little bit about a speech that you made the following year, addressing these issues, at the Alliance for the Mentally Ill conference. You also took pretty much the same speech to the Washington Health Services Commission to a public hearing in October of that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** In Fife.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. You talked about a relationship of mental health care to health care reform and you talk about the concept of health care for the whole body, including the brain.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Because it's all a part of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "From the heart out," as you say. And you have the colorful phrase, "wanting to end discrimination against the brain." It is interesting, when you put it that way, to think that mental health care is somehow a totally different category of health care than the rest of the body.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It should be all a part of the same.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you asserted that a very high percentage, something like, I think, eighty

percent, some high number, of cases of bodily need are really psychologically-based, or have a relationship at any rate – not necessarily psychosomatic – but that there's definitely not a big hard line between the two.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And one can cause the other. They've almost proven that with humor with that fellow who had cancer. I can't think of his name, but instead of going to the hospital, he went and rented a room in a hotel and had all these funny movies and anything humorous and he laughed himself out of his cancer. And he's a well-known figure. And it's tough, but it can be done. It can be done, I believe, through concentrated prayer, if a person believes enough. But it would take a phenomenal person to be able to do that. But it has been proven to be done, where cancer has disappeared.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, even combining types of care – you wouldn't necessarily have to put all your eggs in one basket.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, no, but combining health care – we're getting toward that with alternative medicine now. And it's getting closer, but it isn't there yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, certainly if you're feeling sick, you are troubled psychologically as well; I mean, it goes both ways.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If you're depressed, you can become ill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And if you're ill, you certainly can become depressed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that's proven, I think, when a spouse dies and the other spouse dies within a month of that time, or within a year. It's crazy, but it happens. And nobody can prove why it happens and no one can say it didn't happen, but there's no proof. We're a scientific community that believes that you have to have proof for everything you do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But anecdotally, people recognize that connection and it's just a matter of really looking at it. You're pushing in this speech, and in other ways, for full parity for

mental health coverage in the uniform benefits package.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was tried once and it almost bankrupted the Medical Service Funds. They did it and they accepted it and I'm told that a group of University of Washington professors were the ones who really bankrupted the program. Now, I don't know whether that's true or not, but that's what I'm told, and I was in a position to be told things that maybe others didn't know, but I'm not sure that it was true. Because you could also be fed falsehoods. But it almost bankrupted the program because it's very expensive. And maybe there were things used in taking so much time that were not necessary. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You do suggest, though, that these treatments can be more predictable, can be effective, that costs can be estimated and that with better management...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that's true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These treatments need not be a black hole for money. But the perception was that you could never cure people, that you couldn't predict what would work and what wouldn't. That therapies are too undefined.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's been proven that people who were so depressed that they turned to crying, and when they were lifted out of that element became some of our very brilliant scientists and members of society. And that's happened. And I can't mention any people but there are stories all the time coming out of this happening. And there are stories of a philanthropist in the East who financed an elementary school of children who were either slow learners or were not challenged and he challenged the class that he would pay for them to go through college if they could rise above and produce, and they did! And that's been proven time and time again in this country, that things can happen if we care enough to work hard enough to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you're going out and giving speeches like this, are you giving them to groups that already agree with you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of resistance would you get for this sort of idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I never got any resistance because I never got into a group who resisted me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But these ideas were difficult ones and kind of revolutionary for their time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that there was a general agreement among those with whom I spoke but nobody took them to heart in order to pursue or to do anything about it. And that's the reason you go into groups to speak to try to get a groundswell going, but it never worked. Or maybe it did, but it did by osmosis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there just too much ignorance and prejudice against the idea of mental health? There's a kind of stigma attached to it still.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not so much anymore, I think there's just a "ho-hum" attitude. "It doesn't affect me, so why should I worry?" And those who have people in mental health are beginning to doubt that anything will ever be done. I ran into Eleanor Owen who was a mental health advocate for WAMI (Washington Advocates for the Mentally Ill) at Pat Thibaudeau's fundraiser. And she's gone gung-ho. She even ran for the Legislature against someone who was opposing it, but didn't get anywhere, just this last year. And so they are out there, but some of them become so grim. They lose their sense of humor and their sense of timing and so nothing can happen. You have to have new blood coming in that is positive!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a pretty hard subject to be upbeat about. It takes on a profile that's not at all fun.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Especially if someone in your family is... We acknowledge other disabilities and say that you can't fire a person for a disability. And you have to make it easier for them to work and provide access to work; even the Legislature has to have elevators in every building. So, we're doing it, but it's by osmosis. Again: slow, slow, slow.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were getting out there and speaking out. Definitely getting the word out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Talking about it. The same thing with the developmentally disabled. There are so many disabled people who are now holding jobs and they've proven they can if they have the right equipment. People who are deaf can use a typewriter or computer; people who can't walk who now have access to buildings, public buildings, to work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, if you think of, say, one hundred-year increments, a revolution has taken place. Not so long ago, none of these things were in place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. That's true. Including Muscular Dystrophy, kids who can work at a computer, and have brilliant brains; we're using those brains. And I keep thinking that if we could ever crack the code on those kids who are geniuses, mathematically, what are they called? It was like the Rainman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, the form of autism sometimes called idiot savants?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. And he could compute like 1,096 by 5,765 and come up with an instant answer. If we could key into that and find out, we could be the most wonderful nation in the world. If it could be done. We could solve all kinds of problems. We solved a lot of problems with the space station because they say that the experiments that were taking three to five years to prove out can be proven out in twenty-four hours in a space station, testing medications for people. Twenty-four hours to less than a week that had taken years to do. I was preaching that, too. Saying if we ever can break that code, there's nothing we can't do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, finding worth in all kinds of people is definitely the goal.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We split the atom. When I was taking physics in high school, I can remember our physics teacher, Mr. Shearer, saying, "They'll never split the atom; it's an impossibility."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Better not say never!

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did! We did!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, as long as we're trying. I guess we can't even imagine now where we might be in fifty years or even ten.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Remember reading the book 1984, all these things that they said were going to be done and we said, "crazy." I can remember my husband as an architect, designing a place for a television set. He did one house that the living room and family room had a break in the wall so that you could push the television either way. And I said, "Well, that's crazy, nobody's going to have television in every room." Well, look!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Be careful what you predict!

**Sen. Wojahn:** And this was back in the fifties, early fifties or late forties.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, just at the beginning of television, who would have guessed? Of course, that might not be the best cultural breakthrough we've ever had!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I give him credit because he was a planner and a...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A visionary?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A visionary, oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We don't know, do we? Maybe that one-percent income tax is going to come blazing through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm the practical side of the visionary. I take the visions and try to put them into words and sell them and he dreamed them up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes two, you know, both sides have to happen. So, when the Clinton plan failed – getting back to that – was there a sort of unraveling of the effort?

**Sen. Wojahn:** By that time Phil was out of the Legislature and was with the Supreme Court and that's when it began to unravel at the state level.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that discouraging?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. There were all kinds of problems emerging within the committee and within our caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it discourage people to the extent where they thought health care reform was not possible?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or did you then just say, "Well, okay, if the Federals can't do it, we've got to do something."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think anybody ever gave up trying to do things in this state. At least we took on other areas. I attacked for the Patients' Bill of Rights, because with some medical plans you had to be referred and doctors were refusing to refer because it would show against them. So that's the reason for the Patients' Bill of Rights. It was to force them to give the patients some rights to do some things that otherwise they wouldn't be able to do without the passing of the law. And so, no, we never stopped thinking about it, but you couldn't go full-bore and try to redo what had been done before. So, I took the new attack of a one-percent; I continued to advocate for that. And continued to advocate for the patient against the insurance industry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you read about what happened there with the Clinton plan, there was just a tremendous amount of work and then there's this terrifically deflated outcome. Regrouping would be a little hard, I would think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A letdown. Well, especially if you didn't have both houses of Congress with you, it'd be impossible, almost. And the press not sympathetic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does seem to have stalled then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I think there are too many ultra-conservatives in the Congress to ever be able to do it. There are also the far-seeing ones, like McCain, who's generally fair-minded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the idea that if you don't get a handle on health care reform,

you're going to bankrupt the nation? That so many dollars are now going into that pot?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The federal government can always print more money. And bring on inflation!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But say, on the state budget level, that's getting to be a very substantial chunk of money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and if we hadn't added the cigarette money, nothing would have happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if even fiscally-conservative people might want to look at that and say, "We've got to do something different."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, Reagan, you know, kept printing more and more money. We were out of the deficit when he took over; when he left, we were in severe deficit. Clinton was there for eight years, we lost our deficit; we were back in the black. Now we're into it again, because the conservatives don't seem to learn. You have the conservatives, but they still are money-grubbers. It doesn't make sense. And yet you can't talk to any of the super-conservatives, because they don't listen. They go like "this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Cover their ears?

**Sen. Wojahn:** As long as they get their share, they don't care. It's a matter of caring and sharing. They don't care, so they don't share.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This wasn't the only health-related bill that you worked on that year. If the really big ones won't fly, there were still the little efforts to chip around on the edges. I just wanted to touch on some of them. There was a bill you worked on modifying the review of infant and child mortality rates. Just keeping up the record-keeping a little bit more? Is this so that you'd have better data?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. More data. We had to provide the data; now we're doing it for children over that age. That came afterwards and that was a proposal made to me by the health officer in Spokane County who had been a member of the DSHS group who was

supportive of me when we removed the Department of Health from DSHS, a former member of the State Board of Health. He came to me and asked about that and we did that. And then Pat Thibaudeau, four years ago, increased it to older children. So you keep definite records.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly information is one of the foundations for any kind of program.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And you have to do the scientific studies and keep records. This all started with Florence Nightingale. I'm reading her book right now. She's the one who wanted to do something with her life and was very, very depressed and ill all the time because her parents wouldn't let her. They were very wealthy. And she finally broke loose. She was keeping records of hospitals – in her room, she'd get the records from the hospitals in London and all over England. She kept records, and that's where they began to clean up the hospitals. Yes, it all started with her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ladies of her class were not supposed to look at such things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the prostitutes were the nurses in the hospitals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or men.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there were men or there were women prostitutes and everything was filthy; there was not enough water. There was not enough heat to heat the water!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We have come some distance!

**Sen. Wojahn:** We have come a long way. And thanks to her! You know, I give credit where it's due.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, and Clara Barton and all the other great Victorians.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Was Clara Barton for the Red Cross?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I believe so. The American branch.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Women, Betsy Ross, the flag! "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," that was by



a woman, but also the National Anthem was by a woman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, I don't think so. I think that was a man. Francis Scott Key. We'll let them have one. All women, the others!

**Sen. Wojahn:** We just rolled out the flag!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** My, let's see. You had a bill to centralize poison information services. Again, this idea of organizing information seemed important. One other to reduce the tax burden of free hospitals, specifically the Shriners' Hospitals. Did they come to you and explain their situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether it was the Shriners, or whether it was just the non-profits who were having a tough time. We also made it possible for all of the hospitals to coordinate their purchasing power with public hospitals so they could purchase together to save money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would save, yes. Another bill to modify the licensing of home health, hospice and home care agencies. It repealed the sunset date and expanded what they did. Now, that's something that relieves some of the burden on hospitals, keeping people out of the hospital. It helps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We also made it possible for some rural hospitals to convert part of their beds to nursing home beds, but we couldn't do it for city hospitals – urban – just for rural, because of the problem of having enough nursing beds in hospitals. So they were able to do that. There were very strict laws. And we tried to expand that into urban hospitals, but I put bills in to do that, but never got it. But it worked in the rural areas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least in the rural areas, would it help support an institution that otherwise might not have quite enough going on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, and I think we made it that under the federal law they had to provide an administrator for the hospital and also for the nursing home, so they were divided, but that could be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They could share facilities?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They could share the space yes; it was a great bill. And we had a tie-in; it was passed by the Feds, we had to authorize it at the state level.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That mixture of part federal, part state is always interesting, how you have to work together to get certain things to happen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And to get money sometimes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, of course. You had a bill to modify controlled substances definitions, standards, and scheduling. Also matching federal regulations. One of the substances you were trying to regulate was anabolic steroids. Are those the steroids that athletes take? Is this a new phenomenon that you are trying to get on top of here? As society...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Progresses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if you called that progress, but changes, at least, you have to keep up with the latest wrinkle?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If people find out different items...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Little loopholes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Little loopholes in the law. Or there was no law there before, yes. One of the other things we did at that time was to authorize the Pharmaceutical Board to look into all these, what they call "designer drugs" because they were developing designer drugs and they were coming on the market so fast that you couldn't keep track of them. We had to put a stop to it or give our Pharmacy Board the authority to review and to control. And we gave them that authority. Because they came before us and said it was almost impossible, they needed that authority to control. So that was another thing that we did. A lot of little things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure. Another kind of news-making issue of that day, you wanted to request investigation and reporting of E. Coli outbreaks and you wanted better food inspection, I gather. So this is a whole new area for health.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that would be food inspection. We were doing it, but I think it was haphazardly done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This had a new urgency, shall we say, with the outbreaks that were damaging a lot of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It all resulted from the lack of meat inspection. And at one time, when I passed the bacon bill, way back in '69, there was a Wholesome Meat Act, passed by Congress. We got federal funding at the state level, but we also added money to the federal funds to develop meat inspections. Most of them were veterinarians that would go along to the slaughter houses and check that out. Gradually, during the times of financial stress in the state, we lost our meat inspectors, or they reduced the number and we relied on the Feds to do it. Well, there weren't enough. There were maybe only twelve inspectors for the whole United States and they could not do a good job. In the meantime, we were reducing the Department of Agriculture's money, so they couldn't afford to hire meat inspectors, and from that came the E. Coli. And then we raised the temperature of hamburgers and said that it had to be a certain temperature, which was more than any other state. And Jack in the Box did not do that and they proved they were remiss in not cooking their hamburgers to the degree that we said they had to be cooked in order to kill the parasites in them and people were getting sick. And that was caused by less meat inspection and by the fast food places not paying attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The long train of neglect. Holes in the system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. One thing leads to another. And if you're not vigilant at all times, you're going to have problems. And every time we have a dearth of money, we have more problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly it had a tragic outcome. People died and many were injured by that outbreak.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Their whole digestive system was destroyed. Senator Rosemary McAuliffe's little grandson got sick and I think he was only about eight months old. Yes! And she came to me over the meat-inspection law and I ran through the whole thing with her. Because when I got the bacon bill, we tied that into the wording of the federal act and I finally got it. And Oregon has sponsored the same bill. It got thrown out by the courts. New York, the same thing, but we won ours because we tied it to the Wholesome Meat Act. And everybody thought I was crazy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet here we still need that provision. I also wanted to make note that that year, 1993, you received the Governor's Award for Child Abuse Prevention. Did that encourage you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I was doing it anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a moment of recognition?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was just a moment of recognition.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's better than nothing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Better than a punch in the nose, yes. But as I remember, I saved their funding. They were going to repeal the act and take the funding for other purposes and we were able to prevent that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No wonder they gave you an award, then. There was a very nice photograph of you with Mary Lowry, the Governor's wife, getting the award. You look very pleased.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was pleased. It was nice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly. You had a slew of other bills that you worked on. You went back to some consumer protection type bills, an area you hadn't worked in for awhile.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I started in that area, then I got into women's issues and gross unfairness issues. I never limited myself to any one thing. And then I chaired the Commerce Committee where we dealt with unfairness in the marketplace and stopped practices like the door to door selling of hearing aids and other areas which were interfering with ethical businesspeople. So it got

into a philosophical thing. And that's what I was probably best known for, that I didn't specialize in any area. But I was asking other people to do it, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You worked on a bill to create the Washington Housing Policy Act that session, which seems quite a large issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was wonderful! That's still in effect. George Fleming and I did that. We changed it and now they still have the Housing Authority with Commerce and Economic Development or whatever it's called now. It's a permanent office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you happen to work on this? And what does it do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember how I got interested; I think George Fleming talked me into it. We had problems in Pierce County with housing, low-income housing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What does the Housing Policy Act do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It helps to establish the Housing Trust Fund. From that Act came the Housing Trust Fund.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it kind of a revolving fund to help people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, a low-interest revolving fund. And I think it called for requests for housing, planning for housing money. And then from all of that came the bill passed in 1985 which gave a property tax exemption to help with housing – not just low-income housing – but to help economic development for cities. What we did was to say that you still have to pay for the land under the building, but if you want to make the upper stories a store-front and apartments, you can do that and there will be no property tax on that or on the storefront itself which is being remodeled in the building, or you can remodel the whole apartment building, but you still have to pay the property tax on the land.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds innovative. That would encourage good development. You also had a bill this session – was this with George

Fleming too? – studying discrimination based on race and national origin in home mortgage lending. I was surprised to see that issue because I associated that with a much earlier time period. But was it still going on? The red-lining?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, red-lining was going on and insurance companies wouldn't insure houses or banks or buildings up in the Hilltop area of Tacoma or in the areas of high incidence of vandalism like Watts. See, it all came about because of the Watts destruction, but it takes a long time to ever be recognized. George Fleming sponsored a whole glut of those bills. I was with him on all or most of them. We negotiated together on those things. We negotiated that at the same time we did the housing, we did it for hunger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he come to you in part with these issues because your district was also experiencing some of these needs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were real good friends and I was a fan of his as a football player. We were good friends. And he knew that my district was copasetic with his. All these terrible things were happening there and nobody could get insurance on buildings in areas of heavy violence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, this is part of the piece you need if you want to bring those areas back to some semblance of livability.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Hilltop has come back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of your big effort up there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. You know, even McKinley Hill now doesn't have a grocery store. Nobody will go in there. That's where, when I was first married, I lived until my husband died. And it was a poor section. They still don't have a grocery store; they don't have a bank. They have nothing up there to help assist with the economy. There's a senior-citizen apartment up there. And I don't know how they get their groceries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must have to go out of the area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So, it needs to be reinforced. Because the big Safeway store left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a spate of other bills that are not easily classified. You even have one assessing environmental cost of transportation projects. That was something unusual for you. You rarely or never strayed into environmental-type bills. Or transportation bills of that kind.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never got into that unless asked to go on a bill with somebody. Someone must have sought me out and asked me to do it. And it made sense. Because they shouldn't be going across wetlands. There were a lot of restrictions to which no attention was being paid. And also, the people – when land was condemned and they had to give a person an amount of money commensurate with what they were losing and take into consideration that they were losing their livelihood, their home – and maybe it was a family home, and they couldn't replace it with the money they were being given. When we exercise eminent domain, you have to give enough money to cover the cost of a new location.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Replacement value?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Not actual value, but replacement value. And all of these things happened because I knew people to whom these things had happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm just trying to find the thread here. There was one bill that people in Olympia might know something about, but is not probably known statewide; you co-sponsored a bill to consolidate the State Capital Historical Association with the Washington State Historical Society. I understand the State Capital Museum was in some kind of financial difficulty. Was this to save that facility? To tuck it into a larger entity?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't have much management there and it was a building which they had acquired through a donation, as I understand it. There was never enough money to maintain it and there was hardly enough money to maintain the larger museum, here in Tacoma at that time. It got to be a knock-down, drag-out

between the two of them. Really, it was sad, because we didn't want to lose either one. The museum in Tacoma had also been granted to the Society – by the Ferry family, but many, many years prior to the granting of the museum in Olympia. We had started to improve the museum here. I was on the Board at that time. There were nine-year terms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if that connection was your association with that bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We merged the administration of the two museums and saved money when we incorporated the Capital Museum into the State Historical Society.

And at the same time, John McClelland was starting the Columbia Magazine. He was the editor and the publisher of the Journal America and also had the Port Angeles and Longview papers and had started publishing the Seattle Magazine. It was all family-owned. And then he sold the papers and the Seattle Magazine and divested himself of all that and started Columbia Magazine. The magazine is wonderful and is for all the museums now. That sort of tied them all together, so now they're all one. Everybody who belongs to the Historical Society gets a copy of Columbia Magazine. It was at McClelland's initiation. He's a philanthropist; that is wonderful. And members have admission to any museum in the state, free admission. Except there's a division between the eastern and western historical societies. They are funded separately.

And it was through McClelland's great efforts to develop more money to get the new museum we had to battle – not battle – but to have words with the Capital Museum. They were trying to take over and yet we were the state museum. McClelland had wanted to build a state museum in Seattle, but we in Tacoma said we were the first state museum. Ours was always the state museum. The State Capital was a city museum and they were trying to become the one museum for the state. And the state museum actually had been established in Tacoma. It was donated back before the turn of the century, to the state – not to the city of

Tacoma – to the state. It had people from all over the state on the board, even Spokane, although they had their own museum. It was not just Tacoma people. So they were competing. They were trying to make that the museum of choice and it was just a city museum.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's pretty small.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So was the original museum here in Tacoma; it was five floors, but it was small. And we had remodeled it once and added a new bathroom; it was quite nice, but it wasn't big enough and it didn't do justice. But there was a battle for funding which started the whole thing. We had to be innovative and persuasive and forceful and fighting. And then we incorporated the board from the museum in Olympia onto the state board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the Historical Society pot of money just wasn't big enough for this kind of duplication of effort?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were trying to take the money away and make that the state museum in Olympia. And we were maintaining to keep it our museum. By that time we had Dave Nicandri with us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was a kind of end-run around them? You absorbed them into your larger organization?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because we were the state museum.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you, then, have a corresponding vision for the Olympia group? What was supposed to be their mission?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they still had the mission of maintaining it as a Capital museum. Beth Willis, Chuck Fowler and Dave Ammons were on the State Capital Museum Board. We incorporated them onto our Board. And we made the Secretary of State, Ralph Munro, an ex officio member of both boards. Beth Willis is a very good member. She's nearing the end of her nine-year term. But I know she was battling us. But it was a friendly battle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then, you kind of all got on the same page?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We all were working on the same page and we were delighted. And then we got the new museum in Tacoma, because that's where it had started. It was through the efforts of John McClelland as president of the Washington State Historical Society.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting! You weren't a part of this next bill, I don't think, but there was a big ethics bill pushed by Governor Lowry that year to establish a Commission on Ethics in Government for campaign practices.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We already had an ethics board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was one, but he was trying for a bigger piece. Do those bills substantially change behavior?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I don't know how you change behavior. It's character. It's called character, and you either have it or you don't have it. And you have a core of values when you go into the Legislature or you don't have values. You're called amoral if you have no values. But there are certain values; I always had a certain value I'd never go below. I could negotiate anything above that line, but anything below that, I would never ever; I was inflexible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a sort of perception issue that if you had this in place then when questions of ethics came up, there was somewhere to turn so that you had some kind of oversight?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we had an ethics board already. So I don't know why; part of it's a sensitivity. They started doing ethics through sensitivity training and every major industry had to have sensitivity training for their employees so they would be sensitive to developmentally disabled people working for them, or ethnic people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's all part of the cultural shift.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That all became a part of state government, too. But I couldn't see the advantage of an ethics bill. It didn't make sense when we had an ethics committee which was working and doing, I thought, a very good job.

Except that one of the times they let something slip through was the time Buster Brouillet, who had been Superintendent of Public Instruction and was running for his old House seat, and he was accused of supporting sexual abuse of children in a campaign brochure for Randy Tate. Publicly! Yes! By the Republican Party. And Randy Tate beat Buster that year. And I think that precipitated this bill. And the Ethics Committee let Tate come up; they should never have seated him in the Legislature. He also became a Congressman, but then he lost after one term. He was a right-winger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this ethics committee would have looked at things like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Responded to that, yes. But it was an ethics committee that was supposed to be looking at it and a lot of us didn't think that he should be seated because of that. And Tate said it wasn't his doing; it was the Republican Party which published the brochure. This is all fact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is sort of a gray area in there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was a gray area, so he got seated and a lot of us were offended by that. So my position was, if you already had an ethics commission which wasn't working, how do we hope to get another one that would work? How could we write enough rules and regulations into a matter of personal ethics? It's like trying to "catch a snark."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The issue got a lot of press and there was a lot of effort behind it. The public wants to think that government is doing something; whether it really works is hard to say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And sometimes it's done to get the press – more than any hope of a bill ever passing – to get the attention. So it may have been that. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another bill which received a lot of media attention. Representative Cal Anderson was pushing a gay rights bill that year. He was the first openly gay legislator. He was trying to get a gay rights bill through which

failed in the Senate. Several eastern Washington Democrats voted against it and Marc Gaspard wouldn't bring it up for a vote.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't have the votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It looked like it was going to fail. That was quite a blow to his cause. Can you say a little bit more about what happened there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was blow, but then he got AIDS and was dying of AIDS so everybody became a lot more sympathetic. He was a nice guy. I think everybody liked him. He was liked by everyone – and I will point that out as far as I knew – and he was respected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He certainly used humor to advance his cause, rather than some other methods.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was very good. He was liked and from that, after he became ill and then eventually died, things eased up quite a bit on this rights issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this just before its time; does it remain controversial?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had had the controversial issue of the AIDS bill – providing money for AIDS, and we couldn't get a bill through. It passed the House five times and every time it would come to the Senate, we wouldn't pass it. And it kept going back to the House and I remember Senator Deccio was the hero of that. He said, "Let's try one more time." And they got it the last time. And it was pure stamina and perseverance and it was right and he knew it. He's a very ethical man and I love him; he's really good. And some of the things he can't stomach, that he sees his caucus doing and they don't like him, I don't think. Or, I guess they respect him, but they try to sublimate him every way they can. But, anyway. I think from that came a resistance – because of that AIDS bill being forced through against the objections of some very strong Republicans and Democrats from eastern Washington. So we had trouble with the Cal Anderson bill, which came afterwards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The newspaper accounts faulted the Democrats for this one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't hold together. You see, when Jeannette Hayner was majority leader, the Republican caucus held together no matter how painful. They held their noses and voted together; we didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, not for this one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We should have. I believe Bud Shinpoch when he was in the House sponsored a bill before Cal's.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's earlier than I realized. This account about the Anderson bill from the Seattle Times said, "The bill passed the House with sixteen votes to spare, but in the Senate at least four Democrats, all from eastern Washington or rural areas, opposed it, leaving the bill one vote shy of what was needed to get out of committee. That prompted Senate Majority Leader Marc Gaspard of Puyallup not to bring the bill up for a vote."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was fought in committee. He didn't have the votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This bills seem to flounder on that confusion around the meaning of "gay rights." Cal Anderson maintained he wasn't asking for "special rights." He was asking for normal, everyday rights to be free from discrimination.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. Which we now have passed in the city of Tacoma. But you have to remember too, that Puyallup is becoming more and more conservative. And Gaspard was from Puyallup. And that may have been one reason. One reason that not only were four of his members not going to vote for it, he would have had to vote for it, too. But he always did. Once a bill got loose, he was okay. Generally, they were good about holding onto an issue if it got on the floor, and rarely was anything ever held back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Give you a chance to vote on it, whatever they may think?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But if you remember, Pierce County was not particularly pro-gay either at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The group from Oregon who wanted to bring in an initiative to roll back gay rights – I'm not clear about this – but there was that campaign, "Hands Off Washington" in response to that attempt. Was that related to this bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it probably was. I remember that happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember the bumper stickers just flooding the state and one of the issues was it was "outside money" pushing this. That was one of the first instances, I believe, in which people realized that there was actually a campaign from elsewhere to influence Washington laws. Not exactly "grass roots."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. A lot of the campaigns in which the person circulating the petition gets paid for every signature are brought about by pressure – and paid for – by special groups.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's talk about that line-up of initiatives attempting to reshape government arising at that time. One of them is related to prison sentencing reform. The Sentencing Guidelines Commission was recommending reduced sentences for non-violent criminals, partly as a budget saving measure. But at the same time that they were looking at the real-world issue of how you pay for all this, there was a movement called "Three Strikes, You're Out." It had several phases. John Carlson was one of the first to try to get that on the ballot, although his measure wasn't successful. But the following year or so, there was a series of events which got a huge play in the press. One of them was the death of Diane Ballasiotes at the hands of a convicted rapist who was, I believe, out of prison on work-release. Her mother, Ida Ballasiotes, ran for the Legislature – and won, in great part to address that tragedy. There were a couple of other cases similarly horrible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was the city firefighter, a retired firefighter, who was stabbed by a fellow who had been released, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a sort of spate of these cases, but that was the one that really

galvanized the whole campaign for what became Initiative 593. That campaign was carried out all through 1993. It began just before the session started. When a big initiative campaign like that is rolling out, does that impact what the Legislature does? Do you start to look at those issues differently as these things gain steam?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, silently, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it better to let them just go through the initiative process? Or do you get on the bandwagon?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In my opinion, if there's going to be an initiative, it should be an initiative to the Legislature to let them review it and bring in experts who understand the issues on both sides of the problem. The only initiative ever passed that was well thought out, was the one on disclosure. A group of people thought there should be disclosure on funding for election campaigns. And they met and held hearings all over the state for about a year and discussed it thoroughly before they sponsored the initiative. And no one was paid for signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, that was the old-fashioned way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Done the old-fashioned way and it was a good initiative. We tried to address it, because it was before us and we had to do it and we did pass a bill, but this initiative overshot our bill. The initiative passed, so it superseded ours. And I think we did pass a bill, but this one became the law and that was fine. But since then, special interests have gotten together and ultimately the people getting the signatures are being paid per signature. It was all a business-like venture in order to support a philosophy that maybe was not well thought out or even practical. That's when they become very dangerous. And this "Three Strikes, You're Out" was very dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's catchy, it's emotional. People who read about these murders in the paper want something to be done. They're outraged. But like you say, this is maybe not the best way to pass legislation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had sponsored legislation when I was still in the House, called the determinate sentencing bill, which said if you do a certain crime – it's on a scale of one to ten – you're going to get so much time. "You do this, you're going to get so much time." It's like the one that if you use a gun to burglarize or commit a robbery, that's five years, no matter what, it's five years. And this was determinate, so that every prisoner who went to jail would know what he had done, what he was being punished for. Because there were so many disparate judges around the state that they were giving three years for one crime and twenty-five for the same crime committed in another area and it seemed unfair. I thought that was a great bill. I never got it. It never passed. It made too much sense, I think. And I got into that when I was on Judiciary. I was on a national committee working on that; the idea came out of Chicago. And it never did pass. It passed in some states but we didn't get it. So from that came this other, the "Three Strikes, You're Out."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the Sentencing Guidelines Commission? Isn't that their role?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Sentencing Guidelines Commission came out of the determinate sentencing bill and they established certain crimes or ranges. So the push did precipitate the Sentencing Guidelines Commission. And it seems to me they should be left alone to determine the fate of a person. And the Legislature could increase the time spent for crimes, as they saw fit. But to just unilaterally say, "Three Strikes, You're Out," didn't make much sense because some of these could be felonies, but minor felonies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It ends up with quite a range of who gets put away.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It's also the gross unfairness which occurred before we had the Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington State was not the only one. This was part of a national movement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, it's become popular. Now, it becomes "Two Strikes, You're Out."



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even President Clinton endorsed the concept. California went the furthest; I understand their sentencing became extremely harsh and certainly filled up a lot of prisons. This measure passed, of course, we know. And Ida Ballasiotes, on the strength of it, ran for office and was elected the following year to continue the campaign and whatever other issues she was interested in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was her only issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You may not have known it at the time, but this was the beginning of a big movement to shape legislation with initiatives. There had been Initiative 134 on the regulation of campaign contributions and then term limits came, then this “Three Strikes, You’re Out.” These are high-profile initiatives with a lot of money and a lot of press.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the Supreme Court has thrown out some of them. They threw out part of the disclosure also, where there was a limit on the amount anyone could give. That was thrown out as not being appropriate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The next big one to hit the streets, Linda Smith, who was a senator by then, launched on March 5, 1993, her Initiative 601. She did not, as a sitting legislator, as you might expect, have this measure formulated as an initiative to the Legislature, but went straight to the people. “She wanted to make the Senate miserable,” was her quote. She called this her “taxpayer protection bill.” Smith had introduced a Senate bill that didn’t emerge from Ways and Means to the same effect and then took it straight to an initiative when it looked like her bill wasn’t going to pass. How did that feel within the Senate to have a sitting senator take this route? Wasn’t this highly unusual?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Because most legislators don’t like initiatives. They think that they are elected to do that and if given enough initiative by the people, they will initiate the actions that are needed. And so no legislator, that I know of, ever signs initiatives. Or ever likes initiatives, unless it’s something that they have been pushing themselves and couldn’t get. So it is rare. And because she did that, it gave it more

impetus. And then she could challenge the whole body for not passing her bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s quite a slap at the Legislature, then? I was wondering if it caused resentment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! Oh, everybody resented her. I don’t think there was one person in that body who didn’t resent her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s basically saying, “Your process is broken and this is the only way to get anything to happen.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was done one other time and that was when Slim Rasmussen did the margarine initiative and he never was popular, either. He did two initiatives. One was the initiative which permitted a person to identify how they wanted their money to be distributed after death. It cut attorneys out of doing wills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this one impacts the entire budget process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain 601, how it works? It had a formula.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, as I understand it, it was to limit the amount of money that the Legislature could spend based upon population growth. I don’t remember the formula. Population growth or population and also taxes that were coming into the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The wording of the short version – of course there’s a much larger version – says: “Shall state expenditures be limited by inflation rates and population growth and taxes exceeding the limit be subject to referendum?” So, it puts a lid on state expenditures without necessarily take into account everything that’s going on, just inflation and population growth.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would stop new programs from being developed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you could – there was this supposed window – take a tax increase to a referendum, but what’s the chance of that passing? Is that a sort of “instant death?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a simple majority. Yes, she was attempting to control state expenditures and to control new programs from being developed, but I always believed that new programs were only developed because the people wanted them and asked for them, or came out publicly and demanded them. And that no program was a program unto itself or done for purposes to expand the popularity of a particular legislator. So, I thought it was wrong. But it didn't kill us, it really didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was going to ask you, you're on Ways and Means and this, of course, passes. So does this change how you look at the state budget? How you do things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You had to be more careful and you had to get the statistics on everything, but that was a Ways and Means staff responsibility so we didn't worry about that. We were told we could have so much money to spend. It's like a wife being given an allowance by her husband. Same idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's not really based on what available revenue exists? The budget is now based on this formula?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Who can determine? Who knows what the formula should be?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there things you couldn't do because of 601? Did she achieve her goal of limiting government?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the thing is that some salaries of state employees and teachers, etc., if we raise them, they keep building unto themselves and you can't control it, pretty soon. So this would hobble our ability to budget properly. We always had to look to the potential of what could happen with wages and salaries in order to stay within the limits of the program and as programs expanded, as needs expanded, you would not have the ability to handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this takes away some of the flexibility you had before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And maybe some of the tools you would have had to address different issues? It puts a definite lid on that. There was also Initiative 602, a companion piece which did not pass. But that one stated "Shall state revenue collections and state expenditures be limited by a factor based on personal income and certain revenue measures repealed?" That's a little hard to understand. This combination, had they both passed, would have been fairly restrictive, if I'm understanding this correctly. Initiative 602 did not pass, but that resort to initiatives was new on this level. Meta-initiatives you could call them, not addressing one issue but a big structural change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A lot of the initiatives were precipitated by big business, you know. To curtail state expenditures in order to protect them against more taxes or more B&O tax. I don't like the B&O tax; I think it's wrong, but they shouldn't try to control that until we get some other method of planning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Initiatives, because they are not forged in the Legislature with the give and take and looking at all the different pieces and fitting them in with existing legislation, are reportedly clunky. You have to work around them; they don't correspond necessarily to the situation. And they start to hedge you in lots of ways, some unintended perhaps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's the domino effect; you pull one out and you disturb the whole pile and pull out enough and everything collapses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They address certain situations, but then you're stuck with them. You can't do much with them. A lot of people have written about initiatives, David Broder being one of the more noted ones, and they are worried about them as a social phenomena.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a last resort.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He calls them "not a government of laws, but laws without government." Kind of a catchy phrase. That you can pass laws without discussion, in other words, or compromise. They began in the Progressive movement days, ironically, and

addressed a lot of issues that people at that time were really frustrated with, that they were trying to move the governments of the day along. Now they've taken on an entirely different character and are kind of coming from the other direction and prodding government in a different way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they sort of filled in as an oversight for citizen frustration. It's like when the colonies first were established and they gained their independence, there were a lot of loose ends. There were a lot of things that weren't even spoken about. And there was probably a need for it at that time, for citizen input because the citizens' Congress was so new and green at what they were doing, they needed help. And it seemed like a good idea. And if the Legislature wasn't paying attention to a real serious problem, there was a need for outside intervention to get their attention, but I like the idea of an initiative to the Legislature, rather than an initiative to the people. Because then there would be a chance to study it and do another version that was sort of copasetic, but different. To put them both on the ballot. And that makes sense and makes it fair. But I think we should eliminate initiatives to the people. I think we should have initiatives only to the Legislature, because that's what we have: we have a republican form of government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does seem to challenge representative democracy, the whole concept, when you have these really big initiative drives.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Especially when you have a ding-bat out there doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think the framers of the initiative movement ever anticipated paid signature gatherers. They didn't see initiatives as an "industry," shall we say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't either. And they also do not permit, in the state of Washington, the amendment of the constitution by initiative. That is taboo! It's been tried, but it never works.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are always bumping against that. At least the courts are watching out for that one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some states permit it, but we do not and I hope we never do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's also the interesting phenomena of one initiative wiping out another. You could look at say, I-49 being wiped out by I-69, when first the money is pledged for transportation plans and then it is taken away. At first the public voted to support these programs and then the next initiative came in and took away all the funding.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's a sure way of dropping it on its head. Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's hard to say what the public really wants when you have these see-saw initiatives, that seen in isolation mean one thing, but next to each other...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are done in isolation without the knowledge of what has passed before and the reason it was done. And the research is not done. I hope that Tim Eyman doesn't win in the Supreme Court. He's the one who does most of the initiatives now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how would you address this confusing message as a legislator? Is there a way to amend the initiative process?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can require more signatures. We cannot deny the right to collect signatures because that is unconstitutional.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you regulate the paid signature gatherers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, you can't do that. You can't stop them from paying. What you can do is to require them to put a fiscal note on what the effects would be. I think that was tried this session, but didn't pass. And that makes a lot of sense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People need to know the implications a little more?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then, I think they should also have to give a background revelation of the research proving why the initiative is needed, and what the ripple effects would be. So they can't just go out and do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about applying PDC campaign rules to initiative campaigns? I've heard that suggestion floated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we could do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that help people understand who pays for these campaigns and that they are not always "grass roots?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** But do the people really care? That's what bothers me. If you say that ninety-five percent of the money came from out-of-state, nobody cares. Now, if you said that ninety-five percent came from the telephone company or from the Boeing company or from the auto dealers or the Chrysler Corporation, maybe that would. But you'd have to enunciate who gave the money, not just "out-of-state." I think that might help. But then what the executives would do would be to give it to their employees to give in their own names and then give them pay raises to cover that. So you can't beat it. See, all our major corporations are covered. It's all coming from "the people," so we might just as well say "out-of-state."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Will Washington State be faced with more and more initiatives? And what will happen to government if it is?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. That's in the foreseeable future, but I can't predict.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand this is a real big issue in California, and I'm just wondering if we're going in that same direction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** As they produce more and more, the Legislature is going to get its backbone stiffened more and more and they are going to do something. And they may find the right answer, I don't know. It's going to be a give-and-take situation. And it's going to be tough to get because they've got the conservatives and the right-wingers who won't want to do anything. And with both Houses doing bills, the only stop-gap is the Governor's veto, if a bill should pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But constitutionally, are there ways that the Legislature can address this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I don't know now, you know, constitutionally, this last initiative on the thirty dollar tabs; I don't see how the state as a whole can vote and deny the three counties that put up the money for Sound Transit, deny them the right to pay off that debt. Because the bonds have already been sold, a lot of them. If they haven't been sold, I guess maybe they can. And I think that Seattle has not sold their bonds, but Tacoma has already sold its bonds and they are doing it. And I don't know, so we still owe. And can they do that? And I think in the instance of Tacoma, it would be very unconstitutional, but not as far as Seattle is concerned. It's going to be a mess!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this will probably end up in the courts?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, instead of representative government...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Government by the courts. Third branch of government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which is a different issue. Interesting. I wonder...

**Sen. Wojahn:** The courts have settled quite a few. They've settled term limits. But, you know, our court is changing. If Jim Johnson gets in, it's going to be two against seven and they may be able to persuade some of the others. We have a liberal court right now. Dolliver was great. You know, Republican or not, he was great. And Utter was great. We've had some really good justices who had Republican ties. And my son's former father-in-law was great. Judge Frank Hale was great in the early days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's fascinating. I just wonder, as a former legislator, how you watch these things coming over the hill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm not there. Thank God!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You don't have to deal with it now, but you did have to deal with 601.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We didn't like it very much, but it wasn't as poisonous as some of the others, the future ones. They've become more poisonous every year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, you didn't know that at the time, but it was a pretty big wave when it hit.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We thought it was pretty bad. She took her lumps for it, you know. And it wasn't for what she did, it was because she lied. She distorted the facts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder what that does to a senator's effectiveness. When they make the Legislature their enemy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She became very ineffective. She probably would have survived more elections, but she would never have gotten anything out of the Legislature after doing all this.

## CHAPTER 24: BILL REVIEWS AND DELIBERATIONS, 1994

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were involved in overseeing agency operations for many years. You were appointed to the Legislative Budget Committee and then served on JLARC or the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee, just to give it its full name. You had served on that committee since 1985. The original Legislative Budget Committee was formed in 1951 so it has had a long institutional history.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It has to do with performance audits. They're actually being challenged now by the State Auditor who wants to do performance audits in addition to fiscal audits. We liked the idea of maintaining it within the Legislature. It's the one committee that's been handling the sunset reviews. And we needed them. It was my initiation of the legislation which put the sunset reviews under Leg Budget; that was way back. And then I was asked by Ted Bottiger to always follow the Leg Budget sunset bills to be sure they got through or that they were handled preferentially. I remember working with Don Peterson when he was head of Leg Budget. We've since then had several directors. The process worked very well. Some of the things that we initially thought should be sun-setted out were not sun-setted out because they were found to be necessary programs. One, as I remember, was the regulation of occupational therapy. That was not sun-setted out, because there was a good reason to maintain it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't that how sun-setting is supposed to work? A chance to take a fresh look? The scrutiny doesn't always mean that every time some program or regulation will be shut down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. That a program is actually warranted with the budget – and occupational therapy was warranted. People get MA degrees in occupational therapy from universities and it seemed ridiculous to undo it. It was doing a lot of good; people were learning to speak again – some who have had brain damage or are injured with a stroke. We found

that it was necessary and beneficial. It met the criteria of the funding. So a few things we did. Also, instead of deregulating the bill on cosmetology, we strengthened it. Since then there have been problems with it. We've had to work with that. But it gives the Legislature a chance to undo some areas which were not thought through carefully and to rethink them and redo them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's always new knowledge, or slightly new situations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So we did not deregulate the cosmetology. Or occupational therapy. And those are two I can think of which we looked at. We also straightened out a bill in which the taxing of cigarettes was not being done properly and we redid that. So, it's working. I have mixed thoughts about letting the State Auditor take on that role because he's supposed to do the fiscal audits, not performance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's talk about that a little bit more because that was one of the initial issues. And they are revisiting it again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's still there. There is a bill again in this session. People don't think it through; they've got to think it through. Where you get the best possible result. And Leg Budget is made up purely of legislators, it's totally bipartisan. In other words, even the election of officers is done in a bipartisan way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one of the issues with having the Auditor do it, because, of course, that's a partisan office. And there was that worry that they would use it as an election tool.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One year the Senate has it and if it's a Republican having it the next year, it goes to the House and it's a Democrat. So it's very bipartisan. Even-steven. And it's never been politicized, as far as I know. The first meeting I went to, when I was first appointed to Leg Budget, was held in Monroe at the reformatory. I'll never forget that day. I drove up really early because it was starting at nine o'clock and that's

quite a drive, and I got there before nine o'clock and I didn't know where to go. I drove around in the back of the building and this voice said, "What is your business here?" And that was unit that later became the sexual offender unit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The unit that held the very vicious. And I didn't even get out of the car! And he said, "Go around to the front of the building." So I went back around the front of the building, and then this booming voice came out from the tower and said, "What do you want?" It was awful. And I sort of quavered, "I'm here with the Legislative Budget Committee. We're supposed to be meeting at nine o'clock."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did someone appear then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They let me in. I'll never forget that though. It was a four-year prison or correction facility; it was kind of devastating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd think they could have more signage or something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, when we went to Walla Walla during a heat wave; it was dreadful and of course, there you don't often even go inside the walls. You go to this ancillary place first and then you go through a metal detector before you go into the walled area. And it's very, very frightening. And I'll never forget, it was during the time they'd taken all the prisoners out into the yard because there had been a riot and they had ripped up toilets and everything in this one unit. So they put them all in the yard and it was suffocatingly hot. They showed us the food they had, which was awful. And we were so warm. We were inside the wall; it was so hot in that room, it must have been a hundred and ten. They finally brought us a Coca Cola. I never drink Coca Cola, but we swilled it down and got cool; it was just awful! And then that night, we were walking the walls, and we saw the fellow who was the institutional prostitute. And he had his face in the window; his face was all painted like a target. And later on, Life Magazine had the story of the Walla Walla prison where they had a convict prostitute. He was yelling, cat-

calling to us. And then we looked down into the yard and they had a bonfire and someone was roasting something over a bonfire and I asked the guard what it was and he said, "You don't want to know." And I said, "Yes, I do." And he said, "It's a rat." They eat them, because the institutional food was so bad. It was inhumane. That this actually went on in Walla Walla.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking about degrees of degradation and what happens to people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right and the degree to which they go. I think that many of them – at least some of them – are probably mentally ill and really are not responsible and shouldn't be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did they get there, after all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's the same thing when I went to the corrections facility out of Port Angeles, up in Neah Bay. We flew up with the Secretary of Corrections, who was at that time Chase Riveland. We got into Port Angeles and we couldn't go any further because it was fogged in. It was very bad. You should never put a prison up there. There's no help up there; it's the end of the earth and you can't get in about six months out of the year, or a hundred out of three hundred and sixty-five days. We had to take a bus from Port Angeles, which took us an hour and during that time I asked Chase if he thought that any of the prisoners within the facilities in the state of Washington were there because of dyslexia, and he said, "We positively know that thirty percent are. And we suspect that it's closer to eighty percent." Dyslexic. Couldn't learn, turned to crime.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the frustration...

**Sen. Wojahn:** The frustration and you know, being called "stupid." Yes, those are his exact words and I couldn't believe it! Then we got up there, we just barely got the meeting going, had our lunch, and we had to get up and leave because the fog was rolling in and they practically shoved us out the door. The plane

took off immediately and the fog came in. So it's very, very bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they put it way up there because nobody would object to having it there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a lot of that, but it wasn't totally. They wanted it; the people came down and lobbied for it and I went to Jim McDermott and I said, "I think this is wrong and I'm not going to vote for this." He was Ways and Means chair. And he said, "Forget it; it's already a done deal and you can't stop it." I still voted no. I thought it was the craziest thing I ever heard. They can't get personnel to work; they have to pay them higher wages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isolation pay or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Isolation pay. All the food has to be trucked in and that's expensive. And one of my friend's brother was one of the truckers that went up from West Coast Grocery into Neah Bay; he went up there I think, twice a week with fresh vegetables.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think that road would get difficult in the winter.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the residents actually lobbied for the institution. We wanted to put one down in Grays Harbor, in Raymond, and they wanted it and then we couldn't get the money to do it. That's when "Big Daddy" Day was chairing the Social and Health Service Committee, the first year I was on the committee in 1977. The residents wanted the facility for economic reasons, but they didn't get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They need the employment, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, because Raymond was a depressed area. So we could have gotten all kinds of good things at that time if we'd had had the presence of thought to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody was there before you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** This is going way back, but these are things that come to mind that are still with us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, once you build a prison, it's there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Now they don't want it. The only place that refused to put it in – they wanted to put one up by Mt. Rainier, up by Kapowsin, up out of Puyallup – and the people went crazy. The real estate people got into it and they killed it. But I remember that and that was, of course, later, and that's the reason we went to Neah Bay. But there have been two places, one which wanted it, one that didn't. And then one which definitely did – and it was Neah Bay. But the thing is, you can't put people on work release from there because there are no jobs. So, it's a dead-end place and it doesn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was short-range thinking I guess, to do that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We should have had the facilities in the populated areas of the state. Same thing with the bill creating FIP that we passed but which got drummed out when the Republicans gained the majority and took over on welfare. That would have been taken care of, had we been able to get the federal waivers we needed, that they wouldn't pay for. And if we had not done it on a lottery basis. Everybody wanted it, but some of the places didn't have jobs. And I remember, they wanted it down around Kelso, or Vancouver, and they got a program but they didn't have jobs. And so the program failed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's kind of a big missing piece.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the trouble, sometimes, with the Legislature; it doesn't put its thinking cap on and they actually do things that shouldn't be done because they are not thinking clearly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, good intentions, but that's not always enough.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the reason you need historic memory down there. And it's gone. I'm sorry to get off track.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's alright, that's how we learn these things. The Legislative Budget Committee is rather oddly named in the sense that it doesn't write the budget or have anything



to do with the budget, but is concerned solely with accountability issues which have a budget impact, of course. The name was changed in 1996 to JLARC, and then a whole new emphasis, on what are now called “performance measures” came in about that time. That was a notion sweeping the nation; there were all kinds of workshops and books about “performance measures.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s kind of new buzz word. We didn’t need to change the name because it was always a performance audit. But there were those who insisted that it be done. Well, you know, I went along, I didn’t even go kicking and screaming. I thought they were crazy to try to change it and I never did call it JLARC; I still call it Leg Budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Diehard! Did it change the organization much with this shift in emphasis?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don’t think it changed that much. I think it made them feel righteous about what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Up-to-date?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Up-to-date, that they weren’t doing fiscal audits, which people didn’t understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe it clarified their role a little.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It probably did. And that didn’t do any harm. Except that people had to think that it was the same, and so it perplexed, I imagine, some of the lay people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you’d be looking for this old committee and suddenly it was called something else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I don’t think we changed the formation of it at all. It still remained a nonpartisan committee. It still elected people in the same way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask about the mechanics. How were people appointed to this committee? Was it by your caucus?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was. Each caucus had so many that they could appoint and it was the ones who wanted to be on the Leg Budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would go to the Committee on Committees or whomever and say, “I’m really interested in this?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not the Committee on Committees. It happened after that. It happened in-between sessions, when there was a vacancy, or it happened at the beginning of the session. I think the leadership always knew who wanted to be on it because they had letters of request from the past to which they referred. And it’s usually senior members, if they can get them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you certainly served on it a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, a long time. After the first time, I didn’t even know that I wanted to stay on it, but I didn’t protest. Phil Talmadge went on with me and he got off because he couldn’t stand it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was it he didn’t like about it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He thought they were a do-nothing committee. That was the impression...I don’t know why he got off. But I think he felt he had bigger axes to grind than that one because that was sort of dull – it’s dull! It isn’t an exciting committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you’re not creating anything, but it is necessary.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s not creative; it’s simply reviewing things. I think that he’s not exactly impatient – he’s very patient – but it wasn’t his type. He was on it for a couple years and then got off. And I asked him once and I don’t think he gave me a satisfactory answer. I think he just shrugged his shoulders and that was it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you believe in sun-setting things and reviewing and making sure that things are still needed...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I believe in maintaining what we have, unless we prove that it’s wrong. And he was a little bit more forward thinking, I guess you might say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Always looking to the next thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always looking to the next thing. I was looking at the past to be sure we didn't drop something that was important to maintain. I never tried to take a leadership position; I just liked to be there and have my say when I wanted to say something, and if I didn't, I kept my mouth shut. I was not one to speak out unless I felt very strongly about something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you continue to meet about once a month?

**Sen. Wojahn:** About once a month.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have particular areas you were interested in, or still mainly the concept of sunset reviews?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had a review on the sale of cigarettes, which we needed. We did it. And we won, because it was right. Sometimes there were just right and wrong and there was a wrong being done because jobbers were trying to take over from the legitimate wholesale of cigarettes where they actually controlled it by taxation. A major grocery store would have a CPA who was CEO where they did the taxation properly. And the jobbers were cheating on it. They were giving free gifts in order to get the cigarettes in there; they would do displays of candy and give out candy to the store. Or give them extras in order to be able to handle cigarettes. And the taxation got all fouled up. It's complicated. Every cigarette package has to have a tax stamp on it. Well, they were black-marketing the stamps. It was bad. And so we got it straightened out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a lot of money for the state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the jobbers' lobbyists were there lobbying because cigarettes are a major source of their business in some of these shopping marts and fast food places. West Coast Grocery, of course, was in my district and they were very interested in seeing cigarette sales done correctly. The jobbers used the excuse of "putting the little guy out of business." It's that "small business" crap that you get, you know.

It's getting harder and harder for an independent in any area of endeavor to make a living. They can't afford to hire people because of the costs of union labor. I know that, but you can't stop progress. And you have to make the best and do the best you can.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a legislator, if you're on this committee, is this one of those great places to really learn how it all works and fits together?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think so. It gives you an inside view of what goes on; not all of these were sunset items, you know. We were reviewing all kinds of programs, like the Seattle Center which was owned by the University of Washington and their right to sustain the funding they got from the Metropolitan Center, I guess it was called. And you get to learn a lot, but it's dull. It isn't exciting, but it's interesting. And it's historic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a real spotlight on the Legislature. I went to their offices and they allowed me to look through their old newsletters and lists of projects and it was astounding how many different things they looked at over the years. Just about anything you could imagine.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anything could be brought up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it seemed that if a person served there long enough, they would come away with quite an education as to what government does. I was impressed by the breadth of what the program does.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the other major legislative agency is the LEAP Committee that identifies funding issues. Much funding is sustained based on past experience, unless there's a reason to change it. And the LEAP Committee, what that does, generally affects the budget. And for some reason, it was beyond me. I got off of that one. I didn't like it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to talk a little more about JLARC. I want to understand more about their process. Different issues and programs are recommended to them for study: by bills, by sunset legislation, by different requests. Does the Governor, for instance, make any requests or

is the work generated all from the legislative branch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Governor can. That's the reason that Ray vetoed the bill, because she wanted a part in it, so yes, they have the right to request a study.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can the public? Say there's some big event that happens. A lot of legislation seems to be driven that way. Say if there's a scandal or something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Usually that drives legislation. Somebody will sponsor legislation because of the publicity. That's called a reaction, not an action.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then, is there any kind of sorting of priorities? I mean, there are probably fifty things you could study any given year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, things are prioritized. The Executive Committee usually decided. I never served on the Executive Committee. Maybe it was something which had to be decided right away during that legislative session. If there was a sunset on it, they have a year after the sunset review is done to either remain in business or go out of business. So it depends. Any budgeting that's done is related to the Leg Budget Committee, because of the money that is withdrawn, or just enough to get them through to the end of the biennium. And so some things have to be done in that order. And the important things are done in that order, I'm sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Say, a certain issue comes up, how does the committee go about investigating?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The professional staff do it. They go in and actually review the cost effectiveness of a particular program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they determine what the goal and mission of the program was? And then somehow whether they're actually doing it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The staff determines the cost-effectiveness of it. And the dollars that are spent on it. Is it accomplishing its mission? Or is it not? Or what can it do to improve its mission? And then they present their findings to the full committee of elected legislators for their

recommendations. And the legislators don't automatically decide to derail something; they actually help them to improve their mission so that they can remain intact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this committee then construct legislation to correct certain situations and then members would perhaps sponsor it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The staff would recommend; they give you a review, telling things which needed to be done that could be changed within the system. They would tell you the areas that need legislation in order to improve the situation. And they tell you the ones which should be dropped because they are not effective. Or the area of that particular agency that is not being effectively worked. They can actually recommend a transfer into another agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can this be accomplished on the rule-making level? Or does it often require a bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sometimes it can.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So an agency can self-correct?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Agencies can self-correct, if recommended by the Leg Budget Committee or they can get the law changed in order to work more efficiently. Or the committee can recommend that they be disposed of.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So I imagine from the agency point of view, this could be either very helpful, or rather nerve-wracking. Depending on the recommendations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes, I'm sure that it is. But I'm sure that the director, who's subject to the Governor's will, wants to improve or correct. They are constantly having to work their budgets. So that I'm sure they listen. I think a good director would be helped by the Leg Budget, rather than hindered or injured.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you recall any particular things that they uncovered that you felt really made a difference? Certain programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** One of the things that they did in the cosmetology was to remove the necessity for location licenses and then they found out

after several years that they needed the location licenses back, in order to police the shops for cleanliness and things. Deregulation is the main business of the sunset. And if they deregulate something, and find out that it's not advantageous to the public, then they can go back and change that, and that was done. That's the one thing I can remember because I always looked for shop licenses and pretty soon they were gone and nobody ever investigated. No one ever came around; they just collected the money and the licensing fee, and didn't police them. And I'm sure that would be true in any facility in which there was actual review done. Reviews are supposed to be continuous, especially for issues like cleanliness and public safety.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think the public assumes that's done, but that might not always be the case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. Well, the danger is in actual funding or budgeting. I can remember after the Wholesome Meat Act passed in Congress, the state of Washington – because of the bacon bill that I sponsored – had their own inspectors, inspecting meat and then as the budget got slimmer and slimmer, they got rid of the inspectors. So pretty soon we didn't have state meat inspections and we were relying on the Feds to do it and they weren't doing a very good job. And then we got E. Coli. We did legislation to prevent E. Coli, saying a hamburger had to be cooked to a certain degree of temperature which was greater than the federal act, but people were not paying attention to it and we were not administering it. So those are the little things which can happen to people as a result of a budget cut no one thinks about. And I remember when the inspection budget was cut during the time that Bud Shimpoch was Appropriations chair in the House; they cut the meat inspectors down – they kept some, but they cut a lot of them out. And let the Feds come in – and the Feds didn't come in. He may have believed the Feds were doing a good job, and in any case, this was long before E. Coli became an issue. But that was the beginning of

the situation. That's a danger and an example of what can happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a deadly one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's deadly and anything we do can be deadly to somebody. That's the part that bothers me right now with the present national administration; they are cutting things we rely on and we're not picking up the tab, because we can't afford to. And so what's going to happen? Nobody knows, but something will happen before we do anything about it. It's in the foreseeable future.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what it usually takes, unfortunately.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It takes a tragedy. It's like the space program. Something got knocked loose on that damn machine and all hell broke loose, because we weren't paying attention and providing the necessary funding. They've cut the funding way back on that program and nobody's going to want to go up in one of those things again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, now that the Columbia tragedy has happened, I guess they'll shine some light on some of these cuts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We're going to shine some light on the fact that the budget was cut and they weren't properly examining it. And the Columbia was an old machine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was surprised to hear how many times it had gone up. I didn't realize.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure that NASA knows. And the first thing that they let go is safety, I believe. I don't know, who knows?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure we'll be reading about it as we go along. I imagine there's a never-ending list of things for JLARC to examine? Are there groups that contest what JLARC does?

**Sen. Wojahn:** People trust JLARC. Their findings were never contested. They did a remarkable job and were very bipartisan. Both sides listened – and heard! If someone had an issue it would be with the original piece of legislation; they would protest the legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have hearings, don't they?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The staff made their reviews and looked for flaws. Then they made recommendations for changes or possibly elimination of the program. During the review, you can ask questions and listen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you're bringing something up for review, you would have opposing sides and you'd have different opinions about what should happen to help you think it through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sometimes during the writing of a bill the right questions don't get asked. Good hearings always bring out pros and cons. And if there's no one there to protest, maybe something can slide through because a lack of knowledge on the part of the members. It can happen. You can't always be sure that what you're doing is correct, although you have to assume that it is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So these proceedings, they would be public, open meetings? And advertised somewhere, presumably?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. They're always open. The information is sent out to anybody who's interested can request it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd have the stakeholder groups, as they are called, I think.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the stakeholders. The trauma committee on which I served, they have a lot of interested people, always. And they are very helpful and you listen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People bring to those hearings their experience and their expertise.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And some of the people on that committee are not experts, you know. So anything you take up in legislation is subject to public review.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You served on this committee a long time; can you think of members of JLARC who did an outstanding job, or stood out in some way in your mind?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that anybody was particularly – they were all just good working

legislators. Al Bauer was a good legislator; he was great on educational issues because he understood educational issues and was outstanding on them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a place where people could shine in some way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Helen Sommers was really good, although sometimes I believe she was short-sighted. But she usually was able to get to the bottom of things. She was often the chair of the Leg Budget Committee, mainly because, apparently no one else wanted it. I don't know. But she seemed to be automatically elected every other year and was the one who had the most longevity of anybody there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She seems to have made it a specialty. Is a certain temperament or perspective good on this committee? Patience? Attention to detail? Wide experience? I'm not sure – all those things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Patience, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did this committee, during your time of service, fifteen-odd years, change over time? Did it evolve? Or was it more or less the same kind of things? It did have that name change, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I think that it remained the same as far as its mission was concerned. It was just an added mission of sun-setting which precluded diving into agencies as much. We were busy taking up sunset reviews rather than taking on agency problems. I think that what it did do was to discourage the continuation of a committee or a commission which didn't have enough money to function and was simply holding jobs for people until they had something to work on. And I think that may have happened in the Legislature in the past, where there were commissions which did nothing – had a budget, but rarely met.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or maybe at one point had some kind of purpose and lost it over the years?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. And some of them never met. The budget was there; they carried on in the budget, but it never was spent. So we eliminated some of those types of areas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there any other thing to say about JLARC before we move on? Any particular memories? Or good stories?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't remember any good stories.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a lot of solid work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. A lot of solid work and very little publicity. Things just got done. And things got continued and some things got eliminated, but it was all very orderly. It's kind of like the LEAP Committee; no one talks much about that either, but it was a great idea, except that sometimes the money keeps going in and it isn't reviewed as much as it should be, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everything needs a fresh look every once in awhile.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So, LEAP is sort of the counterpart of the Leg Budget or the JLARC. It functions year round and does its job and gets little publicity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's one of those unsung committees. Yet it's really important for people to understand how government actually works.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And unless they hit a nerve, and the press picks it up, there's no serious debate or publicity. That's the kind the Legislature should have. There shouldn't be this knee-jerk action out there. The press picks up on things that they shouldn't pick up on. And dirties up issues that shouldn't be dirtied up. I think sometimes they are crass and bullying in their approach. And I told the Tribune that when they sent me a questionnaire.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bet they didn't appreciate that!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure they didn't. And I didn't qualify it by saying they did a good job on other things, but you know. They jump at things in order to sell newspapers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You served on that committee, JLARC, for a long time, stretching through all these years. So as we're going through all these sessions, talking about your work, we should always keep in mind that you had this other responsibility. Let's look at your regular session work now. In 1994, for that session, there were twenty-eight Democrats in the Senate to twenty-one Republicans. So you had a pretty good



*Shoulder to shoulder with Senate colleagues in a committee hearing (L to R) 1<sup>st</sup> row: John Moyer, Phil Talmadge, Marilyn Rasmussen, Lorraine Wojahn, Margarita Prentice; 2<sup>nd</sup> row Valoria Loveland, Karen Fraser*

margin there to do some things. The House was also Democratic, sixty-five to thirty-three. Pretty big numbers, with Brian Ebersole being the Speaker, and of course, you still had a Democratic Governor, Mike Lowry. You are again elected President Pro Tempore. And you had four committees. At one point I think you dropped down to three, but now you were back up to four.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had to because the opposition party didn't want to be burdened with a lot of committees. So we had to pick up and do more in order to provide members for committees. So everybody had to take more than they wanted to. Many in the minority party wanted only two committees so we had to pick up the slack.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were pretty busy. You were vice-chair of Health and Human Services and vice-chair of Rules, which goes with being President Pro Tem. You were on the Labor and Commerce Committee, and also Ways and Means. So you are hitting a lot of different issues here. I wanted to talk about Ways and Means before we go into some of the other areas. Initiative 601 one had passed and you were beginning to deal with that during budget deliberations. How big an impact did I-601 have in the years following, when you had to work out your budgets?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't have the impact that we thought it would have. It wasn't that negative because it was based upon the population base and I don't remember the percentage that we could raise, but anyway, we had a good economy going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That helps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we were out of the recession that had occurred the past year and the year before that and so it didn't have a great impact. The money was there and we were able to do most of the things that demanded to be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you come to see it as a good disciplinary tool? Or was it something that didn't really matter?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't think about it after the first impact. We all moaned and groaned and said it was going to destroy the state of Washington, and of course, it didn't. It was not that bad an issue. And there was enough levity in there that we didn't really suffer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about those years when there isn't that growth?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then it comes into play? It has more impact?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, now it's deadly. It's the further initiatives that have passed since then that have made it deadly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The picture has become much more complicated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But 601 really didn't affect us too badly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting since it was considered so huge when it was passed. It was going to be a "revolution."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but it wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot of talk, still, of course, about taxes, as there always is. You were tinkering those years with the B&O tax quite a bit. We'll pick up a few pieces of that as we go through the discussion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We reduced the B&O tax somewhat that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the surtax was reduced by two percent; the tax for small business was reduced by raising the exemption level. I think that means if you're a really tiny business, the tax didn't apply to you? The threshold for when you started paying B&O was raised?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Depending on the number of employees you had, I think, was the way you paid it. Small business was considered at \$500,000 or less.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are really pretty small businesses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But then there were some at \$50,000 or less and it was moderated to recognize those.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, trying to keep things flexible? One of the really big debates that I wanted to focus on for 1994 was the Community Public Health and Safety Act, which involved a discussion of gun control, in which you were quite involved. The bill originated in the House and had quite a few pieces. I wanted to go through some of this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the one to permit or not permit assault weapons. I offered an amendment in the Senate. I got up and held up a white teddy bear and said there were more manufacturing restrictions on this teddy bear than on guns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's very visual.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I had it. It's a darling little white teddy bear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because babies could gag on the buttons that you can bite off, and all these other things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That there were more regulations on the teddy bear than there were on guns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of an astonishing fact.



*"There was more regulation on the teddy bear than there were on guns."*

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got twenty-three votes; if I'd gotten twenty-four, the Lieutenant Governor said he would have voted with me to pass the bill. But one of our members took a walk. And if she had voted yes, we would have had it and we would have gotten the amendment on the bill.

Kathleen Drew. She walked up to her office and didn't vote and made a remark to someone, "It's time for me to leave." A lot of people choked that bill down. You know, Marc Gaspard voted for it; I know that he didn't want to because it would hurt him. Sid Snyder voted for it, Marilyn Rasmussen voted for it from a red-neck area. They all voted for it. They voted for it because they thought it was right, but they choked it down. And then this one person did not have the courage to do it. She lost her next election anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it the gun control aspect that made it so difficult for people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you were talking about assault weapons, not hunting rifles, not, you know, the usual kind of gun?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was the gun control. The gun lobby thinks they own every piece of legislation and every idea in the United States and that no one should touch the subject. I'd like to put a fee on bullets to pay for trauma care because that's responsible for about thirty percent of trauma. Or knives. But I don't dare do it. I didn't do it because the labor movement said, "Don't do it; they'll kill you." Well, I'd already gotten a fee for trauma on motor vehicles, and I was going to go back the next year and I was running for office, and they said, "Don't do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are certain things...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That you don't touch. Well, I didn't. I had already gotten it from Motor



Vehicles anyway, so, whatever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was hard-fought. Your amendment was signed on by Prentice, Moore, Niemi and Pelz.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. They all helped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you list the actual names of all these different weapons – Berettas and Uzis and I don't even know what all these weapons are.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I also brought up the fact that a whole section of forest, according to the Board of Natural Resources, was destroyed – I believe about \$500,000 worth of timber – by an assault weapon. Someone went in and shot the timber up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you couldn't safely harvest it? It was full of metal?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that's right. And I also had a cartoon done by Dave Horsey in my office and it shows one guy saying to another, he said, "Congratulations, you've just shot out the heart, the liver, the whole works of that deer." You know, "You've destroyed the deer." No, it was true that they are absolutely unnecessary. It had nothing to do with anything but assault weapons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You name them; you are very specific and you try to go at the heart of what is an assault weapon and then finally, when you voted, you fell short.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were twenty-three and then when the amendment failed, they fell off. But they were the ones who went with me out of courtesy. It was twenty-four that I had – I know the ones who fell off – twenty-four and Joel Pritchard came to me afterwards and said, "If it had been a tie, I would have voted with you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was a supporter of gun control. It was bit of a bipartisan vote, some for and some against from both sides of the aisle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can tell you who changed their vote. Then when the amendment failed, they changed. Drew was the one who walked off the floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were more amendments and more discussion. It finally passed. The final Senate vote for the whole bill was twenty-six for; twenty-three against. Then it went to a conference committee, was held over through to a special session, worked on in another conference committee, and finally passed. But then it was partially vetoed by the Governor. One other piece I thought was really interesting is that the bill talked about youth violence as a public-health issue. Not a law and justice issue – a very different discussion. Who framed that discussion? That's a real shift in emphasis.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think probably it was Phil Talmadge, but I don't know. He was chairing Health at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you take an issue like this, which is a pretty hot-button issue, and instead of talking about it as a crime issue, you talk about it as a health issue, does that allow people to bring up different types of solutions altogether?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. If people end up in the hospital it becomes a health issue rather than a crime issue. That is what happens. It focused on the problem. I thought it was great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** From a different perspective, perhaps it diffused it a little bit? The fear factor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was done to diffuse it. I think the Medical Association was very much in support of changing it. It all changed. And I think it was probably through Phil Talmadge that it was done. I will always believe that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed somehow a more positive discussion. There was a still a huge amount in this report about guns. Some people wanted to tie youth gun use with driving privileges, where if you were convicted or charged with carrying a gun, you lost your driving privileges. What did you think of that? Trying to tie these things together to penalize kids?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was a good idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something they might care about? Something that would make a difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The one thing that you might be able to do to change their behavior. I thought it was great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would kids who are likely to be carrying guns care whether they had a driver's license? I'm just being provocative here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Probably not. But those borderline kids who had families who cared about them that were being...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Recruited, pulled into this underworld?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Kids who could easily be influenced but whose parents really cared about them. It probably could help, though it wouldn't help anyone who has a characteristically criminal mind. No, but those who had no one who cared. Kids who have parents that care, or families that care, would probably be a little bit more careful about getting involved so much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be just one more tool?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just one more tool.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something to get their attention. Would it be a way, say, if you were pulled over for careless driving and it turned out you didn't have a drivers license, would it trigger a more thorough search or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so, but police can...if you're pulled over for another offense, they have the right to search if they suspect there's a problem. I suppose if a kid mouths-off to the police officer, he might get his car searched. But I think, again, kids who have a family that cares are a little more fragile and less inclined to mouth-off or to be persuaded to carry a gun or to do drugs. They'd be more timid about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm just going through this bill analysis. There were so many pieces to it. One of the things it talks about is trying juveniles as adults. That's a new trend that we're seeing more and more of. Was there a feeling that teenagers – juveniles – were being hardened and that a sixteen-year-old, say, it might already be

“too late” for that child? The idea of redemption used to be the push with juvenile justice. And it seems to be getting lost in some of these bills.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that would bother me – imposing the death penalty on a sixteen-year old. I believe I would never have been able to choke that down; they're still impressionable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's still hope?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And teenagers tend to strike out against parental authority and can get caught up in this. I just think that sixteen is too young to lay that responsibility on them. And after all, we make eighteen-year-olds responsible now as adults. And I always used to feel that was a little bit too young to be imposing adult restrictions or giving them adult rights. Twenty-one is fine. They are still immature and have a lot to learn.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there a changing attitude? As kids themselves seem to become, at least in the press, and various studies, more violent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We're seeing it all over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there a hardening of attitudes? A real fear of kids? When people were discussing all this that really came through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the world is more violent now and they see it. They see it in the movies, they see it in the video games, they see it with their parents. And I think there is more stress in the world and consequently kids are seeing more of it even within their own families. And it's caused by stress. And we don't do anything to ameliorate that stress. You know, there's stress in a family where both parents are required to work and one of them feels guilty – probably the woman – because she feels she should be home with her kids. I guess you can place it on the doorstep of corporate greed. Where everybody wants more but they aren't willing to pay a living wage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some things just cost more and require two incomes. Just to stay afloat.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know how a child could grow up in an atmosphere like that and not be amoral. It's much easier, let's put it that way.

You know, these things were occurring in England during the Industrial Revolution. There was just a whole group of people who were transient and had nothing and it was okay to pick pockets. You had to do it to live. During the early days of Dickens, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Despite the fact they had draconian punishments. I mean, they hung people for things like that or cut off their hands.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They still do it in the near East, I guess. The really funny thing, I think, is the laws on drunkenness in Denmark, I think it is, if a man is picked up for drunken driving they throw him in jail and throw his wife in with him. That's true!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I used that in one of my newsletters. I thought it was incredible. Was it Denmark or Sweden? One of these Scandinavian countries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is she supposed to keep better track of her husband?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I guess so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know about that. There is a piece in the bill about media and violence; it doesn't actually try to regulate that, it just mentions it as part of the cost.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't see how you can. It's all First Amendment crap, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of beyond your jurisdiction here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a great deal of discussion in the heart of this bill about "why is society more violent?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** It sounds like a Talmadge bill. Did Talmadge sponsor that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It actually comes out of the House: Appelwick, Leonard, Johanson, and Valle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Attorneys, yes, Appelwick's an attorney.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And Lane, Wineberry, Scott, actually there's about thirty names.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the prime would be Appelwick.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And "by request of Governor Lowry." So it gives you an opportunity to address a number of issues. Now, would you have had a lot of hearings and people coming to speak on all these different pieces? Was this quite a production? This is one of the biggest bills of the session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did that go to Health Care?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Health and Human Services, also Ways and Means, of course. So you got two tries at it. One of the things that it talks about here, which will come up again and again, is it tries to define what "at risk" children are. That's seemingly a new term. Now we're used to hearing that term. It says, "At risk children and youth are those who risk significant loss of social, educational, or economic opportunities. At risk behaviors include: violence and delinquency, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and lack of male parentage." Kind of an innovation there to include both genders. Also: "suicide attempts and dropping out of school. Children and youth at risk include those who are victims of violence, abuse, neglect and those who have been removed from the custody of their parents." So a very broad understanding of what kind of children you're really trying to look at here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it took in that children who had viewed abuse of a parent become abusers themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, domestic violence in the home is one of the biggest indicators.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It recognized one of the chief problems with children having viewed domestic violence become abusers themselves, if not given counseling. And we finally acknowledged that. But it sort of gets lost in the whole train of events, and it shouldn't get lost. I think more emphasis is being placed on it today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It looks like the understanding grows piece by piece and that this is one of those bills which tries to put it all together. In a bill of this magnitude – the short title is “Enabling Programs to Reduce Youth Violence,” are you really looking at the global picture of “where does violence come from? And what are we going to do about it?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** “What do you do about it?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Then what happens? Who then implements all this?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. And what about the financing of it? Is there anything in the bill that says: “Subject to available funds?” At the very end, if it says “subject to available funds,” if that’s in there, then it’s a lousy bill. That there’s no intention on the part of the Legislature to fund the whole bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have different taxes that are going to support this on wine, beer, spirits and cigarettes. Let’s see, “The sunset clauses on the taxes on wine, beer, spirits, and cigarettes are removed. Carbonated beverages will no longer be taxed, however the tax on carbonated beverage syrup will continue.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s on the syrups?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. “Taxes are increased on cigarettes and syrup. The Drug Enforcement and Education Account is renamed, ‘The Violence Reduction and Drug Enforcement Account.’ Revenues from the taxes will continue to be deposited in that account; however, the expenditures from the Account may fund programs under this act as well as the 1989 Omnibus Alcohol and Controlled Substances Act.” So it doesn’t seem like a really huge fund, unless I’m mistaken and don’t understand how much pop people drink.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we took it off of wine and beer. Because the wine and beer people fought it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I can see that. “At least 7.5 percent of the expenditure from the account must be used for providing grants to community networks. The fund may also be used to pay for state incarceration costs.” That’s a little after the

fact. “The extension and increases of the taxes must be submitted as a single ballot measure to the voters for approval if Initiative 601 is upheld.” So this is where some of the little things about 601 come in? You create a study to examine the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice Act of 1977. Was that to see how it meshes with this new thinking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was never enough money to implement that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The task force must make recommendations by the following year. So it looks like you have a funding source here that’s dedicated. If I’m understanding that correctly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s dedicated, but is it enough?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There’s still, certainly, youth violence. But whether you can just solve that with money or not, I’m not sure.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s where we put the fee on pop, but it wasn’t on pop, it was on the syrup.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that’s more on the manufacturers than the actual consumers? Is that the idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Well, it was a very long fight. And it was passed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s an omnibus bill that tries to solve all the problems and give it a tax base that’s never adequate to fund the whole business. And that’s the way...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So charging with one hand and not quite providing with the other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right and not providing enough funding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s talk about this, about omnibus bills. Over the years, there have been several big ones. The AIDS Omnibus Bill, and this one, others. Does that allow you to get at more issues and really tuck in all the different pieces of knowledge that are accumulating, about the causes of violence, for instance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are the bills deeper, in that sense? Do they really get down to the roots of issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they're deeper, but they also often do not adequately fund all of the elements that are contained in the bill. And they go into different codes when they are codified.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is it a way – this sounds cynical – is it a way to have a lot of groups feel heard, but without actually doing everything that perhaps is needed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a way of saying we did all these good things, and "See what we've done that's so great," but there's no way of tracking down and saying that we didn't do it. That it was not done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it better – I can see where there are some strengths, because it allows you to get at all the pieces.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then future legislators can go in and pull out different pieces and see that they get funded adequately. It's good in one way, but it's destructive in another and it actually is falsifying facts, I believe. Because in these bills, there's never enough funding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that is the rub, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But people think there is. And it's tough to pull it out and find out that it isn't doing its job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let's say, to return to our earlier discussion, would the JLARC group come and look at this and see if the bill was actually doing what was hoped?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you'd have to pull various elements out of it. No one's ever attacked the whole omnibus bill as a total. But different factions are maybe pulled out to be sure that it's done and is performing properly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is an accountability issue? Yes, you're nodding your head.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the only group who would ever attack it should be the press and they don't. That's where an investigative reporter could do a good job on it and should, but they don't. It

probably doesn't have enough pizzazz or public interest to entice the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But would that take a few years of having the bill in place, before the holes would begin to show up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would have to go back and ask.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they could say, "Well, there's a funding source for that." We tax the syrup for pop; well, we don't tax beer and we don't tax wine because micro-breweries are business-oriented and wine is a big business in the state of Washington and we don't tax that because it would hurt them, because they are baby industries; they need to grow more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As long as Washington has no income tax, there's not that many places to go.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. And we could put a tax or put a fee on bullets. There are a lot of good things we could do that are not done because they are unpleasant and they lose people's elections. You know, the Rifle Association finally stopped sending me threatening registered letters because I never would pick them up at the post office. I would get a threatening letter and I would never accept it and then I'd get a note from the post office saying, "It's here." And I would call and find out what it was, and tell them to throw it away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Saying "no thank you?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. But some people believed. They identify people that they can never influence. And then they go after them in the next election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it a good idea to have dedicated funds for this sort of bill? Or should it just come under General Funds?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's not a good idea ever to dedicate funding because sometimes the funding becomes surplus and you don't need it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or, it's not adequate, as you say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or it's not adequate. So, the Legislature generally does not like to dedicate funding. It's inflexible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does tie up your budget in very odd ways.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it does. We did it in the case of trauma; we put a fee on the sale of motor vehicles that had to be spent for this certain purpose of trauma care only.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are you reduced to that expediency because you can't guarantee that the General Fund will cover it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to. Sometimes you need trust funds. And a trust fund should never be attacked. It should be exempt from ever being used for any other purpose. Because there could never be too much funding for trauma, in my belief. You see, we have a trust fund established for developmentally disabled people that will probably be attacked next session. It should not be attacked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be a better mechanism for doing all this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** An income tax. You can plan if you have an income tax; you know, you can anticipate the amount of money that you are going to need and you can plan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More stability?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's more stable. But you cannot plan with a sales tax because when a recession occurs, people don't buy big items. Although people have still been buying cars; it's incredible. But large ticket items do suffer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the Legislature is somewhat fond of these big omnibus bills. Is it because it allows you to focus your attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It allows you to do a lot of things in one fell swoop if you can pass them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you can tuck in some useful things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they become Christmas trees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I imagine. But are they likewise, vulnerable to say, your gun control measure – if you had actually got that in there, would that have endangered the entire bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it can go both ways. Well, it's an imperfect mechanism, but it gets some things done.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the reason a lot of legislators don't want their bills amended because amendments can go on the bill that hurt the original mission of the bill and it can die. They are sometimes amended in order to kill them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this is an issue that stays in the light. So we're going to come back to this again as the Legislature looks at these issues. Youth violence is still an issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there's usually not enough money to handle youth at risk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. But as you finesse these issues and learn more, by defining what are "at-risk youth," do all these things add up? Eventually? I mean, it might take you years to get all these things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they add up if you if you have an historic memory in the Legislature, but when you're electing new people every other year in the House, you lose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do these issues pass into the "public vocabulary?" I mean, they probably come from the public as well as go into the public, but everybody now seems to understand what "at risk youth" means.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some people want to put them in prison; some people want to put them to death. You know, it's sort of a free-for-all. Every man for himself and it becomes a real burden.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's such a painful issue; do certain things draw out that sort of desperate "we've got to do something" response?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And what age do you determine that a child knows right from wrong?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems to be pushed further and further down.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Becoming younger and younger. You know, there was a time when I was on the Judicial Council on a subcommittee to determine when a youngster knew, in a divorce situation, which family he wanted to go with, which parent. And we couldn't make a decision because we didn't know – we could never determine the age of reason with the child. With some children it could be fourteen, in others it could be sixteen and some of them it could be not even at eighteen. So we made no determination; it was too hard to make the decision and we never came up with an answer. That's the reason we never came up with an answer on juvenile justice; we couldn't do it. The subcommittee was eventually abolished and nothing was done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a huge stumbling block.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, perhaps better to not just grab at a number but to admit that you don't know. That there's ambivalence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was exactly what was done. That you cannot make a determination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These are pretty tough things to talk about. Another not very fun bill that you got to work on that year is Senate Bill 6158 that modified regulations for control of Tuberculosis. TB was supposed to be something that was gone, that our society had solved. You had closed down the TB hospitals because you didn't need them anymore. Now, the state was experiencing a forty-eight percent rise in TB cases since just 1998. A lot of these cases were associated with AIDS, and with new immigrants who were bringing it in from other places, and homeless people who were not getting any health care. But a rather chilling part of this is that some of the TB was newly drug-resistant. It was a new strain of TB which was very worrisome. Some issues you had to deal with in this bill – partly because of the drug-resistant

nature of what you were talking about, which was a real danger – was the whole issue of involuntary treatment, of needing to confine people who had not committed a crime, but were a danger to society. The whole legal tangle involving due process, public safety – these different competing values.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were almost caught up in the same agenda as the AIDS bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reporting and secrecy issues and confidentiality issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's one of the reasons we needed to sustain and maintain the local health departments and give them funding in order to handle this, because it had become a local issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These people were all over the state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you needed to have the Department of Health available to do that and to work with local health departments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a whole list of these really difficult bills this session. You had one, Senate Bill 6255, changing provisions relating to children removed from custody of their parents. Again, part of an on-going search for the balance between keeping families together and protecting children.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. And the Christian Right was fighting the best interest of the child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have a different perspective; the authority of the family ranks a little higher for them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I think that's where Ellen Craswell came in. Their attempt to keep children in their families even though it wasn't in their best interest to remain there. And it became a knock-down, drag-out in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can't imagine this is ever going to be solved in a final sense. The pendulum swings one way and then the other.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It became a battle of definitions, a fight over the safety of the child and the best interest of the child, which was the most

important and legally, the best interest of the child should be the issue, because safety became a part of the best interest of the child. And because of this battle, some children were given back to their parents and they were eventually murdered by their family. One was Eli Creekmore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were definitely looking at a lot of painful subjects.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the one the senator from Snohomish County was fighting. She challenged Jean Soliz, who was the Secretary of DSHS at the time, and called it "Soliz-gate." It got to be a nasty thing. She's been proven wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Val Stevens?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But in the meantime we've lost good employees. Jean Soliz left and I knew Jean Soliz; she was the attorney for my committee and she was very, very aware of the problems and cared. And she left. She left because of Stevens. She said she would do it again – challenge this family who had abused their children. They had come up from California – they left California because they'd been cited for child abuse, and they came to Washington. Their part was taken by Stevens against Jean Soliz and she called it "Soliz-gate." It was just rotten the things that went on there. And now Stevens has found that she was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I notice in the discussions about welfare reform that FIP seems to have dropped out of the picture. That program seems to have disappeared and now people are talking about a program called JOBS.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The FIP Program was discontinued by the Republicans when they gained the majority. And the waivers were never sought. The Feds refused to honor their commitment. It was all allowed to go down the tube.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This new program, again, tries to address the issue of helping people transition to work, keeping enough of their benefits so they can bridge from welfare to full employment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if they are given help with their health care and their childcare, there's a possibility they can make it. But not given that...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People slide back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's not rational for a welfare mother to give up health care to work at a possibly temporary low-wage job.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't afford to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You worked, this year, on a bill to address the release of the criminally insane. Senate Bill 6532. It seems to have grown out of one of those instances that crystallize an issue. A criminally-insane patient at Western State Hospital was released into the custody of her attorney for a one-day trip to Seattle. Her release order was signed by a judge – and this is quoting right out of your newsletter, concerning her attorney – "who intentionally dropped her off at her boyfriend's home for a visit. The woman was gone when the attorney returned to take her back to the hospital." So she escaped? This person just disappeared?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, she just disappeared for forty-eight hours and then she ended back in the hospital, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was a little sloppy? And so your bill is to address this sort of loose regulation of these people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your newsletter says: "The medical director at Western State said the escapee was not an acceptable candidate for a furlough and the staff would have objected strenuously had they been allowed to do so." So the attorney had the right to do this and the staff couldn't stop it, is that it? That must have been pretty awful for the staff.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It needed to be plugged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is to plug that hole, I see. Did the staff come to you and tell you this story? Was this something you heard about?



**Sen. Wojahn:** I must have, I don't remember. But apparently it came to my attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's in your area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the agency had a right to protest and to be protected against the attorney's rights to do what he was doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also sponsored another bill that year, SB 6076, that would have required fetal alcohol syndrome warning signs in all retail outlets in which alcohol is sold as part of a public education campaign.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were asked to withdraw that bill. The Liquor Control Board said that they would handle it. So we moved the bill into Rules Committee, purposely, so that I could watch it to be sure that they did it. Then the bill was kept there and they didn't do anything about it. I was in Rules and so I could have pulled it any time, but they kept assuring me that they would do it. Well, they didn't! They were dragging their feet. The Liquor Control Board had hearings on it, but they could never quite come up with the wording that was effective and I finally wrote a letter to the Governor, who then sat on the Liquor Control Board and then they did it. And those signs are in the restrooms and bars – any place that sells liquor, beer or wine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I've seen them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they are supposed to be – and apparently are – in any place that sells liquor, but you have to find them. They are not in conspicuous places. They have not done a very good job. They are in the johns. But the grocery stores have not done a good job. They are there but...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm trying to think if I've ever seen one in a grocery store. I don't recall.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they are there but they're not in places that people see them. But we backed off of that issue because we were requested to do so. And the Liquor Control Board did not do a good job and we were forced to go to the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you have a bill the following year that we can discuss when we're looking at that session. This issue continues to interest you. You have another bill to ban lottery advertising. Now, that didn't come to pass. Were you pretty upset about it? You say in your newsletter, "I believe that people will support a ban on lottery advertising and that is the reason I introduced Senate Bill 6238 which would ban expensive media advertising by the State Lottery Commission." A lottery advertising ban was placed in the Senate supplemental budget, but didn't pass in the House. You went on to say, "The Lottery Commission spends almost \$11 million annually on advertising. I believe the public would prefer to see this money spent more wisely than promoting a lottery whose odds against winning are seven million to one." Bad math here! What made this an important issue for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember I was angry but I can't remember whatever became of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They still advertise.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, but I was offended that they spent this much money advertising and gypping the people out of their money because it was a seven million-to-one shot. I hate the lottery. As a matter of fact, when I chaired the committee and we put the lottery bill before the people, I did not vote for it. And they finally couldn't get the bill passed and I had to vote for it and I was offended by that. And that was when I was in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you are still offended?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm still offended. And the bill didn't pass muster. There was no lottery at that time because the people didn't accept it. You see. And I was right, but I lost when I came into the Senate. Senator Talmadge sponsored the bill and I voted against it, but he got it. I don't believe the state should be involved in gambling. And the chances of winning are almost impossible. It's better to be buying milk and food for their children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a great temptation to states, though, because it does raise money. It's a sort of voluntary tax.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course. I know. And I didn't think the state should ever be in the business of gambling. That's always been my position and I refuse to change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, evidently, somebody came and told you this seven million-to-one number and it just got you. Not to mention the \$11 million spent on advertising. That would be a number that would get under your skin, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure they did. Or I went out and found it. I still hate gambling and I'm still opposed to it and it's still there. And I was the chair who wrote the gambling bill and I still opposed it, but it was a good bill. We did it right. We said, "We will license you, but we're going to leave it up to the local communities to tax and they can tax it to death." Or, "They can refuse to tax it and then they can't have it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When the tide's really going, you might as well at least channel it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, channel it to do it right. You bet. I'll never forget. And the number of the bill was 711. That was the number of the gambling bill. Jim Kuehnle from Spokane was the prime sponsor and I gave it to him when the bill came across my desk and he got the number 711, we heard it. And we studied it for one year and finally passed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very catchy. Well, it's a really sticky area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it still is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here's something you're for: you got, I think it was \$660,000 inserted in the supplemental operating budget for the Sprague Building in downtown Tacoma. For historic preservation and the restoration of the downtown area. A key project.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I shared that money because they only needed that much. I shared it with Representative Grace Cole; she needed some money for something in Seattle. So I split it. I said, "I'll give her that much but I

need this much." And we got it. And then at the same time that that passed, I had already preserved the historic preservation money by slipping that one over and fooling Art Wang again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you knew a few tricks by this time. Building by building you're saving all of that area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to. And it was all for people. It was never for self-serving reasons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a vision of that area that perhaps not everyone shared.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I had a vision of Tacoma. You bet. Of the History Museum and the whole waterway. Building so that we'd have condominiums and commerce and we got it all! And that was a vision of many years past.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's your legacy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's my "Martin Luther King, I had a dream." I had a dream.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By staying in the Legislature so long you were able to...

**Sen. Wojahn:** To sustain it. We did another where we were able to develop a program whereby the property tax was eliminated on the property in which the building sits so that we could remodel new buildings above or build buildings for housing. And that was the bill that opened the door to economic development for Tacoma. And nobody recognized it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finding those little solutions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a little bill, but it passed and it's a tax bill that opened the door and that's the reason all these buildings have been done. We have a senior apartment up in the north end off of Division that is wonderful that was built with that. And also we did another bill, one of the last bills that I passed, I think in 2000, was to say that there could be no sales tax on materials to put in sidewalks and landscaping in public areas. I don't remember the number of that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Little pieces that add up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So now we have that. It's there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can see the difference. Bricks and mortar!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Bricks and mortar and yet it's done and the press have never given me credit for that. That's okay, but it's there and you do it quietly. Piece by piece.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes less fanfare is more effective.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The city of Tacoma knows what I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes. People definitely remember.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the general public doesn't know, but they might not have liked it. I got a real bad story in the paper about people who were renting these apartments, that they were buying condos and they didn't have to pay a property tax for the first ten years. Okay, you do that; you've got to give to get and we got! And we got big. Those apartments are very desirable. And we said, "Abatement programs cannot be just for low income. It has to be for everybody." And we got two brand new apartments that are selling for – the cheapest purchase is \$200,000, two of them. Going up on McKinley Hill where I came from.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a real boost to that neighborhood.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they're both going on the McKinley Hill. That's where my husband's father built their first home. It was called Snoose Hill. It was where all the poor people lived. And now it's coming back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can revitalize a whole area with pieces here and there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I keep telling people, "Look what happened to Snoose Hill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very nice. Well, I wanted to make sure we talked about one more long-time institution that you were helping honor, in this case, Senator Ray Moore. I don't know if he



*Signing legislation for Tacoma, Governor Mike Lowry with Representative Maryann Mitchell, Tacoma Mayor Bill Baarsma, Senator Shirley Winsley and Senator Wojahn*

wants to be called an institution but he definitely was. He was a real presence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was an institution and his big agenda was "You can't give people everything, but you can give them hope. And if they have hope, they don't need anything else." He was wonderful! And he hated my bills. Every bill I put in he hated. They were all women's bills. His wife loved them! He used to scold me all the time a bill came across. He sat right behind me and every time one of my bills came, he would say, "This is the damnedest, lousiest, rottenest bill that I have to vote for."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you could just smile, and say, "Thank you, Ray."

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he really was angry, he really was angry. Yes. And he liked me in spite of himself. I went to visit them in Hawaii. He was the one who tagged me the "Norse Goddess of Terror." He and Phil Talmadge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, one of the more colorful epitaphs in the Legislature. I hope you're proud of it. It has a certain cache.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I am. He gave me that. I loved it. And I didn't feel – he was mad about it. He thought it was awful and you know. Anyway,

when I went to visit them two years ago in Hawaii, his wife went into the bank, she wanted to cash a check that was a personal check but it was written on a credit union, I think. It wasn't her bank. And they weren't going to cash it, and I said, "How dare you not cash this check!" And I challenged them and they cashed it. She went back and told Ray, "She's still that." I'll never forget that! I was so incensed that they wouldn't cash her check, I'll never forget it. And that was on the big island in Kona, the town of Kona that we went into.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ray Moore retired from the Senate in 1994 and you sponsored the Senate resolution honoring him. Everyone signed onto this, but yours is the first name and Talmadge's is the second. You were an interesting little triad.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we loved each other. We were friends.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who writes these resolutions? Somebody was having a lot of fun here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We give them the "meat" and they write the thing. Phil and I both gave them some information that needed to be said. Did we use the one that said that the last time he ran for office, he used the slogan "and not just another pretty face."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you mention things like, "Whereas: Ray and his wife Virginia are responsible for some near-legendary Indian curry dinners that greatly added to the spice of life on Queen Anne Hill." That's kind of fun.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. They lived on a street named Bigelow and they had a cat named Bigelow. Bigelow Moore, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's right, the famous cat.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether that's in there or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, no cats. You talk about his long service, his dedication to his constituents. You talk about him being the founder of the Food Lifeline. You talk about him being honored as the "Democratic Legislator of the Year" by the Seattle King County Democratic Club, which may not have

realized he had once been King County Republican Chairman – a little irony there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he had been. Dan Evans hated him. That's the reason he got such rotten publicity; it was prompted by the Republican Party. All these vicious things that were said in the Seattle papers. The Seattle Times called me and were asking some questions and I said, "How dare you beat on him! He's one of the really truly great innovative legislators we've had." And I said, "When he was eighty-five years old he was chairing this multiple-purpose committee and doing a great job for the people of the state."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was very dedicated. You mention his civil rights advocacy, as well.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, and care for animal rights as well as financial institutions, just a whole range of issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He chaired that combination committee: Financial Institutions, Commerce and Insurance. All three – a huge committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that was quite a complicated thing. He had professional experience in that field; that helped.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was also on the State Investment Board. He was a good investor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this one of the joyful things you get to do as a senator? Honor your colleague?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was fun. And he wasn't there when we did the resolution, because he'd already been demeaned terribly by the news papers and other media. I had it framed, had them for dinner and gave it to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of painful. But it sounds like lots of people stood up for him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was. And he'll never come back. He won't come back to the state.

It was in-between interims and he'd built the house because he was going to retire in Hawaii and the paper took him on. And we didn't have any meetings – we had several monthly committee meetings, but people didn't come to those. He saw that his people were taken care

of; he had his office staffed and they were taken care of.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, they really went after that residency issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, residency. Well, I think that anybody with any historic background – I know that Al Bauer took his part and really was offended by it, and Sid Snyder. You know, we were all offended by what the papers were doing to him. And they didn't get any quotes from any of us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It definitely got ugly. It was tragic after such a long and dedicated career.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did. Tragic and he believed in what he advocated. He ran as a Republican and couldn't be elected several times and then he ran as a Democrat several times and finally he was elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He certainly had the desire.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. He wanted to be a legislator and he was a very good legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many years?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, he only served about ten, I think, didn't he? Or maybe twelve, three terms. He came in at the same time that Phil Talmadge did. Was that in '81?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was 1979.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But he would never eat in the Senate cafeteria because he couldn't stand Peter von Reichbauer. He said he couldn't stand to look at him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I took Ray to lunch one morning and I said, "Well, Peter doesn't eat there very often." And he said, "Well, there's a chance that he might, I'm never coming." He wasn't going to eat there. Neither he nor Phil ever ate in the Senate cafeteria.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a very strong aversion! Where did they go?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They went out to a restaurant or ate an apple in their office because they didn't have time to go out. Never ate in the cafeteria.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe he needed a break from it all. He was certainly a hard-

working person. That is the end of an era for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was there for four terms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the Senate is a little more stable than the House? People stay longer?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Senate is more deliberative. And they have been through so many bad bills coming from the House that have been sponsored year after year after year. And we know them because we've been through it. And we know the bills that have ripple effects that would be dynamite! And so we kill them and then we get screams from the other House saying, "They killed my bill!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are always screams of anguish, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And agony, and it was such a bad bill that we just roll our eyes and say, "It's another one."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you have had longer terms so perhaps you do have that different perspective.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there is more of a sense of camaraderie there. And if it's a bill that needs to pass, we see to it that it passes. There's not as much rancor. There may be now, but there didn't used to be. There's cunning there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose! That's not, of course, everything you did that year, but those are some of the highlights.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, a lot of things that I did was because there was a lot of help. You don't do anything in a vacuum in the Legislature; you've got to be a person whose word is good, you've got to be a person who has built trust, although not all people trusted me. Some people thought I was cunning, not always. I always told them what I was doing. I never tried to hide anything. The whole Senate knew what I was doing when we did that to Art Wang, the whole Senate knew it. It wasn't any secret. But nobody talked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps not to him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody talked. And I didn't do it to him to hurt him; I did it because I was right!

## CHAPTER 25: "I'M NOT TAKING THIS," 1995

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The 1994 election was – I don't really want to call it a watershed year – but it's one of those turning points where the country – the national election, I'm speaking of here – takes a turn, to the right, in this case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we got a lot of right wingers in that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was the election when Newt Gingrich's program and presence was so dominant. His "Contract with America" was widely discussed. It seemed to permeate a lot of the discussion about issues and about people's feelings about the country, about government.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got creamed. He did more damage to the country than has ever been done, I believe, by his "Contract with America."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a fairly harsh analysis of what had been the norm in government for generations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was harsh and it was unyielding and it was a lie.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or from the other perspective, it was righteous and cleansing. Depending on how you want to look at it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It distorted the truth, but they wouldn't tell you that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the result was a huge Republican gain that set back the Democratic administration of President Clinton. That had national significance, of course, but it also played in the states. We had our own version in Washington State.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We nearly lost the majority. We got it back two years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you still had a one-vote majority, so your lead was narrowed there by quite a bit. But the House went Republican that year by a wide margin. You lost three seats in the Senate and then in the House it was almost a complete flip-flop. There had been sixty-five Democrats to thirty-three Republicans and it flipped to sixty-one Republicans, thirty-seven

Democrats. That was a huge wave of people, new people, as well as a change in outlook. As well as the election changes, over the course of that session, two Democratic House members also switched parties and became Republicans: Tom Campbell at the end of January and Dave Mastin in July. So their numbers gained even more. I don't know if they had a change of heart or just saw which way the wind was blowing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Campbell was challenged by Senator Rasmussen as not living in the district, as I remember. And she started challenging him and then he ran against her the next time but lost. Or he threatened to – I don't remember. But I know that he changed parties and she was angry at him anyway because he didn't live in the district, but he had an old run-down house there that he claimed he lived in. And it was all kind of weird and, of course, he never got challenged. I don't remember whether he was challenged in the court and whether he won or what, but he remained in office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He still serves.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that may be part of the reason he changed, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At any rate, it added to the power of the Republicans in the House. Washington had its own "Contract with Washington," brought in by Clyde Ballard who was the new Speaker and was promoting a similar type of philosophy. In fact, when he was nominated for Speaker, Representative Van Luven refers to him as "Clyde 'Little Newt' Ballard" right in his nominating speech. And in his acceptance speech, Ballard spoke at length about how "the Washington people have spoken." He saw his election as a mandate. He claimed that the Republicans knew what the public wanted and that they'd heard the message. Then he spoke about his "Contract with Washington State" to mirror the national contract. So there was really quite a new context for legislation that year, given that background, and your one-vote majority in the Senate. Also,

it was the last year of his term for Governor Mike Lowry – was he considered a lame duck?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had some difficulties, some allegations made against him and that almost destroyed him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the Democrats in the Senate feeling like they had to hold the line, or that their position was precarious? What was the talk in the caucus about how you were going to manage this session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Since we had the Governor's office, I don't think we felt quite as threatened as we might have felt, because there was always the ability to go to him if a bill we considered bad did finally pass, we could at least talk to him about a partial veto or a veto. Not that he would always agree, but there was always the possibility. So I don't think the Senate had its ego threatened. I don't believe that truly, although I think that we were careful and I think that we all considered – we didn't talk about this – but I think every one of us carefully considered anything we sponsored with the knowledge that it might not get through the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly many of your bills failed in the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct. And unless we had a burning desire and need for a bill, I don't think that a lot of us were involved in sponsoring legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it would have a dampening effect then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very, very.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You might still be fighting hard for the legislation you were putting forward, but you were more conservative, perhaps, in what you're putting out there? Pulling in a bit?



*Congratulations offered upon election as President Pro Tempore while being escorted to the rostrum by Senators George Sellar and Marc Gaspard*

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think that anything that we did – at least I tried – to get Republicans to co-sponsor. In order to give it some hope of passing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even more than usually?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not more than usual, but I was careful about what I sponsored. I've always been fairly careful about what I sponsored, but even more so. But I've always tried to get Republican sponsorship of my legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, the level of rhetoric went up. So I wondered what kind of climate that would be. Democrats were definitely under attack. The language being tossed around seemed much sharper, much edgier, kind of angry-sounding in a lot of cases, a little bit more punitive in tone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** More so than before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was noticeably anti-government. The way people were talking about government was quite different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Between what Gingrich did and the right-wing problems that we'd been having, it didn't help. And it was beginning to get worse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, when we look at health care issues on the national level, there was a failure of the Democratic program.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We worked so hard to get the health care bill passed and then it got ripped up and torn asunder. We were just beginning to see some competition among health care providers and we were beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel and then it was all destroyed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, so we'll need to look at that. At the opening of session, you were re-elected as President Pro Tem for your second term. You still had Marc Gaspard as your majority leader and Sid Snyder as your caucus chair. And you had several women – three – in supporting positions: Harriet Spanel, Valoria Loveland, and Betti Sheldon, and Michael Heavey and Cal Anderson as assistants to the floor leader and whip.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And a lot of the legislation might have gotten through – had Cal Anderson lived. It was kind of sad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was his last year, wasn't it? He was already ill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he was gone a lot of the time. So that we didn't have the votes. And that was another reason we were very cautious about sponsorship of legislation. The Senate tends to be more cautious anyway because most of us are more experienced. Most of the members have served in the House in the past, know the legislation that is passed over – what is bad legislation – and can pick it out. And that was another reason for the House to get angry with us, because they would send over legislation that had been sent over before in past years which had ripple effects that were bad, of which the Senate was aware and so dropped it. That created animosity, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you're killing their bills and they're killing yours?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And we were killing their bills because they were bad bills, believe me! Well, anyway, and they were killing our bills out of retribution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be kind of a low point in your relations?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, we'll see what happens. Just to set the stage here, you had four committee assignments. You are the vice-chair of Health and Long Term Care, the vice-chair of Rules, of course, and you were on the Labor, Commerce and Trade Committee, and Ways and Means.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A full load. I also was on the Government Operations Committee, which is an administrative committee that meets, not too often, but it's a responsible committee and selected by leadership to serve on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they would be the people who would make things run smoothly? One of the first openers of the session, besides certifying the election, is to give note of what initiatives have passed and this seemed to set the stage for the tone of the session that year. There was an initiative that year to the Legislature



*Addressing the Senate from the rostrum as President Pro Tempore with Lieutenant Governor Joel Pritchard listening in the background*



which passed, Initiative 159, called “Hard Time for Armed Crime,” sponsored by a group called the Washington Citizens for Justice. It increased penalties for armed crime and expanded which crimes were under that umbrella. There was going to be no early release for good time, and sentences were not going to be served concurrently, so there would be a lot more jail time for certain types of crime. Repeat offenders would be given double the sentences. And the sentencing was going to be tracked and analyzed more closely to see what kind of decisions judges were making and their decision-making was going to be more controlled.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were narrower definitions of what judges could do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** More stringent. We always permitted judges to go beyond the sentencing range or below the sentencing range if there were mitigating or extenuating circumstances, provided they enunciated their reasons for voiding the sentencing structure in writing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that was tightening up even more.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But they were going to review that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of this measure also said that gang-related drive-by shootings – if someone died – could earn the death penalty. I’m not sure if that was a controversial part...

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s become controversial because if there is a drive-by shooting and a person doesn’t die, although the perpetrator may have been given a life sentence, now that’s being challenged in the courts. It was challenged and found to be unconstitutional and thrown out. That’s recent. There would be no intent to kill, in other words.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There had been several gun control measures proposed the previous session. And the “Three Strikes” law had been passed, so was this just more and more effort to get control of these violent crimes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think it was a hysterical approach.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hysteria about crime?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think there was hysteria out there over crimes being committed and because of the Gingrich “Contract with America,” where he talked about safety; they were going to make everybody “safe” by putting everybody else who was slightly tainted in prison.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a lot of prisons.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We swing back and forth in this state. It’s really bad. Under Governor Evans we were slowly arriving at more sanity, I believe, in assessing prison terms and looking beyond and finding mitigating circumstances. That sort of turned around and I think the consideration of mitigating circumstances sort of disappeared, if not entirely, at least partially. And in the Legislature, because of the press, it was becoming more and more conservative. And active against crime. I don’t know how bad – it’s hard to really know, sitting in a policy position, what occurs in a courtroom. And I don’t think it’s ever been explained or made very clear, and unless a person were a trial lawyer witnessing this every day, the Legislature couldn’t possibly know what went on and where we may have been a little relaxed at one time, it was totally turned around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are people feeling that scared and desperate that they are just grabbing for solutions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know that they were, but the Legislature thinks they are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This initiative passed. So a certain amount of the public seemed to agree with this position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they thought they were. And a lot of that I could very easily blame on the actions of the mass media in order to sell newspapers or to draw attention to a television news broadcast, you know. And some newspapers have the reputation of being more prone to this. They call it “yellow journalism,” or I call it that. It is called that. So, it hasn’t helped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was the opening act in the Legislature. You were presented with this issue and it's some kind of statement. And there were a slate of bills to do with guns and gangs and that sort of thing. There was one which proposed a one-year expulsion from school for carrying guns on to school grounds. You were not in favor of this. This supposedly matched a federal program called "Gun-Free Schools Act." Obviously, we do not want kids to bring guns to school and that's a very scary thought, but is it an okay idea to then expel the student from school for a whole year? They will probably never come back and then there's no one paying attention to what they are doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There have been instances since then in which principals have had their hands forced by this particular idea. And what if a child brought a gun that wasn't loaded? Or what if he picked it up on the way to school, found it and brought it? There can always be a circumstance where this would not follow that they should be expelled for a year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This law would punish them, but not give them any help. And if they are angry to begin with, this probably wouldn't help that. I was troubled by this idea of kids adrift and wanted to hear how you saw it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What if they'd been bullied – because if they were bullied – we're getting into that now, the bullying in schools, and that has come about because of this bill, probably. So from something bad comes something good. But I couldn't agree with the approach being used.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you see this measure as grabbing for easy solutions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** To difficult problems. I don't remember whether we tied into the federal law, whether the law passed. We would have to follow it, of course, if it did. So I don't really know. I would know that it has occurred since then and people have been struggling to find answers because of that. There's got to be a middle ground.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several bills of that nature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can imagine all kinds of things happening if a first or second-grader brought a gun to school without his parents' knowledge as a show-and-tell. It can happen. Little guys don't have the maturity to know the difference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They might think it's neat or something?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, of course. Or if they've been bullied. That's the reason I think women tend to be leveling influences in any kind of a body. Because most women have been mothers. And usually nothing happens if it's ever happened to a policymaker and her family. They know what happens when such-and-such is done and they tend to be a little bit more discriminating and thoughtful. If anyone could just put before themselves the question: Except by the grace of God, there go I, it would help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That does kind of change the picture. There was a lot of concern about what people were calling "out of control teenagers." One of the biggest bills that session was dubbed the "Becca Bill."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was never properly funded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was quite a complicated bill. You were one of the original co-sponsors of Senate Bill 5439; the short title is "Revising Procedures for Non-offender At-Risk Youth and Their Families." This bill apparently grew out of a tragic event in which a runaway girl was murdered and her parents had been trying to get her to come home and had no recourse, no way of doing that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. She was killed in Spokane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The bill went through quite a few changes and had a lot of different provisions. Senator Hargrove took the lead. A substitute bill was eventually introduced and came out of Ways and Means and there were all kinds of amendments and action on this bill. I don't know if you recall the discussion or what exactly happened because you started as a co-sponsor and in the end you voted against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They hung on an amendment, I think, making the schools responsible and assessing a cost, I don't remember. I remember the argument! It was so fallacious that I couldn't stand the bill. It got worse and worse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they changed the substance of it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They changed the substance. They added amendments and I can't remember the details of it, but I do remember the one thing that caught Rosemary McAuliffe's attention was where they were going to assess a fee against the schools against recalcitrant youth. And I don't know how they were doing it – making them pay – I don't remember, but it was very bad. We fought that, but we lost. That was an amendment added in committee, which was not the Education Committee. So as Education chair, of course, Senator McAuliffe was adamantly opposed to it. And the bill raised questions from other committee chairs that became a part of the bill, as I remember. And I ended up voting against it. Besides that, we did not fund it properly. Massachusetts attempted the same thing, but they put an adequate funding on it and it was working back there, but we never have adequately funded it, even since then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were going to be these facilities called "crisis residential centers" where you were supposed to be able to take runaways if you couldn't take them home. Say, if there was abuse or some kind of problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then you'd charge the parents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then the parents were going to be charged fifty dollars a day; could many of these parents afford that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the first place, if they couldn't control their child and had thrown them out, they wouldn't be willing to pay that. I don't know how they could get out from under it because legally they are responsible. But you throw them in prison because you can't get them to pay? I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like an escalating "solution" here. First of all, police officers are

required to take a runaway child back to his or her parents' home as the first alternative, but if the parents don't want the child in the home...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then they pay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They could take them to this crisis residential center. A process was established to create these places, but as you say, they weren't properly funded. They were supposed to create plans for these children. They were supposed to assess their situation. The police were supposed to compile a lot of this information. DSHS was involved to see if the child had prior records with them or their siblings. That was kind of interesting, perhaps to see if the family was a troubled one? The Department was supposed to create multi-disciplinary teams to assist families in assessment evaluation and referral to services.

**Sen. Wojahn:** All of these things require funding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. Nowhere does anyone seem to be asking the question why the child ran away in the first place. Most children, from what I've read, run because they have abusive family situations. So, having the parents that closely involved...

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if the child had been abused and ran away from home and wouldn't go back and the parent was going to be charged for housing that child, they wouldn't pay. It wasn't very well thought out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to address the family's point of view, rather than the child's, which contradicts some of the other work that you'd been doing to put the child at the center. There were a lot of provisions; it's very complicated. "The age at which a child may be admitted for involuntary treatment upon application of the parent" – that was an interesting piece – was raised from age thirteen to eighteen. "Consent of the child is not required." How would that work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The whole thing is that because of one family having a terrible problem, we go into this with that in mind, to try to change the whole world.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, it was tragic. And pulled at your heart strings.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course, there's no question about that. And the Judicial Council had taken this up before when I was on it and we finally withdrew and let it go because we couldn't solve it. I was on a subcommittee to try to work that out and that was several years before all this occurred. And we couldn't come up with any kind of a resolution to the thing. In the first place, when is a child mature enough to make his own decisions? We couldn't even come up with the answer to that. Which is a simple question. Was it sixteen years old; is that the age of reason? Is it thirteen? With some kids it might be thirteen, some kids it might be sixteen, some kids it might be eighteen or twenty. And we finally threw up our hands and said, "We can't do it." And I'll never forget that. That's the reason I've been so super cautious in any of these proposals that are out there. That's maybe the reason I went on the bill to try to ferret some sanity out of it. But then it got so bad that I would have withdrawn my name had I been able to. But after the bill's printed, you can't get your name off. But that doesn't matter; you can stay on there, but vote no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which you did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Great sections of the bill were vetoed by Governor Lowry.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a punitive approach and it didn't take into consideration the best interest of the child. They are still children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed so different in kind and character from bills which you had just passed and discussions you had just had. So, it took a leap in some other direction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I guess we were all trying to accommodate some of the ideas coming out of the House and we floundered and as a result of that we were on bad bills or bills that became worse as they went through the amendatory process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The issue of runaway children is a huge social problem and needed some

attention. Whether this bill actually helped that issue, you seemed to change your mind.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You know, the League of Women Voters took up the study of that, too, during the years I was involved and we couldn't resolve anything. It's an insoluble thing. There are too many variables why they do it and we often don't listen to the reason of why they do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a big study by the State Bar, entitled "The Becca Bill, Is the Cure Worse Than the Disease?" And they, in the end, didn't like this bill either. This was written a couple of years after it had passed. They'd had time to study it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The reason the Bar Association, I think, found it faulty was it was not properly funded. There was no way that anybody could do all these things that were demanded in the bill without additional funding and a lot clearer thinking.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you don't follow your good intentions with dollars, it doesn't work out?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Famous last words of the Legislature!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Seven of you chose to vote against it. But it passed, of course.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that a lot of us attempted to either kill amendments that were offered or to reason with the sponsors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was certainly worked over. It had a lot of different amendments and different attempts to reshape it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that the inexperience of some House members didn't help. And the punitive actions of some senators. And some "go along to get along." When the ripple effects of a bill are worse than the bill itself, then it's not worth passing, no matter who sponsors it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were more successful in one of your next attempts which was a bill to improve screening for fetal alcohol syndrome. Bit by bit, you were beginning to address this, another painful and difficult issue. When I was reading about the background of this bill, I was

surprised to learn that there was only one facility in the whole state which did this testing. It was at the UW and had a very limited caseload and that was part of the problem. Nobody understood the scope of the problem because there just weren't the facilities to deal with it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody dealt with it! These children often were put up for adoption because they were from mothers who were irresponsible. And we didn't know the damage that was done. People adopted these kids and found out that when they got into their teens, they were amoral. They couldn't be taught right from wrong. And innocently, one of them ended up being locked in a department store overnight. He hadn't done anything wrong; he just didn't know how to get out. He went to the toy department and went to sleep. It was one of the incidents. They were going to put him in jail for a felony, but he didn't know any better. And this actually happened! And he was a fetal alcohol child. These are the funny things that tear at your heart strings.

Then after it got through the University of Washington study, they found out that they could identify at birth a child who was fetal alcohol-prone. It was the way their eyes were set. And there was something about their facial features; they can tell. Pinched through their eyes, that's what I was told. One of the gals who really worked hard on that was a legislator from around Port Townsend, or that area. She had adopted a fetal alcohol child. She worked on a lot of these things. She was a House member, Sue Karahalios from District Ten. We worked together. We amended one of our bills onto her bill because we didn't get it passed. And I remember a staff attorney, Bernie Ryan, telling me it was so far out of the scope and object it would never pass. There was about three pages of it and I said, "Well, get it ready for me; I'm going to offer it anyway." I offered it and it passed! The House adopted it. And that was on fetal alcohol. I don't remember whether it was further study on the issue or what it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This bill was to get more clinics and also public education on the issue.

So that if you lived in eastern Washington you wouldn't have to travel all the way to Seattle to get this screening. That there would be clinics around the state so that you could get some help. Apparently, the UW Clinic only took a few people and there were large numbers of people needing this service.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We under-funded this, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People were undiagnosed and therefore untreated?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't treat them. That's the part that's so sad about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least if you're diagnosed, you'd have some answers and some sense of what's going on, whereas if your child is just suffering and you don't know why, I would think that would be much harder.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And these were usually parents of adopted children who got caught.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More health care issues: the big bill coming out of the House, 1046, was the one you had the most work on. As you alluded to earlier, it repeals much of the 1993 Health Services Act. So years of effort in building are now going backwards? Again, a very complicated bill. Maybe you can help me step through it a bit. It replaced the Health Services Commission with the Health Care Policy Board.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I fought that. It was a non-paid position and had no authority to do anything except make recommendations, which are worse than nothing. And people don't even read their annual report. Legislators don't read it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a big indication. I noticed in the part of the bill which talks about the Health Care Policy Board that the verbs were – as you say, "to make recommendations, review rules, or develop a survey." But there's no regulatory function there; it's just kind of a watch on what's going on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are toothless. It was just an attempt to respond to the commission and get the bill passed. I don't think they had ever any intention of ever doing these things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why did they want to gut the 1993 act and replace it with this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because some small employers didn't like it. It was a business-oriented movement against health care. And all the conservative Republicans were with them – and a lot who weren't so conservative. The 1993 act had been developed by the Senate, by Phil Talmadge. That commission had done wonders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was still in the early stages of operation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were a very thoughtful board. They were up and going, they were taking the brunt – they were kind of the lightning rod for the Legislature. We didn't have to take the heat over their decisions; they were taking the heat for their own decisions and it was a very strong board. And because it was going to hit employers, it got killed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any way that you could have staved this off?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The only way we could have saved a portion of it would have been to keep the commission so they could at least keep doing their work and bringing it to the attention of the Legislature and the public. Because they could go public with the problem. The staff person was the son of one of the Superior Court judges in Seattle. And it was working. They were holding public hearings throughout the state so that this was being taken in, so that we knew what the people wanted. They knew the limitations that they could go through. They knew the potential of the finality of the bill when it ever got into full swing, and was fully developed. And they knew the hazards and they were doing an incredibly good job. And that was all tossed out, all their work. They were paid a good salary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did the House overwhelm the Senate and the Governor with this bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because the Democratic chairman in the Senate was afraid of the Republicans. Quigley was the chair of the committee at that time – a freshman senator who

took over that committee, who didn't understand what he was doing. He rewrote the bill every other day, I understand, and had the staff standing on its ears trying to keep up with him. And the whole thing was in turmoil. I managed to maintain the commission in committee. I asked for a vote and I was vice-chair and I totally underhanded him. You know, I did it! It was right! And I won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were you fighting with him over this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he would come out with different versions and you would do what?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I tried to retain what we had; we retained the commission. That's the one thing we had when the bill went from committee to Rules and onto the floor of the Senate. And then he voted with the Republicans to remove the commission and then we had nothing left. He did it because he said they were going to go to initiative against the bill if we did not take action ourselves and I said, "Well, let them go to initiative. I don't think it will pass. Let them do this." Well, he could see the election going bad again for the Senate; you know, he may have had his reasons. I'm sure he did, but I don't consider them very good reasons and when it went to the floor of the Senate, he up-ended us. And some Democrats went with him. There was no point in getting up and even talking because it wouldn't have done any good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did people feel this was...

**Sen. Wojahn:** They felt it went too far.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, strangely enough, a middle ground? Did they feel that the alternative was even worse?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't even think about that. He kept saying, "Well, if we do this, nobody will be able to buy any private health insurance anymore. Unless they belong to a group, they won't be able to get it." He screamed about that, but then he voted to remove the commission and eventually voted against the bill, to repeal the whole Health Services Act. So a handful of us voted to maintain, to keep it. I mean, voted

against the repeal. But I'll never forget. And then he didn't run again. He ran for something else, Congress, I guess, I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a long, complicated bill. There was a list of the elements from the 1993 Act that are terminated or repealed: the Washington Health Services Commission and its powers and duties; employer and individual mandates – I'm not sure what that is – the maximum premium on the cap on what you were to pay; maximum enrollee and financial participation – all these things were done away with. Mandatory managed care requirement, statutory limitation on the Legislative Uniform Benefits Package, the approval process...they're all repealed. This was quite drastic. Uniform benefits package and community rating. Doesn't that keep the costs low?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Community rating was the most needed part of that bill because it's the only way to control costs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anti-trust provisions, point-of-service cost sharing, small business assistance program – I was surprised that that got thrown out – health service information system, ERISA waiver request, registered employer health plan...

**Sen. Wojahn:** The whole bill was destroyed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Premium depository for part-time workers, seasonal workers' benefits, and limited dental health plan. That pretty much guts it. I couldn't think of what could be left if you took all those things out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were just a few pieces left which were repealed the next year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know how hard you worked to get the original bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We never got the waivers we needed from the Feds, but we were still awaiting them. We knew it couldn't possibly go into final effect until about 2005, but we were working toward that by degrees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So from your point of view, was this a giant step backwards?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your newsletter – one of the phrases that rings through it all through this year of 1995, is "We're still fighting. I don't intend to give up. I'm not taking this."

**Sen. Wojahn:** We fought every step of the way. But when it got to the floor of the Senate, there wasn't any point in fighting it. You could filibuster, but it wouldn't do any good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a dark day for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard. You've now been in the Senate long enough to see your work go backwards as well as forwards.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd seen that in the House though, but this was devastating. At the same time they were crucifying the President's wife who really had adopted the Washington State bill. That was the bill that she was pushing and it would have worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if we'll ever know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We never will. One thing we do know that it was working as far as prices were concerned, as far as competition. And that's what you had to do to establish some degree of competition out there; otherwise you wouldn't have any way to control costs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had caps and you had community rating.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Community rating is absolutely essential. One of the doctors in Tacoma who testified or talked with me on the side, he said, "It won't work without community rating." I'll never forget Dr. Whitney telling me this. "It will not work."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In one of those "I told you so" situations by the very next year, the loss of pooling in the community rating was analyzed and it was found that there was a thirty-four percent premium increase for policy holders of Pierce County Medical. When you took away community rating, their premiums went sky-high.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is true. We knew that without community rating, the price would be so

bad the people couldn't afford them. That's the reason we insisted. Pierce County Medical didn't want community rating. The original bill gave them a reason to do it. I still believe that it would have worked. And if you consider health care as essential – as a human right – it would be tough to not accept community rating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also Senate Bill 5386, that you co-sponsored, the short title being: Modifying Provision of the Basic Health Plan. It's by the request of the Health Care Authority. The Basic Health Plan offers subsidized coverage for individuals whose incomes are below two-hundred percent of the federal poverty level. I think what it does is expand the enrollment of the Basic Health Plan.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was requested. You always sponsor that kind of request because it's an improvement on what we have. It was put in probably before, at least pre-filed or put in the first or second day of the session, to make some corrections in the existing health benefits bill. They are technical amendments and things that need to be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. There was another little health care bill which you co-sponsored that, again, tweaks how people get their health care. It required that health plans must allow women a choice of primary care providers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's so that OB-GYNs could become primary providers. Women often don't go to anyone but the OB-GYN. I didn't like the bill; I didn't think it was a great bill, but, as a woman, I said yes. I felt that they probably needed a family practice physician or internist, especially for the purposes of HMOs and this bill would allow OB-GYNs to be the primary care providers and do the necessary referrals. But I did not like it. Let's put it as bluntly as that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were in kind of a gray area? So it makes it a little easier for some people to get referrals?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was in six-and-sevens on that one. Some women never go to any other doctor except their OB-GYN. But an OB-GYN would

not be able to determine if you had a problem with your thyroid gland, I don't think. You know, that's the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The bills talks about "gatekeepers" to the system. Just getting people in the door?

**Sen. Wojahn:** OB-GYNs as a gatekeeper rather than a general practitioner or an internist, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So even if you started with that specialist, you could still go elsewhere, but at least it would get you into the system?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we should permit that to anybody to have that right. It doesn't seem that you should just give it to OB-GYNs. That if a person was going to an endocrinologist and the endocrinologist knew it was out of his area of specialization, he should be able to refer them to somebody else. So that was a dumb bill. See, what I did was to establish a gatekeeper, which you had to go through in order to get treatments by other doctors. And some of them wouldn't recommend even though they knew that the person needed specialized help; because of the cost they wouldn't recommend them. They were in the pockets of the insurers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps that's a different issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** With that going on, in reality, it never could work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One bill you that actually pushed through the Senate, but it failed in the House – and there was a whole series of these that we'll talk about – was your "marital warning" bill, Senate Bill 5124.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, it passed the Senate about three times or four times; by the fifth time they refused to pass it again, but I didn't blame them. You know, they'd been through it and that was the one the House absolutely stomped its foot and said "no!" I got a lousy, rotten editorial in the Tribune as though I had a half a brain and the Times, I think, did the same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there was one good editorial on it. They explained it quite well.



**Sen. Wojahn:** The Spokesman Review liked it. They loved it. I had a long talk with the editor of the Spokesman Review.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody understood it. The paper I was thinking of was The Olympian; they liked it, too. They described it: “The bill revises the wording of marriage license applications to say that people who get married don’t become each other’s property and cannot be abused by their partners. Senate Bill 5124, sponsored by Senator Lorraine Wojahn of Tacoma, was approved thirty-three to sixteen. Most of the ‘no’ votes were Republicans raising questions about the measure’s prospects in the GOP-dominated House.” And it gave the exact wording: “Neither you nor your spouse is the property of the other,” the applications would be amended to read. “The laws of this state affirm your right to enter into marriage and at the same time to live within the marriage free from violence and abuse.” On what grounds were people against this? They just thought it was...

**Sen. Wojahn:** ...thought it was silly!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not important?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not important and that it was silly and yet it was brought up by the American Medical Association Alliance – which is made up of the wives of doctors – at a national level. And they passed it on down. And the president of the Pierce County Medical Society was on the Commission Against Domestic Violence, on which I served. There were twelve of us. And there was a doctor on there, Dr. Law, and he approved it and it passed the Pierce County Medical Association. As we did the bill, I got the approval of the Commission Against Domestic Violence through the efforts of the wife of one of the physicians who was on the Commission. They came down and lobbied for it. And the Washington State Medical lobbied, but the House refused to listen to anybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are pretty big guns. Normally that works.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I accused the Washington State Medical of not pushing it hard enough. Pierce County was pushing it and the doctor, Dr. Law

– his son was a page of mine at one time, nice people – he was president of the Pierce County Medical Association. But they came to me with the bill; it was not my idea. The request came through the Commission on Domestic Violence, along with the support of all of these other people. That’s the one where the woman, who was president of the Alliance – on the national level – of the American Medical Association, was from Roseburg, Oregon and she’s the one who, when I was on the trip by ship to Turkey and the Greek Isles, sat at my table.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Small world!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Small world! I couldn’t believe it. They didn’t get on the cruise the first day. They had flown in to London and were going to pick up the ship en route and so they came about the third night that the ship was out. The people at the table with whom we were sitting was the sister of this doctor from Roseburg, Oregon. Her husband was an American airline pilot and Frances North, the former legislator, and I were sitting at the same table with them. They said that her brother and sister-in-law were going to be sitting at our table but they hadn’t arrived yet. And they told me he was a doctor, but they didn’t say where he was from. So when they sat down at the table and they introduced us all, they introduced this doctor and they said “from Roseburg, Oregon,” and I said, “Well, it’s good to meet you. I’m Lorraine Wojahn, sponsor of your bill.” It was just a riot! And she promised to come up the next year and testify for it, but it didn’t get that far.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is something! Now, would you actually have gone over to the House and tried to meet with members and lobby this bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I went over and testified. Well, it never got a hearing. I called people. I called this legislator whom I knew and who I thought would be sympathetic and would support the bill.

A school teacher, Kathy Lambert. I thought she would understand, but she didn’t. She never bad-mouthed it, but she refused to help. I’ll never forget it. I talked to my own District

members of the House and they were helpful, but they didn't have the votes, you know. The woman in the House who fought the marital notification was Suzette Cooke; she was chair of the committee. And she managed to blindfold several people – Democrats – they didn't know what she was doing. But she fought that right down to the wire. And this was the kind of thing that people like the Speaker of the House would think was silly. Just like they believed that children should be put back in their home, regardless of what was happening in their home. You know. They didn't believe there was such a thing as domestic violence and so, of course, would never respond to a need for preventive legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that the message was put on the application for marital licenses in Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, what we did then when we couldn't get it at the state level, the Commission went before the county auditor, Cathy Pearsall, and asked her to add it to her marriage license applications. Which she did! It actually should go on the health certificate. The County Council was very supportive and gave money for the Commission on Domestic Violence to function here in Pierce County.

You know, that that created so much national attention. I had calls from Canada; I had calls from ABC and from CBS, and Dan Rather's program, Sixty Minutes. I went on national television. They came and got me in a limousine and took me to Seattle and put me on with somebody debating me. I never even saw the program. It was dumb because nothing happened. Several states did pass the bill, but we didn't. We would have been the second state to have passed it if it had passed. I think probably most states have done it by now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it will come up again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it didn't as far as I was concerned. Nobody else was willing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were Democrats in the House just completely cowed by their small numbers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so because you have to remember that they had been led before by a strong leader who made them do what he wanted – the fellow from Vancouver, Joe King, the former Speaker of the House. And they were like lemmings; they just followed him, regardless. And so I don't think any of them had ever exercised their initiative because he did it for them, believe it or not. Everything depends on where their hearts are and their ethics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another bill of yours that died in the House that session. I was surprised that this one wouldn't fly because it was really about parental responsibility. In Senate Bill 5375, you proposed the suspending or revoking about seventy different kinds of professional licenses to enforce child support orders. It put some teeth into enforcement of child custody payments by holding up renewal of professional licenses for nonpayment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, that was my idea. Way a long time before it ever passed. I never did get that. But the Congress picked it up on it. And even after that the House fought it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does go national, yes. You had quite a bit of literature saying that it had worked in other states. Maine was one of your examples.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When I first sponsored it and Talmadge was chairing, he was the second sponsor and he didn't push it. I thought it was a great idea because – usually – professionals are able to hide their money. They would put it in a separate account and it couldn't be touched by a garnishment. And so we knew there was money out there held by professionals which we weren't able to get. Massachusetts had a bill and they had dropped it in and I got wind of it. I researched it and dropped the same bill – a similar bill – into our Legislature. The Massachusetts bill passed, but they didn't have any experience with it and then Maine picked it up about four years later and they collected \$50 million the first year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, quite astonishing numbers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was incredible! And so that's when I went back and extracted this bill that had been in and then dropped and brought it back and I fought for it. And I got it through the Senate all the time, but the House would drop it on its ear. Never could get it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The piece that interested me is that it was just simply the threat of this, that hardly anyone lost their license, but the money would come pouring in under the threat of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right, under the threat of it. And I told them that. You see, they are big business; they are the people who hide their money. Tell me about it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought "family-value" people would support this as it helps keep people off welfare. You called this "welfare reform at its best." That people should pay for their own children.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they are the family-value people, but they're really not so. They are for big business – and this is a business issue and it became an issue that you don't do this to anybody. It isn't "nice." Well, so what? The child is going hungry or the child is not well clothed, or the child is getting no money at all. And most of the people wouldn't be on welfare if they had been able to get child support.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Especially if their parents are professionals. Well, it just dies. Here was another one, Senate Bill 5350, that actually just makes the regulation of day care enrollment numbers uniform for unincorporated areas as well as cities. They have different regulations for different areas?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got that through and then it was stopped. We had a bill to expand day care enrollment in both counties and cities, and the cities and counties association had given up and said, "Okay, you can do it." Well, Mary Margaret Haugen, in the House, from a rural area didn't want it, so she knocked the counties out of the bill language when she chaired the committee in the House. We tried to get it back. Later, I was presiding in the Senate one day when this bill came up and Marc Gaspard and

Mary Margaret came up and said, "Please let this bill go" and that Mary Margaret would help me the next year to get it out. Well, she never did. And I had to let it go because, as the presiding officer I couldn't speak on it; I would have had to get off the podium to defend the bill or let it go. So I let it go and I should not have. Because it never has been passed. Day care centers still cannot have any rights under the zoning rules of counties and they should be able to. You know, we regulate everything except for garbage disposal and shorelines, and yet we can't pass legislation for childcare, to help children? There has to be something wrong here!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In some of your remarks you said no reason was ever given you, but could you surmise why they would fight this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She did not want to lift the lid on zoning. If they opened it up for day care centers anywhere within their counties, she felt the state was infringing on the counties' right to control land use. If it was a certain zone for housing, they couldn't put a day care center in there. Well, a day care center fits in with a housing area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's where the children are.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And so it made sense. I checked with the counties and I knew that they had said yes, that they would accept that and that it would have to come under the zoning laws of the counties or cities. They could establish one up to twelve children, no more. But they extended the number of kids they could have to ten to twelve, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was twelve.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't hurt anybody except that she took it upon herself to do this in the House, when she was there. I don't know why. Then she came to the Senate and that's when we had the conversation. I put the bill in again and she said that she would do it, but she didn't. So they've never been able to get it as far I know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, you had many other bills that session, some of which were successful. You were able to help Tacoma

rehabilitate some land and expand the UW branch campus so they could support more students.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wanted to buy up all the land they needed before the university went in. All those property owners around there would raise their prices once the campus went in, so we needed to acquire as much land as we thought we were going to need in order to keep the prices stable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you certainly had a busy year. It was a very long session. There were three special sessions. You attended as usual from January to March and then in April you had another special session from April 24 to May 23, almost a month. You had another little quick session for two days in May and then you had another one for two days in October. That's a very controversial one, the October one. It had to do with the financing for what became Safeco Stadium. There had been a proposal put on the ballot in King County in September of that year to work out the financing for the new baseball stadium for the Mariners. When that vote failed, there was quite a scramble. People didn't want to just accept that because there were all kinds of threats from the Mariners that they would leave the state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That always happens. They threatened people to get their way and scare them by forcing the issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It worked, I guess. Governor Lowry called all the members back for an emergency session to deal with this issue. I'm not sure who put it together, but there was a new package to provide financing for the stadium with special lottery ticket sales, increases in King County taxes on restaurants and rental cars and things of that nature. What was that mini session like? It seemed very focused; it was just this one issue, which is highly unusual. Did members feel that this was a true emergency and were willing to come back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, some of them did. They left me alone because I said I wouldn't vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody wanted to call the bluff of the Mariners?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, nobody did. You couldn't have won. No, it was just the persistence of those who wanted the stadium and the push of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, I guess you might say. And I never got into it because I just said, from the start, I wouldn't vote for it. We couldn't take care of the children and the health care of people in the state, so I wasn't going to vote for a stadium, for God's sake. So they left me alone. And I never did get hit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were pretty strong-armed tactics for this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, there was the same campaign all over again with the football stadium, same thing. And I love baseball; I'm a definite fan. And I even got calls from constituents saying, "How could I not vote for that?" They knew I liked baseball and I said, "Well, it's very easy. I have a district with a lot of poor people who won't even be able to afford to go to the stadium. How am I going to vote for a fancy stadium when they have trouble finding the money to feed and take care of their children?" They didn't argue with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there no notion that the Mariners ought to build their own stadium?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, well they have the money. They should; private industry should be able to pay for their own stadium, especially with the selling of seats for beaucoup dollars, you know. They should have paid for it. It should not have been a public issue, in my book. They said it was for economic development; that's the way you get away with a lot of things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering how they framed the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** "Economic development."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Was Governor Lowry also very gung-ho on this? Or did he feel pressured to do this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, probably for both reasons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were only one of sixteen senators who voted against this. Senators Anderson, Bauer, Fairley, Fraser, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Johnson, Loveland, Morton, Owen, Roach, Schow, Strannigan, Swecker, West, and Wojahn voted against the stadium vote. Quite a mixture of Democrats and Republicans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, Republicans and Democrats. Was McDonald on that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, he's not with you. He votes for it. Did you – the ones who voted against it – did you club together in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were just individuals here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, as individuals. We couldn't have clubbed together because we were so far apart on so many other issues, like Strannigan and some of those Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you didn't normally vote with this group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** People from poor districts voted with me – members representing poor districts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you're called back and you're given the pitch. You had two days. It's a high pressure situation with a lot of lobbying.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They didn't lobby me. They may have applied pressure on others.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What I really want to talk about is the fallout from this vote. It's still cited today as a proof that "government doesn't listen to the people," because King County, of course, had turned this down. And it's King County that...

**Sen. Wojahn:** That carried the vote. Van Luven was real big in there, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he was the prime sponsor. What do you make of that? Are people right to be angry about government turning around and voting for something that the voters had rejected?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! If it's gone to the people and they have voted no, then I don't

think that the Legislature has the right to make another policy, to turn that policy around. I just don't think it's right! And it undermines the faith, the confidence of people in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how do you deal with this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You don't. You can't do anything except say, "I told you that they wouldn't like it!" But there's nothing you can do. You don't talk about it because the person that you slam-dunk on this issue, you may need for a vote on one of your bills. You've got to vote for issues based upon the value of the issue or the policy and so you don't challenge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what about the public?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't even challenge people when they didn't vote for the bill to be able to sue for child support. You know, that was a big bill and it should have passed, but I had people voting against it because they felt sorry for the "poor professional guy" who had to pay. The poor guy that had to pay usually was loaded, you know. There's no accounting for people. You learn that fast and some of the people you really like, you find going against you on issues that are so important to you, or so vital, or so needed that you can't figure it out. But gosh, if you got upset, you couldn't last in the Legislature and your bills would die just because of who you were and how you accepted things, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you're in there for the long haul, you just have to look at it differently?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that's true. Except some of these people who voted for that stadium were in for the long haul and yet they still did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's something about baseball that does that to people. Baseball just overrides other considerations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. This one woman who called me was a doctor's wife and I couldn't figure her out. Apparently she hadn't thought it through. Well, there's no greater baseball fan than me. I love baseball! But I love my constituents more. I like people more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did some people thank you for your 'no' vote?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. They still wonder how I voted. Some of them don't even know. I've never voted for anything that I thought subtracted from my main issue of being fair to my constituency. And I can remember telling one of the former bankers here in Tacoma that I wouldn't vote for something for Washington State University that they wanted desperately because I couldn't face my constituents who were without in order to provide funding for this particular issue at the university level. And I said to him, "If you were me, you would do the same thing."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he respect that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. That was when I was a freshman or sophomore. I was green as grass at that time, but I didn't do it. I represented the third largest welfare district in the state. Seattle was the first, Spokane was the second, and I was the third. And I never voted against my people. Ever!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That clarifies some things for people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they got it. They knew what I was talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was kind of the last hurrah for 1995. That was a pretty tough session for you. A lot of your bills got stalled.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and everything was going down the tube fast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You lost ground.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but I don't think I made any enemies! I may have; I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's good. It seemed frustrating – and then the stadium bill to wind up your year. It was not a positive cap for you on top of losing all those other important bills.



## CHAPTER 26: FIGHTING ON, FIGHTING BACK, 1996

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let's start our look at a fresh session, 1996. You still had the one-vote majority in the Senate. It was Speaker Clyde Ballard's second term in the House, leading a substantial Republican majority. You were again President Pro Tem. There were some changes in your own Democratic Senate caucus. Marc Gaspard resigned from the Senate to head the Higher Education Coordinating Board and was replaced in his seat by Calvin Goings. Phil Talmadge had left the year before to go to the Supreme Court. Those were two important leaders gone from your caucus. Sid Snyder became your leader; he moved up from being caucus chair. You have a new person in leadership who's a colleague and a friend of yours, Pat Thibaudeau; she becomes the assistant whip, so she's moving up in the Senate hierarchy. You had quite a few women member leaders again: Valoria Loveland, Harriet Spanel, Betti Sheldon. And Darlene Fairley is now coming into leadership. Michael Heavey was also in a leadership position. The Republicans were still led by Dan McDonald. Were the Senate Republicans still a fairly cohesive group at this point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think there was friction within the caucus over some members and some of the newer Senate members were trying to take over, as I visualize it now. They didn't succeed because Senator McDonald put his foot down at that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a fairly strong leader for them? Was there was jockeying for position, as sometimes happens?

**Sen. Wojahn:** At that time, yes, I believe he was. He was fairly strong. But not as strong as Jeannette Hayner. And they listened pretty much, although he was getting pushed around by some of the newer members, I know that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans, certainly in the House, had a new kind of energy so I wondered if that had rippled through the Senate. Your rate of change is slower than the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we don't change as often. I think that the House was getting ready to point some fingers with the election coming up that year. I think that's the time they sent out these letters, "We think you ought to know..." Or they used other devices. That was a part of the Gingrich crowd doing these dirty tricks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a pretty aggressive campaign. Did your own campaigning style have to change to match this new climate? Was your district pretty safe for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. The only time I went out and actually had a PR person – after my first go-round where I had to go back and get public relations help – was after the Tribune did that dirty editorial against me. That was the next time I ran, and I did pay out some money for public relations help and did spend some money for bushels of stationery which I recently threw out. I never used it. But I felt I had to do it. It was not my money, but I hated to do it; it breaks your heart. Special envelopes were all printed; I could never use them again. But I don't remember ever getting involved in a campaign in another district. If a member was ever on a committee that I chaired, I never attempted to get involved with providing funding against them, as I look back. I stayed out of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just stuck to your own area? Was your area changing in any way? Or were you still pretty solid there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I guess it was after this election that we changed and I acquired a lot of the River Road and parts with almost a Puyallup address, but still in the Twenty-seventh District. And that was done in 1992, I guess. Yes, it changed. After the census in 1990, the districts were changed to compensate for that and I got a lot of new areas in my district. I got a lot of my old district taken away. But I acquired some really good areas around Point Defiance that I hadn't had before. They were strong Republican districts – part of the old Twenty-sixth District – but a lot of them were doctors and



professionals whom I knew and they were all with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be helpful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So it was very strong, but I lost some Democrat districts in the area that had been the Twenty-fifth District, which was Democrat, but red-neck Democrat who didn't vote for me. It's crazy! I picked up Republican professionals, largely. This one friend – a dentist – called and wanted a sign for his yard and when I took it out he said, "I have to get one for my mother-in-law; she won't speak to me again unless I get a sign for her." And then one of my doctors, Dr. Priebe put up a sign. And that was incredible. They all did. I think that whole precinct went for me, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you're one of the beneficiaries of Washington's cross-over voters?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And when I had fundraisers, I had women come in and say, "I'm a Republican, but I'm voting for you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think cross-over voting happens a lot more than we know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so, too. In fact, I remember once when they were talking about sending a member of the caucus over to eastern Washington – this actually happened, someone told me about this, I did not hear it firsthand – but staff was talking about sending someone over to Spokane to help a candidate running against a Republican over there and they got all tangled up and finally someone said, "Why don't you send Wojahn. She dresses like a Republican." She said that! I'll never forget that. I laughed and laughed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe that means you have very nice suits or something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know, but it was someone, obviously, who didn't like me. They did it on purpose! It was nasty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It could be a compliment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it was backhanded, but it was alright. The next time I ran, after that bad editorial, I lost votes. I was getting eighty-four

percent of the votes before that and I dropped down to sixty-six percent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's quite substantial.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know that it hurt me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this be your last election campaign? Did you know that at the time, that you might not campaign again?

**Sen. Wojahn:** 1996 was the last one. I wasn't going to run that year but I got so angry over that editorial that I ran. I really thought about quitting, thinking I'd done just about as much as I could. Well, I'm glad that I didn't, because we got the trauma bill out after that and the Patients' Bill of Rights. And so it was worth doing, but I was seventy-six years old at that point and so I was contemplating quitting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did people question you about your age?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, never. I think the Tribune hit me once on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about yourself? Were you getting a little tired? You'd been doing this for a long time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I wasn't tired, but I did not have as much energy as I had had. And I can see myself slipping a lot more since then. And it may be if I'd stayed, I wouldn't have been as effective. I don't know; you don't know. I felt fine, but I just thought it was time to go. We needed to bring in some new blood and to get some other people started, to learn.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly it's a respectable age to retire.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd been watching Jessie Helms – how awful the old bastard was, you know. And some of those in Congress who were ninety years old. They were doddering. And I know my doctor – a woman doctor whose mother had turned seventy-two, I think, and had been in the City Council back in New Jersey – and she told me that her mother was not going to run again. And she looked at me like she thought I shouldn't run again, either. I'll never forget that. But I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you've still got the interest and the energy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was sort of indicating that I ought to be thinking about retiring. I had already been thinking about it. But I didn't retire then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you had that hard session where things started to go backwards, is that the time where you think, "Why am I doing this?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That was the thing. It was really bad. But I never felt that it was so bad in the Senate after we got rid of Quigley. He was really bad news for the Democrats. But things were changing. Even the women who were coming in, we had a couple who had never served in the House who were bad. Some had served in the House, but some of them were fairly conservative and it didn't look too good. It looked like if we got the majority back, we'd still have these problems to offset.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there still the closeness between women members and the mentoring and helping each other of the earlier days?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that's been going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now women are just members like anyone else?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, the women who came in seemed to be pretty set in their ways and were not as malleable. I wasn't able to influence them particularly. The only way I could do it was with example. I couldn't do it by talking.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the women moving up; were they more experienced? They had done different things? They came from a different kind of background?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, a lot of the women had served in the House, but the House had always been suspect as far as I was concerned by some of the lousy bills they sent over. So some of these women coming over had been a part of that and were pretty set in their ways. And so I didn't particularly have much luck influencing them, let's put it as bluntly as that. The only time I could influence them was on occasion in caucus and if I had something to say, I said it.

Sometimes it was sort of brutal. And then they would listen. But other than that I don't think I ever sat down and lobbied any member of our caucus. It was only when I felt very strongly about something that I brought it up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking when you first went to the Legislature, the women of both parties kind of stuck together and helped each other. You had a kind of a fellow feeling.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, we did. Because there were only seven of us. I remember getting a bill into Rules Committee for Lois North because the Republicans were in control and it was my first term, I guess, or second term. She wanted this bill. Zimmerman was the chair and he moved to adjourn the meeting, and I said, "Wait a minute." And I moved her bill out and she looked at me like I was nuts, but she got the vote. And I'll never forget that. I just believed that if you believed in something strong enough, you did what you needed to do. And I guess that's what I've always done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But were you trying to help her as another woman member? Just give her a break or because you believed in her bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I liked the idea, but yes, I was doing it for her. And I sort of looked at her and she wasn't moving, she wasn't doing anything and so I did it. And that was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As women become almost the majority in your party, did you lose that need to stick together? By the 1990s, you had a lot of women in leadership and pretty much half your caucus was now women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but they all have ideas of their own and if they've never had the experiences that I had had at that point – because I was a lot older than most of them – or didn't know the issues and weren't willing to listen, you couldn't persuade them. Women are tough to persuade. I could persuade men more than I can persuade women. You know, I learned long ago, that you could talk to a person and know if they were listening and understanding or if they didn't care. And if they weren't listening or didn't care, you sort of

figured you wouldn't do any good to talk anymore. Just give it up. And maybe it would come up again, when it would be heard for the third time, or maybe it wouldn't. But if you couldn't persuade a person in the first try, you didn't go back and push it. You waited for something else to come along to give you a lift; maybe on the floor of the Senate they would listen to a debate issue or some of the things that the other side said against the bill would spark something within them that they knew that the position I had taken was correct, was appropriate. Because these are really strong-willed women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you didn't want to lose that. On women's issues, they were generally with you. That was foregone. You didn't even have to ask for that. But on some peripheral things, you did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know you are friends with Pat Thibaudeau. Were there other people who were your close allies?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was very good. Pat I had known forever because she started lobbying the year I went into the House. She was in there forever. And I knew her from then and we became very good friends and trusted one another. And I got along really well with Darlene Fairley; I liked her very much and I thought she was really up and coming. And I liked Valoria and Betti Sheldon. I like them, truly like them. And Marilyn Rasmussen I like.



*Meeting with Pat Thibaudeau, then a lobbyist*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they kind of on the same wave-length as you? You could understand each other's issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. We did. And then there were those who didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there any men that you felt the same way about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I got along really well, usually, with Al Bauer and Sid Snyder – really close. And Marc Gaspard. I got along with the leadership with the men. No, it was no problem there. The only ones I didn't get along with were the Tim Sheldons for obvious reasons and the Hargroves. You know, I learned to choke them down and to pass their flinch tests, but they never became buddies. And if they were with me on an issue, I praised God. It was always good. And sometimes they were. But very often they were not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was Sid Snyder like as your new majority leader?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was a jewel. He had been there so many years. He knew the rules backwards and forwards. He was a mentor for a lot of us on the rules and he was just a really good egg. Really a nice man. There are nice men, you know. And he was one. Very understanding, very supportive – always – and even though he didn't quite agree, he would always go along if it were important to a member, if he could. No, he was good. Very, very good caucus chair, very good leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be his leadership style? Would he just try to take care of a lot of people? Was he inspiring? Did he have a philosophy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was laid back. And if he were needed, he was always there. In other words, if someone got up on the Floor and was accusatory or challenged the statement in a rude way, he would pop up. He was always there and he always knew when to get up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was very concerned with decorum and civility. And respect for the institution of the Legislature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always, decorum and civility. He worked under Cherberg for so many years and understood that. It used to drive him crazy when Joel Pritchard was chairing because he was so funny. I liked it; I thought he was hysterical, but Sid didn't like it very much. He used to sit and roll his eyes. But Joel was Joel! I had an affection for him because I lobbied him before I was a member when he was in the Senate then and he was always good. He cared, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As you read through the Senate Journal, there are all kinds of very dry remarks coming from the President of the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, I know. He wasn't too much for protocol.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the next session of 1996 your committees again were the same as last time: vice-chair of Health and Long Term Care; vice-chair of Rules; Labor, Commerce and Trade and Ways and Means.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was fortunate as being vice-chair of Rules because the Lieutenant Governor wasn't there a few of the times and one of the times I was able to get two bills out. They were related and I moved them both out in one motion. It caught the members by surprise and even the Republicans voted with me. Before anybody knew it, I got them passed. Then the next time the Rules Committee met, and I was there, they said, "You don't get away with that anymore." It was always a friendly conversation. Nobody ever attacked; it was fun. And I liked being chair of Rules. And a few other people tried it, but they didn't get away with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's certainly the place to get something done. And Ways and Means is also, of course, very useful if you want to get certain things into the budget.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I've observed more than getting into the thick of things and worked behind the scenes with issues rather than going to the forefront, I mean, because I wasn't always sure of my ground. Especially with finances, I

was never really sure, but I knew what needed to be done in some areas. I knew where there needed to be an additional amount made or whether they could take a reduction in amount if they weren't doing their job. And so you always felt you were in control in Ways and Means even though you weren't talking a lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know you've been credited in several instances of getting things done, probably in Ways and Means, by just tacking on some project and getting it into the budget.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or bringing up a subject. I remember the time that Peter von Reichbauer got that money for that pool and recreation center in northeast Tacoma which should have been a private health club because it had all the attributes of a health club. And Dan McDonald put it in the budget that year. That's about the time that he was chair of Ways and Means and they were talking about this health club and giving them the money out there. I was astonished because it had not been in the budget and then all of a sudden it appeared, and I said, "Whose amendment is this?" It finally came out that it was Peter von Reichbauer's; it was his district. And I said, "Well, as far as I'm concerned, this is the biggest snout in the trough I've ever seen." Oh, it was so funny. I got my point across, but Peter von Reichbauer was so angry with me – he was not on Ways and Means – that he took me on, on the floor of the Senate, getting out of the elevator. And everybody cracked up, but it didn't come out. I moved that it come out of the budget, but it stayed in. It is a health club, actually. And there was a pool within a half a mile of there. That big pool that was put up by the Weyerhaeuser Company.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, the Aquatic Center.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Aquatic Center was already in; they didn't need that. They needed a recreation center, but just the building. It was crazy. It should have been handled by the local park board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So state money went for this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, all of it, as I remember. The cost of the pool, everything. It was a lot of

money. And there were times when I did speak out, but only if I had something valuable to say, let's say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were able to get some things for Tacoma put into the budget on occasion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I remember one time I wanted something for Tacoma and I finished my speech by saying, "Just remember, committee members, that the eyes of Tacoma are on you." And McDermott who was the chair, spoke up and said, "Oh, no, no, no, the eyes of Wojahn are on you!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Almost as bad! I read a little quote somewhere that said something about you taking a page from Warren Magnuson and his habit of giving ten percent for the country and ninety percent for Washington State. There was some quip about, "Well, Wojahn's got fifty percent for Tacoma and everybody else gets fifty percent."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's left over, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A backhanded compliment at your ability to get things for your area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Veloria Loveland is quoted as saying when someone said that I went to sleep in meetings, and she said, "Well, she may go to sleep in a meeting, but when she wakes up she gets thirty-five million dollars for the history museum."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You couldn't have been sleeping through very many meetings if you were doing all that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was never sleeping. I closed my eyes sometimes but I rarely ever slept, even after lunch. But sometimes I can think better when I close my eyes, especially if we're dealing with numbers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody could tell then what you were thinking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some times on the floor of the Senate I threatened to go to sleep. The air was so thick with speeches, you know, it was just



*A weary Senator, still listening*

full of hot air. All for the cameras. Nobody said much except when the cameras were there and then everybody got up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think, then, the advent of TVW has changed how people act in committees and on the floor?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know about TVW because people don't watch TVW as much, but before the advent of TVW, when the news cameras were all on the Legislature, whenever the press was there with their cameras, everybody got up to make speeches. Now, with TVW, they are there all the time and nobody thinks about that as much. They can't see the cameras because they are not as visible now. So I think it's less with TVW.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting, although you wouldn't want to be caught dozing off.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They probably caught me many times, but I never got challenged by it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As long as you're doing your job.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Maybe on the night of Sine Die, I put my head in my hands and go to sleep. That was just working through the end of a session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was your stamina as great as ever? You've been there through all kinds of ups and downs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My stamina was great for anything that I was totally involved in, but it probably wasn't there with things that I had lesser interest in. And so you can't afford to have that happen. You need to be alert at all times with everything. Because some bad things happen if you don't. Especially if you're in leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've seen so many bills come and go; it's not that you would get jaded, but would you think, "Gee, we already tried that."

**Sen. Wojahn:** But if that ever came to a committee on which I served, I would speak out. And at one point I was serving on four committees and so the thing was pretty well covered. That's when we were in the majority. In the minority, I was on two committees. And so you caught things. You caught things that had been tried before that didn't work or you caught things and remembered some of the amendments that would help the bill out. You would offer them and so then longevity is a good thing. Also, it's historic memory. But I don't remember ever absolutely trying to kill a bill. I don't think I tried to kill any one bill based upon animosity toward the sponsor. I remember voting for Senator Rasmussen's bill when I wanted to kill him!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All for a good cause! One of the big bills that you seemed very interested in that year was the osteoporosis bill. How did you get involved in that issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was aware of all the pharmaceutical lobbyists and had generally listened to them and during the time there was a battle going on for generic drugs. Generic drugs – several years back – had not been improved enough to replace regular drugs. Sometimes they didn't dissolve at the same rate, and so I was always fixated against letting them take an equal footing or using them in DSHS as a replacement for formulary drugs because of that and because I think constituents suffer. I had

one constituent die because he couldn't get the formulary drug; he was given a generic. Eventually they did get them improved enough. But during the time I'd become really intimately aware of the pharmaceutical lobby and believed that they knew what they were doing. And so the Merk people came to me because they had discovered a new drug called Fosamax that they believed could arrest osteoporosis. And it actually improved people with osteoporosis. The reason they needed some help with it was because before they could take the formula to market, they have to take a whole mobile home full of stuff to the Food and Drug Administration to prove it. They went in September, expecting to be authorized the following January to go on the federal registry but the Food and Drug Administration was so impressed with the results that they put it on the registry right away in October. So it went on four months in advance of when it was supposed to be on the approved list. So they came to me and said they really needed a confirmation that it could go in the drug formulary and be prescribed to be covered under medical insurance. I put a bill in to do that and I had all the women in the House with me except two, I think. Then I had another bill in for an educational program to be administered by the Department of Health; I think I had all the women in the House on because there was no controversy on that one. And I couldn't get either one of them through! I got them through the Senate several times. Never could get it out of committee in the House because of a doctor who has since been reamed out of the Legislature, who shall remain nameless, from the Redmond area, who was a right-winger. He fought it because he said exercise can replace drugs. Well, exercise – when they get so bad, you need the drug.

And then at the same time, I was able to get the Merk Company to finance a machine to be sent out from the East Coast to be housed in one of the state buildings for two days so people could get a free bone scan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So kind of an awareness exercise?



*Raising awareness of the ravages of osteoporosis by bringing a bone scanning device to the Legislature*

**Sen. Wojahn:** An awareness program, yes, as a part of the whole thing. And they brought it out and had a local doctor there and a technician. The technician had been sent out from the East Coast because it was such a new machine; it was state of the art. There were machines, but this was state of the art. I sent notices out to the Tacoma newspaper, but they didn't use it. So nobody from Tacoma knew about it. The News Tribune had reservations about me, apparently, and they did not use it. There was a line-up from the minute they opened the doors in the morning until they closed; they stayed open two hours later at night. The doctor didn't get out of there until after eight o'clock, I understand. And it was very worthwhile. Some fellow came in – I didn't get to see him because I was in committee and my staff told me that he had cried because they had discovered that his wife was seriously ill with osteo. She was fairly young; she was about thirty-eight years old and they immediately put her on a regiment; they thought they could help to her come out of it. And he was so thankful. And this actually happened! And he said he wanted to give me a big kiss. But I didn't get the kiss and hug; my aide, Evie, did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you got the verbal one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. And so it was a wonderful program and for two days they were just loaded with people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the ripple effect of people even hearing about it, even if they didn't get to do it, would raise awareness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is correct. Then the next year, I thought I was going to be able to get a relay organized with a whole group of people who had had a bone scan done in their heel, which is rather inexpensive.

They were going to start in Spokane with this mobile unit and the guy who had it was going to help me form a group of women to relay the information from Spokane across the mountains. They would go so many miles and then it would be picked up by another group and go over the mountains. They had them in Renton and in Tacoma – women who had had this heel test and had found out, and we thought we could bring them in to show the influence of the women who had found out about this and could be helped by it. But the mobile unit broke down and we were never able to do it. I went before the Interim Committee of Health and they declined. They refused to put it on the formulary so it never got on. And I couldn't even get the Department of Health to do the information. The Department of Health did one that was sort of an aside, that they could afford to do, which was simply a reproduced item on osteo they handed out to medical clinics and to physicians. But nothing went to the general public and so we never did get either of those bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm curious to know why anyone would be against the education part of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They said it wasn't necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren't you trying to raise awareness of the issue of osteoporosis, not just this particular medicine?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, just to say that women needed to have a bone density test, even if they were thirty years old, but very fine-boned. If they didn't get the proper nutrients in their body, or if their body rejected them – they could drink all the milk in the world but if the body rejected it, they wouldn't assimilate it – they could get osteoporosis. So osteoporosis can start as young as thirty years old. It's very minimal but it can be detected. It can be detected in the bone in the ankle and if they get the slightest detection, then they need a full bone scan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's an indicator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. The indicator is there. So we never could get any of it. A lot of doctors are doing it now. And I think Medicare finally picked it up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's becoming better known. But that was more of an uphill battle than you expected?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We could have helped a lot of women and prevention is worth half the battle. If you can prevent something from happening, you prevent the future costs. The same thing with diabetes. You know, we finally got that on the formulary and that was done by Jeannette Wood, a really good Republican senator from Mukilteo. The Republicans were in control. She got the supplies for the test detecting diabetes covered by Medicare insurance in the state for a year on a trial basis and then I was able to push it over into the next year. She lost her election that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see from the literature you gave me that you did give speeches on osteoporosis, trying to raise awareness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did on osteoporosis. I tried; I did everything I could do on osteo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mentioned in your newsletter that you managed to get it in the supplemental operating budget, by an amendment after the original measure died in

the House. Do you remember that particular action?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got a statement put in the budget notes by Joanne Conrad, who is the staff attorney for health care, that the Health Department recognized that there was medication available, or something. Joanne got something, just a statement in the budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a foot-in-the-door kind of measure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I think as a result of that the Department of Health did this alert, I think it was done in-house, that they sent around to the various physicians and to the hospitals. And so it was an alert. I'd forgotten about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your newsletter says, "The State Department of Health has been authorized to join with the health care industry to make the public aware of the dangers of osteoporosis. The campaign was made possible by an amendment to the supplemental operating budget. The heart of the amendment was Senate Bill 6239," sponsored by yourself. Then it says, "The bill was added to the budget after the original measure died in the House." That at least gets the ball rolling a little. You used everything you knew how to do, it looks like.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. I used the staff to help me to do the things I needed to do because they were really good. We did the same thing when we were trying to get the acknowledgment in the family independence bill, FIP, that the Department of Health should make every effort to counsel unmarried pregnant women to consider adoption. And that was the statement that I got into the budget notes. Joanne Conrad helped me with that, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So with that sort of statement in the notes, can an agency then run with that and do things? Does that establish legislative intent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That mandates them to counsel to do this. We emphasized it in the family independence bill that they should consider doing this and we got them to accept the budget note on adoption as an alternative to either



abortion or welfare. I remember that. The notes are statements of legislative intent. That's the policy. You can get a statement in even though it isn't in a bill form in the budget. They only last for two years, the duration of that budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a start. That's an interesting ploy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the last-resort effort. You do everything you can and the last resort is to go to the budget and get a statement in there, in the budget notes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must be a complex document, in that case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The budget notes are considered very important; they are read by the agencies because they carry the force of intent a lot of the time. And if there is any doubt on a rule and regulation, they will look to the budget notes for direction. If they care to. You know, it depends on who the agency head is. And Mary Selecky was a friend.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I imagine for them, if they are inclined to do it, but don't have the authorization, that that helps? Here's a "devil's advocate" question: why would the insurance industry block preventive medicine? Wouldn't that be cheaper in the long run? You noted that they blocked covering these measures.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They do it because everything that you do costs money, regardless. And even though it might save money in the long run, they've got a lot of things in there that cost money that really are not helping, but they are stuck in the law. And believe me, it can happen. It's just like the auto dealers, if you ask them to make a little change in their auto design that costs five cents, you multiply that by 500 million cars sold and it adds up. And so consequently, they will fight anything regardless of how sensible it is. And that's what we argued: we're going to keep women from getting osteoporosis because we're going to alert them and give them the chance to take this pill and to get exercise and follow other good health habits, if the doctor deems it's necessary. Now, doctors are not going to deem it's

necessary unless it is necessary to do the bone scans. They are not going to just do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but all they can see is that it's going to cost money up front?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some doctors, in order to keep from getting sued, will prescribe unnecessary tests. So it's all a part of the whole game we play. It's a game.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting. That was one of the battles that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing you do is easy in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently not. Certainly not in health care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Or in anything that costs money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You gave a speech – not necessarily tied to any legislation, but it was another one of these health care issues where you talk about the changes in the field, in this case what was happening with AIDS. In fact, it was good news in that there were new drugs and new treatments and more people were surviving AIDS. So the problem shifted from one of hospice care to one of what to do with all the recovering patients. You talked a little about how the Legislature needed to begin looking at that new outcome and the enormous cost, actually, of the new treatment, even though it was successful. And how that development rippled through the budget. How does the Legislature balance those kinds of health care issues? The cost per patient for AIDS care was just enormous. Do they put a cap on that sort of thing, so that there's some money left for other health issues? Or do you just pay? How does that work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You just put the money in the budget as much as you can afford. You don't put a cap on it, but the amount of money is the ceiling that can be spent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is the health care budget just a big bucket and if the money goes for AIDS treatment and that's a never-ending need, what happens to other needs? When you have these competing health issues, who chooses where the

money goes? Who chooses that x number of dollars will go for AIDS care and x number of dollars will go for these other multiple needs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Unless it's specified in the budget, the amount of money that can be spent for each item, it's up to the Department of Health to make the decision on how it's spent and how it goes out. Sometimes it's sent out on per capita basis, sometimes it's sent out on a need basis. So it's up to the Department of Health unless it's specifically dedicated, say that so-and-so million dollars has to go for AIDS. And we did it in the original budget. I think we had to spend fifteen million dollars at one point on AIDS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the medications?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not on medication; it's more general than that. On the attention to AIDS, whether it goes out in medication, education, or however.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just the whole thing. I was curious because in your speech you allude to the fact that there isn't enough money, that there's a huge need out there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There's never enough money. It's left up to the agency. They get a bulk sum, with so much allocated for certain programs which could be an AIDS program, which could be used for education or medication or physicians or whatever. And they have to stay within that budget. In any program, there's never enough money. That's the reason we established the LEAP Committee; on certain things they had to spend so much money, like on education and it's based upon past monies and expected additional population growth. And so the LEAP Committee does a lot of that determining what is needed. That's the reason it was established during Leonard Sawyer's regime, along with John Bagnariol. They are a very innovative program. But there is never enough money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like another one of those heartbreaking issues where you can help just so many people and then you can't do more. One bill that did pass that session, which

seemed important to you, was the domestic violence prevention bill, Senate Bill 6462.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they were cut out of the budget and we got it back in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, something like that. This was a request by Governor Lowry and Attorney General Gregoire, but I gather you got involved in it because the bill was suggested by the Pierce County prosecutor, John Ladenburg. Would he have come to you? He wanted to increase penalties for domestic violence and to make it a crime to interfere with somebody trying to report domestic violence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a big domestic violence bill. That was the one I sponsored after Talmadge left because the leader was gone. It was also endorsed by the State Supreme Court. And it was absolutely necessary. They appeared before the committee, that anyone interfering with the reporting of a domestic violence, like pulling your telephone out of the wall...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that a woman trying desperately to call for help is prevented?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's the same year, I think, that we got the "tall figures" that were developed for domestic violence by a group of Bellevue women at the Bellevue Community College. They were life-sized figures; they were all painted red and every one of them represented a person who had been



*With women activists in Legislative Building hallway in support of domestic violence awareness campaign using life-size figures of victims*

killed by domestic violence in the state of Washington. And we brought them in. We had them at Pierce County at the courthouse. One of the judges there was so opposed to the whole domestic violence issue because he was abusing his own wife who is a friend of mine. And his name is Ralph Turco. Pat Turco is a friend of mine and she finally divorced him and went public and he was removed from the bench. But at this time, he was still a municipal court judge and had some power. He said the display couldn't be in the courthouse and he got them out of there. So we got hold of the Bellevue people and we had them sent to Olympia.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If I recall correctly, they were lining the halls of the Legislative Building. It was really a graphic display.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and there's a picture of them in one of my newsletters, I think, of all of them. And every one of them represented someone killed by domestic violence and painted on the front was her name, her age, and then it said, "Deceased, victim to domestic violence." They are still available, I think, those figures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It gets attention, to see something like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So that all became a part of the whole educational process and the whole display.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm really struck by your creative attempts to get attention for issues. I'm still harkening back to your bacon bill – the see-through raincoats.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to display it graphically or men don't understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You certainly had some really interesting ways of making your point!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So we put on clear plastic raincoats and said you "ought to be able to see." All the women in the House went in, in plastic raincoats, and they said, "This is what we mean."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This issue was much more serious.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to deal with it any way you can and I always found that "seeing is believing." That's been proven by television. People watch and see and listen much more than they listen to the radio. They listened to the radio but they didn't get the message, but television they do. But I was in the Legislature when television was in its early stages, you know. Also, I had a gal up here on the bacon bill who wore mini-skirts and she was a beautiful gal. She came in and testified before the Agriculture Committee and that bill went flying out of there before you knew it. It was just a riot. There's a picture of the two of us on the campus taken and she's in her mini skirt, a darling gal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess you use whatever you've got.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'll never forget what she said, "When I buy a pound of bacon, I believe I'm breaking every gambling law in the state of Washington." We were doing the gambling bill at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, memorable!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It worked. You have to remember that most of the legislators were men at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. This bill we were discussing on domestic violence had several pieces. It makes it a crime to interfere with the reporting, and it adds domestic violence to a list of aggravating circumstances for criminal sentencing. And it increases the penalty for violation of no-contact orders, making it a felony on the third time. That was a pretty heavy-hitting bill. It passed with flying colors out of the Senate and then really ground to a halt in the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Adam Smith was the chair of the committee and I think he said, "This is Senator Wojahn's bill," to the whole committee before I had a chance to talk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that help or hurt?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh God, it helped. It went flying out. I was vice-chair of the Rules Committee and so it obviously got into Rules right away.

We got it over to the House and Carrell opposed it. He organized a “POPS” group and he was against anything which interfered with men and still is, I’m sure. If it was an out-of-state case of domestic violence, the bill required the local prosecutor to honor any restraining order from whatever state it had been issued. The prosecutor had to act if a case was reported. He couldn’t brush it aside, as I remember. I don’t remember the exact details. Carrell asked me a question, as I remember. The committee told me my eyes flared. I’d testified for the committee and he asked me, “Would it matter if the prosecutor ignored this?” That’s not quite the way it was said. I said, “You can leave it out if you want to and be responsible for the injury or death of a woman,” “It’s your choice,” is the way I put it. It shut him up. I’ll never forget. It was a key to the whole thing. And I know that I had trouble getting it past the member from Hoquiam, Jim Hargrove. He didn’t like it either. And he finally went with me, I know because I challenged him and he voted with me on that bill and I sent him flowers, I remember. And he remembered that. And he voted with me on the floor. And he got up and said why. It was just a riot. He said, “I finally was convinced.” He’s still there. He was at one time chair of Children and Family Committee and a very good chair, I might add. And I think he went over to Carrell and told him, “Don’t try to stymie this woman; she’ll catch you.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were somewhat blocked in the House, but then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It finally went through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were able to add it to another bill – add the substance of your bill to another bill, and then that passed and was signed by Governor Lowry. You were able to maneuver.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was a triumph of the session. Another successful bill, which came as a constituent request from Pat Kohler, had to do with graffiti defacing buildings. Apparently, the critical wrinkle in the law before was that graffiti doesn’t actually destroy buildings, but it

does deface them. You included defacing as a punishable offense as well as other destructive activities toward buildings. And that parents had to pay, as well, for their children’s acts.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, I remember that; it was a constituent of mine. I don’t remember, I think they defaced some murals that had been done. There were several murals in the city; they were beautifully done with volunteer artists. They were gorgeous and they were defaced and because of that we were able to get the bill through saying there’s a difference between a caricature and an actual defacing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mention in your newsletter the Wheelock Branch Library was messed up by graffiti and that the mural on the Stadium Toy and Craft Building was defaced in this way. These were prominent enough buildings that people were really upset about this.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Artists had painted a lot of buildings in the city with real neat artwork. It was started in New York, I think where someone was defacing the buildings and they talked him into doing it properly and he painted these neat murals then, after that. And the same thing occurred in Tacoma, then someone tried to deface them and then we said, “You can’t do this. This was a gift to the city and it’s a crime to destroy that.” Yes, I remember that bill. Pat Kohler was the one who started the Morning Sun business. They paint things on sweatshirts, on Tee-shirts. He started that in his garage and then got a place down in the tide flats and then he went out to Fife and got this whole new building where he was doing it. It was a several-million dollar business. He finally sold Morning Sun. He was Margaret Hurley’s nephew, from Spokane. I knew him from Morning Sun and I knew the story. He came forward and said, “We need to do something about this. This is happening and we need a bill to stop it.” And so we did it. A lot of my bills were sponsored at the request of constituents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This one certainly has a large impact.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did. Then they finally built a building right up close to that so that the big mural by the stadium is gone. There's a building right up against that now. They had them all over town at one time. One of them was down by the new history museum; I think that was finally torn down, too.

One thing I want them to do about the University of Washington in Tacoma, there's a big blank wall going up the stairs and then over to the left, there's this building that's all brick above, but there's a great big cement block that is as great as this area of this room, big as that wall. It's just blank and I want them to put the seal of the University of Washington there. It would be beautiful and you'd see it as you're driving down. You can't see the sign unless you turn your head and look, but there you'd see it. I've talked to the president, but she hasn't done it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, those big blank spaces kind of invite graffiti.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it just looks awful. Great big blank concrete wall. To the left of a broad expanse of steps going in to the University of Washington, there is this beautiful building in back of the library, a building which used to be for the electrification of the street cars. It was just a utility building; now it's a gorgeous building, and then to the right is the bookstore and there's a fountain or something in the middle. But on that side, there's nothing. The brick above is pretty, but that is not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Potential for something. Then, you had a whole slew of bills that offered help for several different causes. Let's see which ones had importance for you. You were a co-sponsor of Substitute Senate Bill 6120, called the "Erin Act," after the granddaughter of Representative Kathy Lambert, who I gather, had a baby and was urged to leave the hospital before she felt quite ready to do so. This bill establishes health insurance benefits that allow a new mother to stay in the hospital a little bit longer than eight or twelve hours. I remember that discussion when hospitals began urging

new mothers to leave pretty quickly after having a baby.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sometimes a baby is not ready to leave either and they shoot them out at the same time. And they can develop serious hazards to their health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that happen in this case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know the story. I just felt it was wrong to force the woman out too soon, especially with a newborn, unless the baby was totally healthy. And sometimes they don't discover that until forty-eight hours later and then it's too late.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of this issue was also, who was making the decision, the physician or the insurance company?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. The insurance companies are still telling doctors what they can and cannot do. You know, they say they won't pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That leads the discussion. There was another bill of which you're a co-sponsor enacting the "Infant Crib Safety Act," to get cribs which were not up to standard out of the market, out of hotels, out of various places where people used them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That should be up to the national act. There's a national children's safety act which does that. They get toys off the markets that are dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these bills harken back to your early days of being a consumer advocate. Another bill that you co-sponsored was revising the penalty for criminal mistreatment of people who are dependent persons, for small children or persons who have disabilities in some way who are cared for by caretakers who may abuse them, desert them in some way, or somehow not provide them with basic care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that bill passed. I just lent my name to those because they were appropriate bills. I don't remember any knock-down, drag-out with them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, some of these are pretty straightforward. There was a bill establishing “conditional privilege for communications between the victims of sexual assault and their personal representatives.” That would be what, a woman is assaulted and she goes to court with someone from a rape crisis center who was helping her? Their communications become privileged, just as hers with a lawyer would be? I gather from the bill language that before prosecutors could make some of the counselors testify against their own clients.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The thing is, this one Municipal Court judge I was talking about who abused his wife and refused to let those tall figures to remain in the courthouse, any time a counselor appeared with the victim of domestic violence, he would challenge her. Pretty soon he made it so miserable for her and distorted the fact that she was there to help, that the counselor got fired. And it was a judge doing this! You wouldn’t think that that bill was necessary in order to prevent this from happening, so that a support counselor could appear with the victim and help her out. We had those victim advocates to help them because they were incapable. The county prosecutor did that when Ladenburg was prosecutor; he did that because a lot of women would file the charge of domestic violence and then before it got to court, they would rescind it. And he finally said, “You can’t do that anymore. We will provide you with a support counselor to go into court with you.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those women are frightened.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And this is another incident where we had to do a law in order to protect the victim and the counselor from action by the court – the judge, or the defense attorney. So that was a good thing. And I know that one. One of my friends was fired; she was beaten down so badly by that judge that she’s in a nursing home now. The Judicial Commission finally threw him out for all these other reasons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another bill which you sponsored improving guardian and guardian ad litem systems to protect minors and incapacitated persons.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, to defend them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not many people are familiar with that system. Maybe you could say a little about what that is.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The guardians ad litem are assigned as guardians to poor children who have been victimized by their parents or a parent in order to protect them and provide them with advocates; they don’t always have to be attorneys.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Someone that speaks for the child’s interest and represent their best interests in the court?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. Or the incapacitated person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of those are pretty grim issues, but here is a more fun bill: a bill to authorize the Washington State Historical Society to work with the Lewis and Clark Trail Committee to commemorate the coming bi-centennial. That is a big project.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We needed money in the budget for that, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are you still, at this point, on the board of WSHS, or is this just something of a continuing interest for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was off the board, because I’d served nine years at that time, but I was always supportive of them and anything they needed. I was the one who usually got it for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re familiar with their work; they’re in your district. There was another bill that relates to Tacoma more generally. It was a bill to improve the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and if I recall this incident, it’s pretty complicated. It allowed or authorized the Public/Private Initiative in Transportation Program, that was established a couple of years before, to help build the bridge. Now, was that where they are allowing a private group to build a bridge side by side the original bridge? And one will be a toll bridge and go one way and the other bridge will go the other way? I’m not clear about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just the authorization to let public/private come in to do this. We found that we could not do these things ourselves. We did not have the population to support the things that needed to be done. We needed a public/private partnership. And this was to establish that. And they've been screaming about that ever since.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's highly controversial.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, but I went on it because there needed to be something done and we could not do it alone; we needed to at least investigate the potential. And then from that came the bill to permit the property tax exemption for public housing in an existing building or land. And that came at the same time. That's the one that's doing all the public housing in Tacoma right now. And that bill was a great big factor in economic development.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This just tests the feasibility? So this is one of those foot-in-the-door kind of things? Privately-financed transportation improvements. Is this because transportation money is getting so problematic and so stretched that you are looking for another way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every penny from the gas tax has to go into highways. And consequently, there's no money there for public transit or any of the other things. Ferries are considered an extension of the Highway Commission, so I guess you could consider them as necessary for part of the gas tax, but you can't consider public transportation as part of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about bridges? This is for a bridge.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that they are part of that either. I can't answer that. But I do know that we needed to investigate the use of private funding, along with public for economic development. That was Oke's bill, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are building that bridge now, aren't they?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Finally, they just started building the approaches to it and then one of the big pylons that was built in Seattle was towed down here two weeks ago to be put up. This is a

preliminary step and if we'd done it at that time, it would have been paid for by now. But there was a hue-and-cry and people didn't want it. They didn't want a bridge because they didn't want people coming to the Peninsula.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were two points of view. There are the people who want easy access and then there are the people who would just as soon keep a lid on that so that there is not more development. Until people in those communities come to some consensus, it will be difficult to strike a balance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They've finally been forced into it. But it's been long and painful and costly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just another very small DOT issue: Senator Jim Matson had served in the House from Selah, Washington. I gather he passed away this year and there was a Senate Joint Memorial requesting the Department of Transportation to name an overpass for him and one was chosen from his district. I was just wondering how you choose to memorialize people, where that came from?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. He was a farmer, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And is every senator memorialized or just some? Does it depend on a groundswell of sentiment?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It depends on who wants it done and how much of an effort they make toward doing it. They named one for P.J. Gallagher, but I've never seen it printed on any bridge. He was a House member, Transportation chair for a long time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably a more controversial Senate Joint Memorial requested clarification of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act from 1988. You seem to be the prime sponsor of this. It said that there was an act of Congress which enabled the Tribes to have gaming on their reservations. There were different classes of gaming which didn't need state approval if they were social games, traditional kinds of games, and also games about the level of Bingo, which also included pull-tabs and punch boards and things of that nature. But I gather the Tribes wanted to

go to the next level, Class Three of gaming and needed permission to do so. It's not clear to me but it seems from the federal law, Tribes could have the same level of gaming allowed to the rest of society; in Nevada, they have everything, so then Tribes there could also have everything. But in Washington, where you don't have full gambling privileges, then the Tribes weren't supposed to, either?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Tribes could only do what had been authorized by the Legislature and they wanted to go beyond that. And they've done it and they weren't supposed to. And the Feds aren't doing anything about it. They shouldn't even have slot machines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did they go ahead and have more gambling than you were comfortable with and therefore you were asking for clarification as to whether that was really allowable? Is that what this is?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted anything that was authorized by the Gambling Commission; it had to be approved by the Legislature. And that was the bill; I couldn't even get a hearing on it. I couldn't get the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then you tried the Joint Memorial as a way to at least get some attention for it? I'm also curious, when something is a joint memorial, who are you memorializing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I was asking for a clarification on the whole thing. "Can they or can't they do what we say they can't do?" It goes to Congress. It's a letter to Santa Claus! It doesn't do any good. They don't pay attention to it, usually. But you do it in protest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, so you're just making a statement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Making it known that you disapprove and that you want them to clarify it. Well, I don't think they ever did. And they didn't sue them to stop it, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you don't really have any power to do anything about it, I gather.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We should have but we don't because the Feds have to stop it. We don't have the police enforcement to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another question: where does a Senate concurrent resolution go? Not to Congress.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, a concurrent resolution is a state resolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just the Senate and the House agree? Pat Thibaudeau was the prime sponsor, but you signed on to one "to establish a joint select committee on oral health care." It was adopted; was this a new interest for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that's the one where the state of Washington would help with children's teeth, but is that the one where we needed help for adults to get oral health care?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It mentions more about children in Head Start programs. But it also refers to low-income children and elderly having high rates of dental disease. It's just asking for more information, some kind of study to see who suffers from this and who might need help.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Do a study to find out if there is a greater need than we were addressing. That's another attempt to force the Legislature to allocate more money for this particular issue to which they pay no attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were asking for identification of barriers to access to oral health care services: financial, regulatory and administrative barriers and potential solutions. And you were asking the Committee on Health and Long Term Care to do a study and report back to the Legislature the following December.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that was the one where they actually carried out the study and they wanted to put sealants on children's teeth if they were decayed, to stop the decay. I disapproved of that. I thought that was wrong to seal cavities because the cavities could continue to develop under the sealant, I was afraid. Rather than having dentists do it, they were having dental hygienists do it and I think from that study came this whole sealant deal. It's probably passed by



now, but I fought it because I was afraid that hygienists were not sufficiently qualified to be doing that. They needed dentists. If they did it under the auspices of a dentist, fine, with the final check by a dentist. But not to just permit them to do it without some follow-through. So I was not supportive of the sealant program. And that came as a result of this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So who would do this study? Would it be the staff of that committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, there would be legislators. If it's a concurrent resolution, it would be both House and Senate, usually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So members would be appointed by their caucuses?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it usually tells who appoints them. Usually the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. Or the Governor, it could be either. It has to be somebody. The concurrent resolution will tell you in there who does it. They get appointed by somebody; it's usually leadership in the Senate and the House or the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering, since your name was on it, whether this was something that would be coming up, that you'd be paying attention to.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I went on the bill because I thought they were seeking more money to solve the problem of adult and child dental care. So, you never know what you are getting into. It was just Pat Thibaudeau and Deccio. And I was the vice-chair, but I never got in on it because they knew I would oppose it. I was with dentists, because I just figure that you need a true professional in there to be able to tell for sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's certainly been a thread through a lot of your legislation, figuring out who should be authorized to work in particular areas.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Who's responsible for what. And now that they are improving the dental hygiene profession, maybe now I would approve it, but I didn't at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were the main bills that I thought we could talk about for 1996. But there was an issue that kind of dogs you through that session. You had hoped, or had a promise from, Governor Mike Lowry of an appointment to the Liquor Control Board. I guess there was an opening coming up. And as it turned out, he appointed someone else.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He did it twice. He did it three times!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were three different openings?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. First, he appointed Joe McGavick, a Republican, because Lowry wanted to change the rules of the Liquor Board and privatize liquor. And he couldn't get the bill even out of committee. And he told me he wanted to appoint McGavick because he wanted him to do it and I didn't approve of it, so he told me he wasn't going to appoint me at that time. I did not approve of privatization. I thought it got more people drinking booze and more problems. In California when they opened it up, they went from a low incident of drunken driving into a horrendous problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So perhaps Governor Lowry thought that you weren't going to carry out what he wanted you to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he obviously wasn't going to appoint me because he wanted to appoint him. And so maybe that's what he was telling me, that he never would appoint me, I don't know. But he didn't get the bill, and people just laughed at McGavick when he came. McGavick is the one we asked to post signs on pregnant women drinking and he refused to even do it. It's all a part of the same story. At the same time that he appointed him, I had a bill in that required notification to pregnant women in bar restrooms and restaurants and any store that sold liquor to post the sign alerting women of this. Because I've been through this fetal alcohol system problem before and knew what it cost in human suffering for all concerned. And so it had nothing to do with the Liquor Control Board, except that we wanted them to do it. Anyway, Lowry called me into his office and said he

wasn't going to appoint me; he was going to appoint somebody to do that. But I assumed that if he didn't get the privatization, that there would be an opening for me. And there wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why were you interested in this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In one of my first jobs, at Rhodes Department Store, I had worked in stock control and I knew that kind of work forwards and backwards. And from the time I was first in the Legislature, I was on committees which wrote the liquor laws and I was adamant about the state holding the monopoly. I did not want it to go into privatization because of the damage that it could do. And it's been proven to do that now. And so I always was interested in the Liquor Control Board. We were doing their legislation. From the time I went as a freshman and was on Business and Professions, and then the Commerce Committee, which I chaired, I always was interested in that area. And I had friends – my brother was an alcoholic – and I knew the damage that it could do and I knew that families couldn't always control it. And so that's the reason I wanted it, for very good reasons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that being on the Board, you would be able to implement policies which would help educate people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Educate on problems with liquor and not be able to just dispense it. They can still only dispense it; they cannot advocate for any particular product. And Governor Lowry appointed a woman who was promoting it. She became chairman of the Board and she was promoting the sale of wine. And so that was an issue with me.

But that is not the reason that I got that lousy editorial; I just didn't happen to go to the meeting that morning. It was an eight o'clock meeting of Commerce; I was on four committees and I just could not manage that meeting that morning. They were only doing gubernatorial appointments and it wasn't necessary for me to be there. I didn't even know what they were taking up the Liquor Board appointment, so I was not there to sign it out. It

got enough signatures, but when Deccio signed it out, apparently his caucus said, "Take your name off, make the Democrats do it." But I'd always made it a policy to never sign on a bill that I hadn't heard. So I wouldn't do it. I was not at the meeting. And so I refused and when they actually removed Deccio's name, I was hounded by the Governor to sign it and I said "no." And then the press said that I had stamped my feet and carried on. I didn't do anything. I just said "no." And they gave me that rotten editorial; The News Tribune was bullying. Their editorial board didn't bother to investigate the facts; they simply wrote the editorial not knowing what they were talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They alleged that you wanted the position for its pension rather than for the position.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. If I had wanted my pension, I could have taken my pension years before. At age seventy I could have taken my pension. I chose not to because I was still working; I didn't think it was appropriate. And I didn't even want to take my Social Security, but I had to. Senator Rasmussen took his, Bob Graham took his, and still worked way beyond that age. And I could have had that salary plus my pension and I chose not to. Which proves I didn't want the money; I wanted the job. And the Tribune didn't bother, they didn't call me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, you never did get your say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never got my say. I got some nice letters to the editor. I wouldn't have run again if they hadn't done the editorial. I had decided I was going to retire.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you had to prove them wrong?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that I was still effective. They were bullying and dominating and telling me what to do and nobody tells a legislator what to do if they have any moxie. You don't do it. So they did that rotten editorial and I know that there were many letters written to the editor on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So at least your constituents understood?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They only printed three of them. And it was not the case. If they'd bothered to call me, I would have told them. One reporter called me, I was busy and he said something and I said, "Well, I was promised that position." That was a P-I reporter who wanted a job with the administration and he used that as a method. Ed Penhale. The next thing I knew, he was working with OFM. So I still believe it was a case where a reporter wanted a job and he needed something to get him the job and he got it. But that's the story behind that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's good to clarify because this is a kind of messy incident.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The editorial reduced the support I had by the next election. I went from eighty-five percent down to sixty-six percent. You see, so it did affect me. And the Tribune even endorsed my opponent. My attorney said, "You should sue them." And I considered it. But I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's really hard to sue a newspaper.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't. They can buy ink by the barrel and I can't. There's no competition. I found out when I ran that next time. I hired a PR firm, which I hadn't been doing because I knew I had a problem. A research project was done on yellow journalism and guess-who was the number one candidate in the state? The News Tribune and that's a fact. The P-I was second. The P-I had always been first. They go after people. Now I think the editorial board has changed; I think the new publisher is a woman and I think that's changed. But it hadn't at that time. The Tribune had already dirtied on me on the bill to require a statement on the application for a marriage license and several other bills I had sponsored had gotten bad editorials. But the marriage application bill was a good bill. You do anything you can to stop domestic violence. And as a result of that, we had a whole burden of domestic violence – many of which I fought – after the fact that they did that rotten editorial.

And they were real catty about the way they did it. It was churlish and childish and bullying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess you would hope that readers could see through that sort of thing, take it for what it is.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know for a fact that several personal acquaintances stopped their subscriptions because of it and they still haven't re-subscribed. I would do it if I didn't want the obituaries, I would stop it, too. But I need it for the obits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is the only local paper.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. One-paper town. If we had another paper in Tacoma, I wouldn't even consider it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those days are gone. Well, let's end our discussion of that year on a happier note. You received a merit award from the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation for preserving the special tax evaluation for historic properties, which was facing termination. You did manage to save that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It really worked and Wang tried to dispose of it. I out-smarted the chairman of the Capitol Budget Committee on that one!

## CHAPTER 27: "TO HELL IN A HAND-BASKET," 1997



*Speaking on the Senate floor*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The election before the 1997 session was a difficult one for Democrats. You weren't the only one that dipped down in your numbers; the Democrats slipped into the minority in the Senate. The Republicans had twenty-six to your twenty-three members and the House was still pretty heavily Republican with fifty-six to forty-two members.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I lost my Pro Tem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you lost your Pro Tem to Irv Newhouse; he stepped into that position. Clyde Ballard was again Speaker for the House. Perhaps the only good news for Democrats in that election was Gary Locke winning as Governor. Mike Lowry was a one-term

Governor and then Locke won the primary and then the general election. How many Governors have you served under? You started with...

**Sen. Wojahn:** I started with Evans. But I was on Rosellini's Commission on the Status of Women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you had a relationship with him, but you didn't serve under him.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And also Governor Evans' Status of Women, with that commission before I was a member of the Legislature. And then I served with Governor Evans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then with Dixy Lee Ray, after Evans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Evans, Ray, Spellman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then Gardner for two terms, and then Governor Lowry, and now Governor Locke.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seven Governors, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot of Governors. Do you have any theories or comments on all these different Governors?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had a lot of respect for Governor Evans and I voted for his income tax as a freshman legislator. I approved of a lot of things that he did. And I thought he was a good Governor but I still wanted a Democrat; I still wanted a Democratic House. And I remember under Speaker Sawyer we used to walk off the floor whenever the Republicans wouldn't listen to us. We'd just walk off and especially if it was a Democratic bill they wouldn't bring out of Rules Committee and wouldn't bump, we'd walk off the floor and wait till the next day and they'd be back to Rules and then we'd try to get it out. We did all those things and I remember those. And then with Governor Ray, I supported her until it got to be too much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she squander people's good will?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, she did. And I remember when she wouldn't help the preserve the Women's Commission. We got the bill through on the Women's Commission and she signed it, but when it later went to the people as a referendum, she refused to publically support it. She allowed the opponents to misrepresent the issue and the people then voted it down. She let it die. So, I then supported McDermott for Governor the next time because of that. And she lost and Spellman won. I didn't know Spellman very much but I thoroughly approved of his action when he vetoed the bill that would have permitted a dry dock to be built in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Cherry Point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, at Cherry Point. They'd done one in Ireland and one in South Carolina and I was adamantly opposed to that for oil freighters. And I was against that and he vetoed the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Spellman got an environmental award for that, I believe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it was a tough decision on his part. He took it on the chin for that. And I respected that. So I respected him as a Governor. But I didn't like being in the minority and I supported Governor Gardner when he ran against him later. I had supported Gardner for county executive and got thrown off the state board. I was a delegate to the Pierce County Labor Council and the union to which I had been a member, who didn't support Gardner. I didn't realize that because I was in the Legislature. Anyway, I got up and spoke in Gardner's behalf and my group was supporting Mike Parker. I got thrown off the Labor Council because of my support for Gardner; I was no longer a delegate. And then Gardner didn't appoint me to the Liquor Control Board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As far back as Governor Gardner, you wanted to be on the Liquor Control Board?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. He knew it. Another thing that happened during those years – and I'll never forget it – we were in caucus and a call

came in to Ted Bottiger's office. Ted was there and I was called into the office to take the call and it was from Governor Gardner's campaign and they said that someone had taken a mailer for "Gardner for Governor" and had mailed it and written a check, but the check would bounce the next day. They needed a thousand dollars to cover it. And I said, "Well, I'm not interested. It's not my responsibility." They said, "Well, Ted would do it and you should do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What, with your personal money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was my campaign money, but I called my campaign chair who was Bruce Gardner – no relation – and I told him what they wanted and I said, "I don't want to do it, but I think I'm going to have to." And Bruce said, "You tell them that I want the money back in this account by Friday of this week." Or they offered that, I guess they offered that. And I said, "Well, they're going to put it back in the account by Friday of this week." This was on Tuesday. And so he said, "Okay, I will write the check." He was the only one authorized to sign my checks. I didn't even sign my own campaign checks; I wanted nothing to do with it. He was the CEO for the Citizens Savings and Loan at that time in Tacoma. And so he wrote the check and I went back to the telephone and I said, "We will do it. My treasurer is Bruce Gardner; he's writing the check, but we expect that money back in my campaign account with my treasurer this Friday." And they promised. They never did pay it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a lot of money for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A thousand dollars, which I hardly had. And I was running at that time. And I called them and called them and they said, well, it was supposed to be done by this fellow who was running his campaign. Anyway, I called him and he said, "The committee's decided that we're not going to pay back any of the money that was loaned to us." And I said, "It wasn't a loan in the true sense of the term." It

never got paid back. Booth Gardner did that to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he aware of it? In big campaigns like that, would the candidate hear of that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure he was. Let me tell you what he did to Bill Baarsma, now Mayor of Tacoma. Told him he would have a fundraiser for him when he was running for Mayor – this is recently – for Bill to set up the program at the Tacoma Club and he'd see to it that it was paid for. And so Bill did it and he never did. So you see, things happen and this needs to be published.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you then feel like you got off on the wrong foot with him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never reminded him of this, I should have. That's where you play hardball.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel a little reticent to work with him after that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was hard. I never respected him again. And I never liked him again and I voted for the things that he wanted and carried his programs through; I never dirtied on him because of it. But he felt that he could do that. I'm a woman; you can do these things to women or you could at that time, I don't think you could any more. But these are the hard things that happened that you learn from. And I learned never to trust anybody and I don't trust anybody anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that would be a lot of money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and it never was replaced in my account. Then Lowry, he did that to me, also, about the appointment to the Liquor Board. I never dirtied on him on it and I never talked about it, but I did refuse to sign that bill out because I wasn't in attendance at the meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had your own reasons.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't sign bills out when I'm not in attendance at the meeting. And the Republicans could have done it; they took

Deccio's name off and it was on their shoulders, not mine. And then the next Governor was Governor Locke who I got along with fine. I always respected him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he come in with a fresh message? Did you feel invigorated by what he wanted to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had supported Nita Rinehart. I had a fundraiser for Nita Rinehart but early, early on, and encouraged her to run. Then I wasn't happy when a poll was taken and she decided to withdraw. She withdrew. And then Locke called me and I said I would support him. But as a result of that, Nita then got a job; she became Ways and Means chief of staff.

That's when we had an influx of new legislators in the '97 session. And I only had two committees, because I gave up my seat on Ways and Means to Lisa Brown. She was fresh from the House and she wanted desperately to be on and she couldn't be on because there were not enough seats. I didn't want to give it up. I wanted to keep it, but I gave it up to help her out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was curious why you only end up with two committees: Health and Long Term Care and Rules, serving now as an ordinary member. That was a drop from four to two.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I was no longer vice-chair of Rules and I didn't want to do that, but I never got on the third committee which I really wanted. Lisa got my seat on Ways and Means. But I went to a lot of the meetings, not sitting with the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What happened to your third committee? You had been on Commerce and Labor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. We were in the minority so there was no seat there for me. And because the Republicans only wanted to be on two committees – a lot of them – they reduced the number of committees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it didn't just happen to you, it happened to everyone?



*Commiserating with Senator Alex Deccio as he struggles to accommodate an oversized bouquet of flowers*

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was done after I'd given my seat up. I probably wouldn't have done it had I known. I shouldn't have done it, you know. Because some people never remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You suddenly had a lot fewer responsibilities. You were not President Pro Tem, and so not vice-chair of Rules, either.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I was no longer anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were still the ranking minority member on Health and Long Term Care. So you still had some leadership role.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had some clout there. And I liked working with Senator Deccio.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that you've said before that you worked really well with him so that when he took the chair it was still a good committee for you to be on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a good committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to note that Lieutenant Governor Joel Pritchard had retired with that election and was replaced by Brad Owen. But toward the end of the session, some senators got together and decided to rename the

state library building for Joel Pritchard. I wondered if you could tell that story, who originated that idea, how that came about? Was there much discussion?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. The Republicans did it. They were in the majority and I had always admired Joel Pritchard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You signed on to it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was on the Women's Commission with me under Governor Evans and on the Women's Council when Governor Evans established the Women's Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, one of the few men who had served on it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One of the few men who supported the abortion issue; we were usually on the same side of issues. I remember when I offered the amendment on gun control – on repeater rifles – and I lost it by one vote; he said if it had been a tie, he'd have voted with me to amend the bill. Because he was absolutely adamant on gun control. And he came and told me that himself. He walked over to my desk and said, "I'm sorry it wasn't a tie."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you happen to go to the ceremony for the dedication of the library?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I don't know why. It might have been a Monday; I might have gone home for the weekend.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a decent day – sunny; there were balloons and speakers. He seemed very excited by it. At any rate, your name is on the Resolution.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody fought it. He was a good guy. He and Evans were two of the good guys. You know, the “white hats.” And I remember when I talked to Tom Swayze the other day at the annual meeting of the Consumer Credit Counseling – I'm on the board with Tom Swayze, former Speaker of the House – I talked to him about Phil Talmadge running for Governor and asked him if he thought Sid Morrison might be running. And he said he doubted that they would ever try again because of the religious right problems. The moderate Republicans felt they would never be able to elect a Governor again after the severe loss they had just suffered when their party supported Ellen Craswell for Governor. He said it to me!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must have been pretty frustrated. Can we talk now about your really big bill that year, the trauma bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I love that bill! It was a great bill. Well, there was no money for trauma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's talk about the context, first. Can you tell me the situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was done during the time that Phil Talmadge did the health care bill. We did a bill that defined the principles of good trauma care and laid out the principles that should be included. At the same time we did the trauma protocol bill, the health care bill was to pick up the cost; the money was in that bill to take care of trauma. And then we lost the trauma care when we lost the health care bill after the next election. It was still on the books and most of the states immediately copied our lead for the protocols for trauma and a lot of states followed us and did similar legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So can you tell me a little about what those protocols are?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it defined such that it had to affect so many parts of the body before it was considered trauma, that those areas shut down, you would die. And you had to have a medical doctor see them within a certain time limit to diagnose and take care of the trauma. The bill included lots of things that defined it. It was sponsored and lobbied by the State Medical Association and the EM people, the firefighters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because it's so much more expensive than an ordinary accident to treat?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's the timing. There has to be a doctor there within a short period of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it just a matter of speed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a matter of speed and diagnosis. So part of it was the timing of the doctor seeing the victim; you had to have a medical specialist present or on call, to be there within an hour or a short period of time – half an hour in some cases.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's part of the expense, that you have to have these people on call?

**Sen. Wojahn:** On call, available. Anyway, that was passed and then we provided funding for trauma care in the health care bill. It was all a part of what was coming on. Well, the next year the health care bill went down the tube when the Republicans regained the majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this passed in 1993 and then in '95 you lost it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We passed the trauma protocols bill, but they were all dependent upon funding. And the funding was gone with the loss of the Phil Talmadge health care bill. And so we had to come up with another way and no one seemed to be able to get a handle on it. Rosa Franklin got some money in the budget for it, but it was five million dollars, which was only a pittance of what we needed. So I went to the auto dealers and they were willing to talk about that with us and to collect money for us if they could also get authorization to impose a small



fee to collect money to pay for the finalization of a car sale – where they have to apply for the license plate and do the necessary paperwork. Most states in the Union were providing anywhere from \$25 to \$200 for this service but the state of Washington was very delinquent and never allowed them to collect money for that purpose. California – all the states – were giving them some money to do that. They were having to hire new people to do that work. They had to have an accountant to do all this work. They had been trying to get a fee for that. I said, “If you will collect \$10 for us, we’ll give you \$15 to collect that fee. So you get \$15, we get \$10 for trauma.” We calculated that would be enough to cover the biennial budget need based upon motor vehicle sales.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a case of, “We need this, so we’ll do this for you?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** “We’ll help you, if you’ll help us.” Yes. So they were getting ready to collect some money for this purpose and some money for us and it sounded like a good deal. I mean, I have always believed you have to give in order to get sometimes! So I took that to the Legislature and got strong sponsors from both sides of the aisle, but it didn’t go through that time. I couldn’t get the bill considered in committee in time, in Ways and Means, so I went back with it the next year, and it was more carefully thought out and worked out by that time. And the car dealers lobbied for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got everybody on board who had something to do with it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got a lot of good sponsors, Democrats and Republicans. God, I had great sponsors on that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yourself, of course as prime; then Senators Deccio, Thibaudeau, Wood, Oke, Loveland, Sellar, Snyder, Fairley, Spanel, Sheldon, McCaslin, West, Bauer, Winsley, Goings, and Schow.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Can you imagine a better group? All the leaders were there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s very good. That’s quite a line-up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would have had Barney Goltz who had been Pro Tem before if he hadn’t retired. I had Sellar. McDonald didn’t go on it with me. West was there when we did the original trauma and I reminded him of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he’s still with you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and he’d been co-chair of Ways and Means before that; he knew. And so he was on board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d done your homework.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got it through the Senate easily, and then it got stopped in the House by Carrell. He wouldn’t do it. He said it wasn’t fair to assess a fee on motor vehicles. He said it was a tax and not a fee. We had gotten a definition from the Senate attorneys before we ever dropped the bill in the hopper that it was a fee and not a tax – the Senate attorneys had said, “It is a fee, not a tax.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that’s an important distinction for those people worried about taxes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It went to the Finance Committee for some reason where Carrell served, although he was not the chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of your problem right there? That it got assigned to the wrong committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. A big problem, because we couldn’t get it through. The House didn’t like it; they didn’t like the idea of taking money out of Transportation. The chair of Transportation didn’t like it. When I took it to the State Board of Health, to get their endorsement of it, they had suggested that I also add a dollar on each new license plate application. They said, “Why don’t you just take what you’re doing and add another dollar; that will give you another pot of money to draw from so you have plenty of money.” So we added that to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand your connection with the car dealers was that most trauma cases, of course, are caused by car accidents. That was the tie-in there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The tie-in was the fact that forty to sixty percent of all trauma is caused by

automobiles and motor vehicles – motorcycles, which are included. And that the forty percent, about or thirty-to-forty percent, is caused by guns and knives and bullets and I wanted to do them too and I was told to get off of that kick.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s probably much more difficult!

**Sen. Wojahn:** So I didn’t put that on the bill. I put just motor vehicles – that included all motor vehicles – everything but boats. It included motorcycles, mobile homes that are on the road, and cars. Anything – but not boats or airplanes. And so it was great; it was a great bill. And when it got into the House, the Senate chair of Transportation was against it, Senator Prince.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because he just saw the words “motor vehicles” and there it went?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator Prince couldn’t stand the bill. It was in Ways and Means, but he heard about it and he said, “I will never go for that bill because we need that one dollar for things that we need to do. And I never want to lose that.” So we took it off. And then he was okay with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were just going to go with the car dealers and not any of these other things? Keep it simple?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. And not licensing. So Prince took his foot off the bill at that point. Anyway, so it got to the House and I couldn’t get it out of committee because of Carrell.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn’t he from Pierce County, too? Not your seatmate, though, further south?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Lakewood. Yes, and Pierce County was the one who needed trauma care desperately. He wouldn’t go for it. The bill had not passed the House – it hadn’t even gotten out of committee and the chair appointed a conference committee, sort of an informal conference committee from the Finance Committee in the House and members of the Senate Health Care Committee. And the Senate members on the committee were made up of two Republicans, Shirley Winsley and Deccio – and me. We got good people. So we went over there and we got in this big battle with the House side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Representative Carrell still interpreting this as a tax? Was that the sticking point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was using that as a pretext to kill the bill. Plus he said it wasn’t fair to people, that it should be on moving violations. He said he was going to go to the Speaker and have it declared a tax. So I went to the Speaker and he wouldn’t talk to me! Then I had to go to his attorney, I called and he wouldn’t see me. I just went to the attorney and he wouldn’t answer. And I said, “The Senate attorneys have found that it was a fee. Are you going to challenge that?” And he said, “I can’t tell you; it depends on the Speaker.” And the Speaker wouldn’t see me. We were at impasse. The committee met several times and I refused to back down. It was about Sine Die time and finally the one member of the committee who was on my side, the Democrat from the Twenty-ninth District, Steve Conway, got us back together again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The big thing that you talk about is that there was only one hospital in the state, then located in Seattle, which was authorized as a trauma care center at the highest level – “One”, and that, of course, you needed care in Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seattle was “Trauma Level One” and Spokane was “Trauma Level Two;” there wasn’t another Trauma Two in the state. We needed one in Tacoma. And Tacoma couldn’t do it because they didn’t have the money. They didn’t have the finances to do it. There’s a lot more to that than meets the eye yet. Steve Conway, the member from the Twenty-ninth District, was holding this together because every one of us took our potshots. Also, Joyce Mulliken was the other member of the committee and she was on the same side as Carrell. She had worked for an auto dealer in her home town and she wouldn’t support it even though the auto dealers were actively lobbying for it. Maybe her dealer didn’t like it, I don’t know. But Steve Conway kept it alive. We met one more time and I had to back down. What Carrell wanted was to assess a moving violation of so much...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, for speeding tickets?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Speeding tickets, but we could only collect those on state highways. But that was not a reliable source. People don't pay unless they are served warrants or are arrested. And judges often reduce the fines or dismiss the case. It's a long process. I felt it was an exercise in futility and that there wouldn't be enough money to pay for trauma care. His way also took away money from the Safety Commission, which was partially funded this way. And he made us back down on the amount that we could collect. It was only four dollars, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Didn't it come down to something like fifty cents difference in the end that you were haggling over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** From twenty-five dollars – part of it going to the dealers and part going to the trauma care – from \$25 down to \$6.50, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you lost a lot of your anticipated funding.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a nothing! And we had calculated what trauma needed down to the dollar. We knew that it wouldn't be enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In his statements to the press, Carrell called your idea “punishing the innocent.” He wanted to switch the cost to people who had “done something”...to use speeding tickets.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It doesn't punish anybody. Carrell wanted to take the money out of the Safety Fund by assessing moving violations. That same fund helps support the courts and other public safety programs in the state. Let me tell you, I understand that the lobbyist for the Supreme Court lost his job over this bill. He was incensed about it and spoke out and Carrell got his job. This is the kind of deadly thing that bothers me about some legislators. Because that took money away from the Supreme Court. It denied them of some of their funding, I believe. We were stealing from Peter to pay Paul. I thought it was inappropriate. And the courts didn't like it. Anyway, it reduced the amount down and I was forced to choke it down or lose the bill. And then, I believe, the auto dealers

gave up their share to trauma, which was a generous gesture. I heard they gave that up so that we would get more. I understand they said, “Well, it won't help us, but it will help trauma,” which I thought was really great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this one of those instances where you have to take a half loaf?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I ended up taking it because it was down to the wire; it was about the last bill to pass. And we finally let it go; Carrell was adamant.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you got part of it, anyway.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I'm still unhappy about it. I tried to help him out – out of the Legislature! We've tried to get him out of office. We thought we had one of the best candidates available – a young attorney who won the boys' ranch settlement against DSHS and several other large personal injury cases – Jack Connolly who's with one of the biggest law firms in Tacoma. He's a personal friend of mine, and he ran in the Twenty-eighth against Carrell and lost. A brilliant attorney, graduated from Stanford University, but he lost and he won't run again. Now he lives in the Twenty-seventh District. So he won't run against Carrell again. He's going up in the world and I don't think he wants to run again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was his window and that's that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was his window and he agreed to do it. And he was so good. And then, the battle occurred in Tacoma. We couldn't get the trauma care after they got the money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why, what happened then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The doctors – I found out later – wanted to still send trauma cases to Seattle. Because there weren't enough specialists apparently, to cover that and they didn't want to be bugged in their practices. So hospitals had to go out and hire more trauma doctors as staff. Tacoma now has trauma doctors, which cost more money. And the battle occurred after the bill passed. We weren't getting as much as we

needed, but it wouldn't have mattered because the doctors fought it anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they never speak out the whole time you were battling this? They waited until it was over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. They waited. They apparently didn't want it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think some people knew that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm sure they did. The hospital didn't tell me. No one told me. And they didn't rejoice when it passed. We signed the bill at Tacoma General Hospital. The Governor came in and signed the bill there and there wasn't any rejoicing. And one of the surgeons lived in my building next door here and he didn't even tell me, Stan Harris.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you just never know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So, I found out later. But we needed to do it because Harborview said they were finally able to pay for uncompensated care. They were collecting from people who had insurance, but if they didn't have it, the uncompensated care was suffering and then, through this bill, they were able to pay for it. Tacoma General had to hire doctors and they were able to pay for it. And the last Legislature took the money away. They raided the trust fund. We had a reserve fund and they raided it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because you had this dedicated money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's dedicated, but Ways and Means took it from the fund. It was finally put back in, but not for several months.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How could they do that? I always thought that dedicated funds were what that sounds like – dedicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Dedicated funds are trust funds and they are not supposed to touch them. But they did. It's difficult; we don't usually resort to dedicating funds, but this was essential so we did it for trauma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they were looking for money down every couch cushion to balance the budget that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Marty Brown didn't even know they had done this and the Governor did not know it had been done. Because he replaced the money in the supplemental the following January and the Senate kept it in. There must have been a loophole somewhere in the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tacoma did create a trauma center. Did any other community use this money?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sacred Heart in Spokane had one and they were apparently able to maintain it because their doctors cooperated. I'm on the trauma committee, the Governor's Committee. It's made up of emergency fire fighters, EMs, and doctors in hospitals. I know the administrator from Harborview – every time I would go in for a committee meeting – he would come over and he kept thanking me every time I was there for doing the bill. He said, "We can pay for the uncompensated care now." And the people at Tacoma General thanked me generously. The money goes out to all hospitals who provide trauma care; according to the need, it goes to everyone in the state who has the program.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you did do some good there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, I did some good by holding on to it. It was a matter of principle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were thinking of the long term. That was an era that many people point to as being more ideological, more divided, more partisan. I don't know if that was what made the trauma bill so difficult, but a different spirit seemed to pervade that session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a Republican House and a Speaker who wouldn't listen. I believe the issue was used as a political tool.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It has been said that the old art of compromise was not as valued in these years as it used to be. That there was kind of a new tone. Did you feel that? For instance, some state leaders in the Republican Party, Dale Foreman,

John Carlson, other spokespersons, were pushing pretty hard to redefine their party message and move it to the right. And there were a lot of new members. And as new members often are, they come in all charged up; they are going to change the world in a day. Their idealism was not yet tempered by experience?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Change the world. That's right. Well, it was the religious right who had taken over the Republican Party.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ellen Craswell had run for Governor, but lost to Gary Locke, but even she was thinking of leaving the Republican Party because for her it wasn't pure enough. The Libertarian Party was forming which was attracting some members, including the Craswells. It seems to be a time of flux. Historically, the Democrats' soft edge pulled the Party to the left, while the Republican Party was being pulled to the right by the Libertarians in these years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which made it difficult for moderates in either party to negotiate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'd like to talk about that because the issue of "civility" in the Legislature was really brought to the fore in the '97 session. Was it that noticeable at the time? Or is it hindsight, where people look back on this session and see it as more divisive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was noticeable. We found that there were varying degrees of liberalism in our own caucus. And some things that seemed to me to be absolutely right on social issues we could not persuade some members of our caucus. And then in other areas besides social issues – other issues of business – we could not arrive at a moderate position. It was fostered a lot by the political infighting that was going on within the major parties in the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it pull everyone to the right?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not everyone, but some became dissidents in their own caucus. And it made it very difficult to get a compromise on anything. And if something was compromised

or something was actually passed it was because both parties totally agreed. And that was true with the trauma bill. There was no opposition in the Senate at all except with one person, the chair of Transportation; he said, "You can't use the additional dollar on a driver's license because we need that for transportation." But that was about the only thing, because we had unanimity, almost. I think it would have passed the Senate. So there were very few bills at that time that were not hard fought and did not take up a lot of floor time. Or that were dismissed because of the floor time which would be needed to debate, which you might lose in the end anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were more and more things dying in committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were dying in Rules Committee. Some of them in committee, but often Rules would be the death knell because of the dissidence. On either side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just wasn't worth it? There was no center?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No center.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But there was a sort of scrappiness about some of the things that were going on. There was the rather infamous incident with Senator West threatening the building industry lobbyist over the phone, which hit the papers with quite a splash.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I think a lot of us sort of agreed – not with the remark that he made – but with his feelings on the issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand he had been a little hard-pressed by this particular lobbyist.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he thought he was God. Still does. And I don't think he spoke for the entire building industry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very few things are monolithic like that. There was also the rather well-noted Pam Roach speech on her flowers which were removed from her desk.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the funny thing is that it was one of her own caucus members who had them removed because of a severe allergy. And

that was the longtime Senator Irv Newhouse. He sat either right behind her or in front of her and they were giving him fits with his asthma. But he didn't do it; he had someone else do it, I understand. This is what I understand. And he was doing "this" when she was beating on everybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Cringing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was cringing. We could see him cringing in his seat. And everyone knew who was the instigator, but no one would admit who had done it. Nobody really knows. It probably was a page or one of the security people. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were the flowers just moved, or absolutely removed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were put in the back of the room, way away, either there or I don't know. They were still in the chambers, I think, but had been moved away. As I understand on the floor or back by the davenport.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, somebody just forgot to tell her what the issue was?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I imagine it should have been done by her own caucus and either they neglected to, forgot to or didn't choose to, and I don't know which it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These incidents were really played up in the newspapers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, she took a lot of floor time in order to have her screaming fit, which was not appropriate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did these outbursts impact how you worked together in the Senate?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That added to the dismay and part of it was the fact that most of us knew that it was not one of our own who had done it. And I think she was pointedly trying to say it was a Democrat who had done it and we knew that it was not. Or suspected that it was not, and so most people, I think most of the senators, were really upset and chagrined over the whole thing. They just wanted to shut her up.

That's something that didn't occur during the reign of John Chergberg because he really ruled with an iron fist and the decorum in the Senate was always maintained. Men didn't appear on the floor of the Senate without a shirt and tie. I remember someone came with jeans on, on a Saturday, and he was asked to leave; that was a Republican. So you see, he did maintain decorum and everybody respected that. They didn't argue with it; they didn't fight with it. They didn't obviously disagree with it. They just respected it and respected him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had a certain stature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And so it led us to believe that there was a lack of respect within the Senate, which kind of hurt because I think all of us expected it. The only time that there was a difference was when it was decreed that women should not wear pantsuits in the Senate. And that was some time prior to this. And I was on the side of the women that if it were a pantsuit like a dress suit, why not? Because sometimes there was a real draft in the Senate and it got really cold. Especially where I was sitting. It was kind of a tunnel through that seat and we needed pants for warmth. And so it got dropped. It was stated and then it was dropped immediately.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it all depends on what they look like, I suppose.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It started, I think, with telling the support staff of the Senate, with the secretaries, and then it gradually evolved where they were told they couldn't wear pantsuits and that's when I became a little bit upset and we got that straightened around real fast. It never arose to the point of being ludicrous or appearing in the press. It could have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, easily.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If we hadn't stopped it. There are lots of things we stopped because there was a consensus of opinion when we talked it over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's really what you're trying for.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These small incidents that I'm talking about really lead up to a rather large incident that happened in late April of that year. The Senate was working on the budget bill and, as always, that's very contentious and the Republicans were having difficulty getting it through their own caucus – Senator Roach was withholding her vote. She wanted more license tab money to go to Transportation, I understand. She had some kind of issue with that. And by the time they could come around to accommodate her needs, Senator McCaslin was apparently fed up and refused to vote with them. Which meant – since it was so tight – they had then voted on the budget twice, which is the rule – that you can only put a measure through twice. And then, what? Does it have to go back to committee and be refashioned, what would normally happen next?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember that rule.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At any rate, they were going to just ram it through a third time, but Senator Snyder became very upset with what was happening and made an impassioned speech on the floor of the Senate about respecting the rules, respecting decorum, respecting the old way of doing things. And he then resigned from the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The contentiousness had gone beyond the ability for him to even represent his caucus. And at the same time, McCaslin became embittered with Roach. One of the funny things that happened, he came to me after one of these sessions and said, "Would you please ask the Secretary of the Senate to pass out earplugs so we can put them in our ears when Roach gets up to speak?" He said it to me! And I just happened to have some earplugs in my office so I went and got them and gave them to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, no!

**Sen. Wojahn:** So yes, I remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was getting to be quite an impasse then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You see, it came to a head with that, with Sid resigning because the moderates who got along and liked Sid and liked the ability

of Sid to negotiate for our caucus were just inflamed and upset over the whole thing and so he resigned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any forewarning that he would resign?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no, no. He didn't mention anything to us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He struggled within himself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. He just did it. It was shocking to all of us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When he gave his speech, did he then walk off the floor? What happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we adjourned. I don't remember. It was just very traumatic. I felt like I'd been shot in the stomach. I mean, it was one of the most shattering things that has ever happened because it was so unexpected. And as I remember it, he walked off the floor and then we immediately went into caucus. And I think we came out and adjourned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you went into caucus, was he present there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, he walked away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you do? Did you all just kind of reel around, trying to take in what had happened?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can't remember. We may have just adjourned. I probably just went home. Remember, I was over in the Cherberg Building at the time, because I had to move out of the Pro Tem office and I don't remember if I went back to my office or whether I just went home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were all in shock?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I probably went to my office and cried, I don't remember. But it seemed hopeless, because if Sid couldn't negotiate – and Sid was probably one of the most level-headed, common-sense people we had – it was going to be impossible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of the comments that he made, he said: "I've always been very proud to be associated with the Senate and before that the House. But my voice and my vote have been

greatly diminished, so I'm going to immediately submit my resignation as a senator from the Nineteenth District." Then the newspaper article I'm reading from said, "He said he believed the minority was being run over by a majority with no respect for the Senate, its rules, or the integrity of the democratic process." And then back to his quote: "I have a great respect for this place; it's going to hell in a hand-basket." And then the reporter said, "Everyone was near tears and no one quite knew what to do."

**Sen. Wojahn:** How could you even respond to that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would be pretty stunning.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know whether anyone spoke anymore. I think everything just sort of disintegrated at that point. And maybe the Republicans began to think of what it had been like with John Cherberg in control. He always controlled the Senate and this would not have happened had he been on the podium.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They, in their remarks, took it seriously, but also sort of passed it off. They don't quite know what to say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to remember that at that time, Newhouse was Pro Tem. I think he tried to calm Sid down, if I remember correctly. Said it wasn't that bad. I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, many people, of course, tried to smooth it over.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, persuade him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This article goes on to describe what happened next. It talks about the back-and-forth in the Republican caucus trying to pass the budget and then it said, "That still left the Republicans a vote short. It also left them in a box, with their members refusing to vote. Legislative rules say a bill can be voted on only twice so they decided to change the rules. But Lieutenant Governor Owen said he would have no part of allowing the change to effect the failed budget bill. Republicans at one point thought they would have to override Owen to get what they wanted, a move that would have been almost as unprecedented as Sid Snyder's resignation."

**Sen. Wojahn:** You never challenge the decision of a chair. Oh!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't even know you could.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, you can, but don't you ever do it. That's a death knell.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a thing to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I did it once with John Cherberg and then I immediately withdrew it. Oh, I'll never forget! I didn't know any better. I was just a freshman senator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's one thing to do it out of ignorance, it's quite another to do it as a calculated move.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, you don't do it. Did they challenge it? They didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then they thought better of that, apparently. The article went on to say, "Owen said Republicans finally found a parliamentary way that he had to 'reluctantly agree' allowed them to change the rules, despite howls of outrage from Snyder and the Democrats."

**Sen. Wojahn:** He should never have done that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know enough about the rules to know what exactly he did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He found a way to get around it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But apparently there were other ways that were less challenging to the norm?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you usually sent it back to the committee of origin. Back to the committee, to be redone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just couldn't do it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wouldn't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wouldn't or couldn't. McDonald, who was leading this, said, "Rules are made so you can drive to conclusion on issues; they are not made to impede the process." Would it be that sort of statement that would drive Senator Snyder into a tailspin?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. If you're going to break a rule, you need to redo the rule and



present it to the body as a whole and then vote to change it, rather than to just do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you have moved to suspend the rules or something along those lines?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You could move to suspend the rules, but they didn't have the votes to do that. You see, it needs a two-thirds vote to suspend the rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, and they're having a hard enough time getting a simple majority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They couldn't get the votes anyway. Otherwise, if you're going to change the rule, you've got to do it in a thoughtful and orderly manner.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's always a way, but not this way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was anything to get your own way. As I stated before, Republicans have not been the leadership often enough in the Senate or the House, and they don't know how to lead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, something went terribly wrong. So, I gather, Senator Snyder packed up and went back home to Long Beach and after the initial shock was over, did the caucus then meet and try to figure out what to do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We implored him to come back. Although, we couldn't promise him anything because we didn't have the votes. The Republicans had to promise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I gather that there were promises. There were apologies. There was something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know nothing about the apologies; they were never publicized. I don't know for what reason he came back, but it would have been an appropriate one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were letters of support signed by virtually everyone. The Governor was calling him; all kinds of people apparently were calling him. Probably his constituents were also weighing in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm sure they were. Because you know, he'd run unopposed.

Always. And he never said anything unkind about anybody. He never did. He was a total gentleman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked. He was implored upon and he did come back.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A week later, was it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something like that. Did that change the tenor of the session? Was that shocking enough to knock everyone into shape? Can you recall if things went a little differently afterwards?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I recall it was very painful for the time he was gone. We just did things that were not controversial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of stepped back a little?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Stepped back and took another good look. But you see, he'd been Secretary of the Senate and the rules were embedded in him, that to some of us it would not be as noticeable. But to him, it would be just a real shattering experience. And the audacity of one party doing that without thoughtfully doing it. Just on the spur of the moment doing it. Keep bringing it back. And that must have been on the final passage. With the AIDS bill, for instance, it just kept coming back from the House – the same thing – and Deccio kept trying to force the Republicans to vote and they bandied that bill back and forth four times. And the fifth time, he finally won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But presumably within the framework of the rules?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was on a bill which had already passed the Senate at one time and it was in a concurrence resolution. So that's the reason for that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I remember that happened too, when they tried, years back in '77, when they tried to force the Women's Commission into all the other commissions like the Asian-American and the Mexican-American and they tried to put the Women's Council in that same group, and it wasn't appropriate. And every time it came out of Rules, I moved it back to

Ways and Means and I won. And then they would call a Ways and Means meeting and bring it back again, put it on the floor within the hour, and vote it again, and again I got up and moved it back to Ways and Means. It didn't do anything; it just stayed on the calendar for the rest of the session. It never was voted on again. And that was the way it was done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that have the same effect as tabling it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But it stayed on the calendar the whole time. But I was adamant, and they said, "Forget it, it's dead." But apparently, that is an old rule that I'd never been aware of it before. God, I was Pro Tem and I wasn't aware of that rule. I remember the number of the rule. We changed the joint rules too often. So this could have been a joint rule, I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The heart of it was the protection of the minority, so that they were not just overrun. That seems a very basic value in our system of government. Maybe that was the breaking point for Senator Snyder, that there were certain principles.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He'd been watching things that were close and having to let go because the rules were not tight enough. But this was the last straw, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something broke here, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he couldn't negotiate, either. And at the same time, I think there were members of our caucus who were negotiating with the Republicans. He couldn't control that – I suspect that. I can't prove it, but I think I know who they were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's always a little of that, isn't there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course. Anything to get what you want. And some people will resort to it. I never did except once. It was the Displaced Homemaker bill I did it with. And I had twenty-some on my side in the House and Polk and the Republicans were fighting me in the House because they wanted the credit for it. It was my bill. And eventually we won. I remember that. But that's the only time I ever did that. And that

was not for a concession that affected just me; it affected every woman in the state. It wasn't personal is what I'm saying. Some people will do it to get concessions in their districts, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But there's also got to be a world of difference between a bill of that nature and the budget bill; the main budget bill, which was the breaking point here. That's much bigger.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's true, right. The budget bill is the essential reason for a legislature and to do it on that bill, it was insurmountable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it would be worth taking a stand on, put it that way. So, when Senator Snyder came back, did everyone kind of shift back to some less obstreperous tone?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think the Republicans became a little more circumspect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Less confrontational?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, less confrontational and more circumspect in what they could and could not do and get away with. I'm sure they'd been getting away with a lessening of the rules prior to this time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's always that erosion of small things, then suddenly you think you've lost a lot.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because the small things become big things eventually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, eventually. It can take a toll. Well, that was one of the more stunning things that happened in 1997. There was another issue, not quite on that level, but it took up a lot of time and energy – the debate over the Seahawks Stadium. You're making a face. In your newsletter, I thought it was quite interesting, when you said, "Some political issues seem to generate more heat than light."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I said that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you said, "We spent too much time debating the stadium at the expense of other much more important issues. Many

deserving bills were pushed aside while the debate continued on how much the state should spend to help a professional football team and one of the richest men in the world who wants to buy it.” I gather that puts you on the side of not thinking the state should build a stadium?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. I didn’t vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that come up near the beginning of the session and rocket through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It came up fairly early in session; I don’t remember just when, but it was the undertone of the whole session, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly was a distraction. Of course, we know that it passed. How was it presented? Can you tell me your arguments against it? Why people were for it and why you were against it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn’t believe that public money should be spent on a stadium such as that. That privateers make the money from it and it seemed to me it should be a totally private affair. We gave the right to sell those loges that were \$2,500 up; they should be able to build something with that money – with private money – not the public’s money. I don’t think the public was well served.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was this stadium different from the Kingdome and from what became Safeco Stadium?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We had a stadium, but the outdoor people wanted an open stadium, but one they could close. We had the argument, “It always rains here and we’d have to forego games a lot.” So someone spotted the stadium in Toronto that had the retractable roof. And so it was decided that that’s what they wanted. And it was the “haves” in the Legislature who wanted it. I represented the “have-not” district. My people could not afford it. And my people probably couldn’t even afford to go to a game if they had a couple of kids. I thought it was wrong to spend public money when people were going without. And that was my district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Eventually, it went to a referendum, which passed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that part of it still prevails, because they’re still trying to get money out of Allen. He’s been taking the money and they say that there’s too much profit being made, that he should be paying more of it back to them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So wasn’t that part of the bill to say how it was supposed to actually work?

The bill review I have says, “The financing of the stadium is by a combination of state, local and private sources. The state would impose a sales and use tax of .016 percent. This tax is credited against the state sales and use tax, therefore consumers will not see an increase in tax.” I’m not sure I understand this; doesn’t it, in effect, dedicate a portion of the sales tax to the stadium and therefore it wouldn’t be available for other uses? Is that one of the problems here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it doesn’t raise the sales tax, but it takes away money from other programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It dedicates a portion of the sales tax to that purpose so it would not be available for other programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that could hurt other things. Let’s see: “The revenues will be deposited into the stadium and exhibition center account and used to retire bonds issued for the construction of the stadium and exhibition center. The tax and credit expire when the bonds are retired but not later than twenty-three years after the tax is first collected.” That’s a long time. So, it’s tying up state money for as much as twenty-three years? That’s a big commitment.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Twenty-three years. Yes. But it should have been left flexible. The money would continue to go into this fund even if it was no longer needed. And what happens to it? It was a different situation from trauma care, which could run short. We never had an excess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, furthermore, I see the Lottery Commission was directed to conduct new games and distribute \$6 million to the Stadium and Exhibition Center Account. Would

that, again, be money which would have been available for other uses but is now all going to the Stadium?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Dedicated. The thing is that most of the time, the Legislature is very reluctant to dedicate any funding, because eventually it could ruin other programs. In other words, if you dedicate so much money to a program and there's an excess of money, you can't spend it for anything but for that program when it's needed in other places. And eventually it can become a real problem. And so normally we do not dedicate funds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it ties your hands for up to twenty-three years. And how do you know what the economy is going to be doing in twenty-three years? But nonetheless, here it is.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It's done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "The management of the stadium must promote the Lottery with in-kind advertising." Well, that's easy enough. "A retail sales tax deferral is provided on the cost of constructing the facility. The deferral applies to labor and services, material and supplies." Well, I guess, that's not a dedication; it's that they are not going to collect taxes, so it's a diminishment, I suppose. They could have collected these taxes, but instead...So you're cutting the state in a different way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Because I remember now when Leonard Sawyer was Speaker and we built the stadium in Tacoma, we raised the sales tax in December and the bids had come back in after the change and then they were not sufficient to cover the new sales tax. I tried to get them to retain the same sales tax that they were paying at that time and I couldn't get the bill. I'll never forget that! I think it was one of the reasons I was so incensed over this. They were giving them a concession – it only amounted to \$150,000 in the Tacoma area, which wasn't that much and I couldn't even get it. It seemed just stupid to me to give it to the Seattle people when they wouldn't even listen and we were in the majority then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's a good question, why did this pass?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seattle legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are so enamored of football?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Seattle legislators had the vote and they were gung-ho, our own caucus included. Jeanne Kohl-Welles was one of their leaders. Some of it is coming home to roost now because they expect Allen to pay back the portion of that money and his attorney says that the Legislature is not clear. And that's the battle; it's in the court right now. "The intent of the Legislature is not clear," is what he's saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your newsletter, you allude to getting a lot of calls, letters, cards – messages of one kind or another – in support of this. And also, you note that people don't understand this bill. They don't understand that the state's putting up a lot of money. They don't understand what the ripple effects are going to be.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had calls from people saying, "Why not let the stadium go; we need football here," and all this other crap. But they didn't understand that it was taking away money which was needed for social programs and foster care programs for children. Any time you tap into money sources you take away from those who should have been considered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's really only one pot of money and it has to go somewhere?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your newsletter, you were very pointed. You say, "Mr. Allen is making an investment; he will get his money back in several different ways." There was this notion, I think, that he was altruistic in just giving this money, but there's a big difference between investing and donating money. Was there was a lot of confusion about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, he wants to do charter schools too, because he's got an investment in school books or something right now, as I understand it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He does give a lot of money. But not in this case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He gives a lot of money, but he knows he's going to get it back. That's the difference between Allen and Gates. Gates gives his money away, with no rules, without a lot of attachments often.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For different issues, too. Those were some of the difficulties of that session, but let's turn to some of the things you accomplished, besides the trauma bill.

You had kind of a slew of what I would characterize as "technical bills," making corrections in things and fixing up some pieces of legislation which weren't working well for one reason or another. You had one authorizing revisions in medical assistants managed care contracting under federal demonstration waivers. This is a program called Healthy Options that you were trying to strengthen, I gather. Just cleaning up the rules for how people get health care – there were nineteen different managed health care insurance carriers – and just helping people choose their carrier and all the different little regulations that go into that.

Another bill of that type, making a technical correction to statutes administered by the Department of Health. There was an incorrect reference to a law regulating nursing assistants in the Uniform Disciplinary Act of 1994 and you put in a bill with several other people on your committee to correct that. Would these be just things that the Department of Health would come to you and say, "We've got this problem."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of them would be Department requests, formally done. Or we could do it informally. But a department request bill usually goes because it's a rule change or it's a clarification.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here's another one, "merging the health professions account and the medical disciplinary account." Again, with the Department of Health. Another one, clarifying who may legally use the title "nurse." This must have implications that an ordinary citizen

wouldn't quite understand. But one of those little things that needed help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the nurses have to be licensed. You shouldn't be able to call yourself a nurse unless you're a registered nurse or a licensed practical.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, just defining that. Here's one, which is probably a little bit bigger bill, regulating the sales of nonprofit hospitals.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think with that bill we disposed of any hospital in the state that was a for-profit hospital. I don't believe we have any for-profit hospitals in the state anymore. I think they are all nonprofits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The background in the bill review said, "Nonprofit organizations, including hospitals, are created under laws that require them to serve charitable or other public purposes. In return, federal and state laws accord them certain financial advantages such as tax exemptions. On a national level, however, nonprofit hospitals are increasingly being acquired by for-profit corporations. When this occurs there's a public interest in insuring that the acquiring corporation will continue to provide the community served by the hospital with quality, affordable health care and that the proceeds from the transaction will be used for charitable purposes. There's concern that should such acquisitions occur in Washington, our laws are insufficient to ensure that these public interests will be served." It went on to describe how public hospital districts were created. "A person may not acquire a hospital owned by another non-profit corporation without the approval of the Department of Health." So it sounds like it was throwing some roadblocks in the way of these acquisitions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think there was one acquired here in Pierce County. It used to be a county hospital; I remember Dr. Burton Brown was one of the early directors. The hospital went through several transformations – it was even a TB sanatorium for awhile – and a for-profit hospital for a short time, but they couldn't make it and Pierce County bought it back. It seems that for-profit hospitals have problems in this state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's really a complicated question.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What you do is to make the rules tight enough so that people are not being hurt. But I believe that then hospitals can't make a profit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Should health care perhaps be run like public utilities, as Senator Talmadge wanted?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They should be. Health care is a public right, I believe. And nobody should make a profit out of illness and sickness and death. It's a right. We define it as a right, you know, and now we're not funding it. There's never enough money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm afraid it usually comes down to that. Well, here were some money-saving issues: you sponsored another bill adopting the Diabetes Cost Reduction Act.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I sponsored that with Senator Jeannette Wood. It was her bill; I was only the second sponsor. She had managed to get it, but with a sunset clause attached. But then she lost her next election, so I was able to sponsor a bill the following year to remove the sunset date so it could be available to senior citizens from there on out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the bill where you found that some insurance companies cover parts of what diabetics needed for their care but hardly any covered all the needs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Most of them didn't cover the things needed to test, the testing supplies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The little blood testing kit?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The little meter and the testing strips and the schooling – about a week's course that you take that costs money, about \$150, and they didn't cover the educational program. So they had to cover educational programs, and the testing strips, anything used in a diagnostic way. Not the insulin or the pills. And we got that. But it's on a trial basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But that's critical for a diabetic, to understand their own needs. Most diabetics self-monitor their insulin levels now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. In order to understand and to work with it, you have to be trained; you have to learn. It's a learning process. And so Senator Wood got that and now I got it clean so that it's available to all senior citizens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just seniors? Not everyone?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm fighting them right now because I have to pay for my testing supplies. And I'm not supposed to and there's something in that bill that's flawed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you'll have to go to your legislator!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** First, the bill talks about statistics, how many people have diabetes, which is an astonishingly high number, and then what happens, you know – how many times they go to the hospital and all the costs associated with that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's very expensive. And one of the leading causes of death.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. The bill summary says, "The Legislature finds that access to medically-accepted standards of care for diabetes, its treatment, supplies, and self-management training, and education is crucial to prevent or delay complications of diabetes and its attendant costs." So this is a preventive measure. "After January 1, 1998, state-purchased health care and health carriers, licensed by the state, who provide health insurance coverage, which include pharmacy benefits within the state, must provide specified coverage for diabetic persons. These provisions do not apply to the Basic Health Plan or to the plans identical to the Basic Health Plan, which insurers are required to offer." That's interesting. And then it describes what you get: "Health care coverage may not be reduced or eliminated due to the act." And then: "The act is subject to sunset review and terminates on June 30, 2001." So, is that what you were able to address?

**Sen. Wojahn:** To remove it from sunset. But I don't know how the program works. I haven't figured it out and I still pay for my supplies.

Apparently if you're over sixty-five, your pharmacist is supposed to pay and then you are reimbursed by Medicare. And however you get reimbursed; maybe it's through Medicaid. I don't know. I have never been able to get mine paid for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you don't know and you had something to do with the legislation...then what does the average person do?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The answer is not there. There are always flaws in the law that are put there, sometimes on purpose and they escape legislators. They escaped me and I don't know. There are so many rules and regulations that people can't figure it out. And I don't know how to remove those, between Congress and state legislatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislature will have to take it up again at some point, then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They never will; it's too complicated. You've got to get someone who's prepared to stick to it for six or seven years. It won't happen otherwise. Between Congress, which is devious, and the Legislature of the state of Washington, which is devious, it's probably getting screwed all the time and I can't put my finger on all the ways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a full-time job.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not only that, there are so many areas. There are a million areas and one person can't possibly resolve it all. [Note: By 2009, this dilemma had been resolved by Congressional action. L.W.]

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but you certainly gave it a good try when it was your turn. Later that year, after session was over, you gave a speech entitled "Prospects for 1998 Legislative Session and Beyond," in which you talked about funding health care as your main topic and how difficult that was. You began with kind of a hard statement, you say, "Americans always do the right thing but only after exhausting all other possibilities."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's a quote from someone, I think it may have been Churchill. That was in behalf of the Patients' Bill of Rights, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you say, "We have not done the right thing; we tried but the effort was cut short." Then you talked further in the speech about what should be done for health care, but you don't seem to be holding out a lot of hope that these things will actually happen. You gave a lot of statistics about the Basic Health Care Plan and who's being helped and who's not being helped. And basically, it's the working poor who are being squeezed out in the middle there. They just can't quite make it. They are just above the threshold for receiving care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the working poor often can't afford it, even if we would reduce costs they can't afford it. Some of them would buy it for their children, but not for themselves because they can't afford it for themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you talked about stable public health funding as being the crucial issue. You note that the county voters rejected a Medic One special levy that election year. What would happen in that case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** 9-1-1 would not work. You couldn't dial 9-1-1 and get help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems kind of drastic. Did they find another way to fund that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think they finally passed a levy, eventually. I think they went right back, as I remember, because that was sort of guaranteed that if you called 9-1-1 you would get help, either from the police or the firefighters or for health care purposes, an ambulance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were people taking it for granted and forgetting that it had to actually be funded?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, naturally. Everybody does that. They want the services but they don't care to pay for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they might not understand how they are paid for.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's through special levies, but they don't understand that because they don't want to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then you go on in your speech and you face up to that "tax" word.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Is that when I proposed a one-percent? With the money placed in trust through a dedicated fund, which you can do, constitutionally without a two-thirds vote of the Legislature or the people. Up to one percent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You say that "subsidized health insurance is just an empty promise." Then you mention the flat-rate income tax.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. One-percent for health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you talked about all the different efforts over the years: the Health Services Act of 1993 and how that hasn't quite worked out the way you had wanted it to.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It got repealed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, well, that's one way of having it not work! In fact, within two years, it was repealed before it really got going. You're basically saying, "Things are getting worse; you know, we're coming to a desperate place here."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you're trying to alert whoever your audience is; do you remember who this talk was given to?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't remember, but I sent a copy of it to the press and they didn't use it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did mention something that will come up pretty shortly, that the AARP has proposed a "Patient's Right to Know" bill. And you more or less promise that you're going to work on this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I did and I got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So we'll be following that very quickly. You were gloomy on this whole issue, but it is gloomy. The situation was not getting better.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was getting worse. With the Health Bill of '93, we actually had begun to see

a reduction in premiums and beginning of competition. But the Republicans didn't like it and they distorted the truth about it. They said it was socialized medicine – that it was going to become socialized medicine, and they didn't like it, and it taxed businesses to a percentage that they thought was unfair; it told business what it had to do and they just repealed the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't have anything to put in its place?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, never. And we predicted at that time that premiums would skyrocket and people without a group to buy through would not be able to afford care, which has happened. You could see it coming. They scoffed at that. So that was a lot of the beginning of the animosity between the two parties too, over health care. And the Republican position that it was socialized medicine. And that's what I've been told with the health plan that I proposed, the one-percent for health, that it's socialized medicine. And we're becoming a "socialistic society." And all this other crap. Well, maybe so, but we can't handle our population as it is. And it's not going to get better; it's going to get worse, especially as we keep admitting other nationalities – our immigration laws.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many of them do come with health issues, it's true.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, it's true. We try to keep them out if they're unhealthy, you know. But you don't always find it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your speech is realistic, hard-hitting, but yes, it's tough to read. How do you keep fighting? How did you keep your spirits up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I just shrugged my shoulders and say, "Someday it will pass, you know." Someday.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Trying to take the long view?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's all you can do. Remember, I've been working on this for six years. And then when I couldn't get that, I adopted the Patients' Bill of Rights, because that at least made sense. Where they had to get



satisfaction out of an HMO [Health Maintenance Organization]. Because I suspected doctors were refusing to refer them when reference was necessary. If a doctor was out of his depth as a general practitioner, he often would not refer them to a specialist because he figured it would come out of his pocket. Or he was being paid by the insurance companies not to. Believe me, that happened! These are all suspicions that I have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You do have a champion in the Insurance Commissioner, Deborah Senn, who was working on these issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She was very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any contact with her?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always. We were always in contact. Trying to do something, sometimes different ways of doing the same thing. She got thrown out because the Republicans disliked her; she got tossed because of that. They said she was trying to write law and she was just standing up for what she believed in. And they distorted the truth and told the people that she was trying to become a legislator and she was not. And they have methods of insinuating against people that you can't fight, because they are half-truths and they win, because the press is on their side. Not so much the working press, but the publishers. And after all, she was a woman. I believe that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did rather go after her.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They did. They went after her hard and heavy and she lost her race. And she compared notes always with what we were doing and I tried to follow what she was doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that unusual? Was she different as an Insurance Commissioner that way? Did she have closer ties to the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. We had a Republican before, Marquardt, with whom I worked as closely as I could. And he did some things and some things he didn't do. He was helpful with the TMJ legislation, but for things in which we didn't agree, I failed. Except

through their attorney, Scott Jarvis, who was always good. He then went with the Attorney General and now he's back. He's a consumer attorney for Mike Kreidler; he's very good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe we should clarify. The Insurance Commissioner, of course, is a state-wide elected official and their primary duty is to what? Regulate insurance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Regulate insurance. But Insurance Commissioners have it very difficult; they have difficulty regulating insurance because it's not pre-regulated at a national level. It's one of the only industries – if not the only industry in the country – which is not regulated by Congress. There's no regulation; they leave it up to the states, which makes it difficult because so many of the insurance companies are based out-of-state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They're national companies?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We need a national bill, like for auto makers and bankers and everybody who is regulated. But not the insurance industry. It's crazy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. I noticed that Deborah Senn, and even the present Insurance Commissioner and probably others, used their elected office as a bit of a bully pulpit to talk about insurance issues and to educate the public to try to make things happen. Where do they shade into what a legislator is supposed to do? They can't legislate, but can they lay the groundwork?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They can try to write rules and regulations that may assist with a bill that really needs legislation. They try to force their issue by doing rules and regs which get thrown out by the courts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was trying to figure out where that line is. Would they also be coming to you with request legislation? As an agency would?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they have to request anything they want changed which is not adaptable. They have to have the legislation, the policy, so that they can write the rules and

regulations. She tried to change policy. I agree with that, you do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is there a contentious edge there as to how far they can go?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was with the Republicans because they distorted the fact that she was trying to change some policy, when she, in effect, was only writing some rules and regulations for existing policy or stretching the policy a little. You know. Policy is kind of a nebulous thing that you can't touch. And there can be so many interpretations to it that you can get off-base writing an interpretation that the Legislature doesn't agree with. And so...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So these regulations would originate with the Legislature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She could not require a policy to provide health insurance. That had to come from the Legislature, the policy. Then she could write the rules and regulations under which the policy fit. That's the reason policy needs to be flexible but not so flexible that it can be distorted by an agency. And that's where we have the Leg Budget check the policy that's out there to see if an agency has expanded that policy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I suppose as the make-up of that committee changes, then people's interpretations of those things could always be a little bit fluid?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But remember the courts have the final decision. It's the final, so there can be arguments there. I don't think anyone ever took any of her trial balloons to the courts for a decision; they just bad-mouthed her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The "trial in the streets" and newspapers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's newspapers and you don't win that either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So many battles! In another area, you were a co-sponsor of a bill that year providing qualifications for granting Certificates of Registration to architects. I was a little puzzled by that. Is this something that had been overlooked?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that they had relaxed the qualifications for becoming an architect to the extent that there were people who were unqualified. They are not supposed to call themselves architects unless they are registered. It's not a generic term, like engineering.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people call themselves engineers, that's true.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You lay out very carefully what the qualifications are going to be. I was surprised by that because I always thought that was something that already had very specific qualifications, but apparently not.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was happening that some people were using the term loosely. Architect licensing needed to be very strictly defined by qualifications determined by an examination that includes an understanding of design, theory, and the necessary elements and basic principles of engineering. They should have at least a baccalaureate degree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You kind of lay it down there. There were just a couple of other bills from that year that I wanted to see what they meant to you. One, Senate Bill 5768, created supported employment programs. This is for people with developmental disabilities and the following year, there were a whole slew of bills to do with that population. But this was kind of a forerunner for looking at some of those issues. Supported employment, I gather, is more than just sheltered workshops; it's different kinds of employment opportunities in which people with developmental disabilities are helped to get jobs, and they get coaching?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Special help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Special arrangements and care so they can enter into the workforce?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that's true. Now, at the same time, I think we were willing to reduce the hourly wage in order to bring them aboard to help them get jobs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Give employers a bit of a break? For instance, if a government agency

employs these people, they're not counted as part of their FTE count. So that would help a state budget.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's worked. We've gotten jobs for people who have muscular dystrophy, who are physically handicapped, but not mentally handicapped. They can work a computer and they're brilliant.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it just takes some imagination and working to find the right niche.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, caring and imagination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, if you're going to have to care for this population, at least let them contribute and feel like they're part of society?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They're part of it, that's right. It raises their self-esteem, you can imagine. The self-esteem of a severely crippled person who couldn't do anything for himself or herself being able to work. And they can!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just have to find the ways.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We tried. Good people try, always, you know. I believe that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's a lot more understanding these days than there ever used to be. And as each one succeeds, it ripples out and people see what is possible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The ripple effects are incredible! And that one family who has this advantage, they tell six or seven other people and the ripple effect continues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And everyone who works with that person sees, yes, they can do those things. And it changes the perception of what is possible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It works. It's the same thing that you look for in legislation to find out what the ripple effects are and if it will hurt people. It has the same effect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Except the other way, how it's going to help people. That's much more fun.

I'm just going to quickly go through these bill numbers and you can comment on them. There was a bill authorizing drug-free zones around public housing authority facilities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because of children. And around schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Around schools, public parks, bus stops, you know those sorts of places. How would you enforce such a thing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The only way you can enforce it is with the local police force.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it just give them extra clout?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I suppose we should have to hire extra security people also at the local level. We'd have to probably advance the funding from the state level because we're demanding that locals do searches and things and if we do that we should advance funding for that purpose. That's what the local district keeps telling us, local communities who we're forcing to do things that they can't afford to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those unfunded mandates?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We don't give the tax base to do it, so we've been giving more tax bases to local government and also supplying funding wherever possible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, one of the impacts of this bill, apparently, was once a place is designated a drug-free zone, a person who is caught selling drugs there, their penalty is doubled.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's classed as a felony. It gets a higher degree of felonious action.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another bill, Senate Bill 5295, revised District Court procedures regarding small claims and appeals. You're just one of the co-sponsors there. It seems like it harkens back to some of your earliest bills.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My first bill in the Legislature when I served on the Judicial Council, way back when I was a sophomore House member, was a bill to increase the amount of money for the Supreme Court to operate for small claims.

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Because it was fifty dollars, and fifty dollars is nothing now. So we got an increase and they've been increasing the amount ever since then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting to me how some of your interests come around again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I started with consumer issues and branched into legal issues and then into women's issues and children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, here's another one of those. Extending gender equity provisions: Senate Bill 5464. This certainly goes back to some of your earlier interests. This is to do with female athletes. WSU had been discriminating against female athletes and then the Washington State Equal Rights Amendment changed that and the court required the University to provide intercollegiate athletic opportunities at a proportionate rate to its male and female student population. In 1989 the Legislature waived that a little, up to one percent of that. "One percent of their estimated tuition and fee revenue to achieve or maintain gender equity." That was going to sunset and you and some other – mostly women – legislators. But not all – Senator Snyder is in there and Adam Kline and Senator Jacobsen, Al Bauer, a couple of others; it was not all women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did I prime that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. That was Senator Kohl-Welles. But you signed onto it. You were still paying attention to these issues; I just wanted to catch that. You may have passed the baton, but you were still pushing those issues.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The first equity bill was mine. I sponsored that in the House years ago, tying into Title IX to provide money for women athletes and for scholarships.



## CHAPTER 28: THINKING SMALL, 1998

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The 1998 session still had a Republican majority in the Senate: twenty-six Republicans to twenty-three Democrats. The House was also Republican as well, so Clyde Ballard was still Speaker, fifty-six Republicans to forty-two Democrats; they had quite a lead. Senator Dan McDonald was majority leader. Your Senate Democratic leader was again Sid Snyder; he's back in the saddle.

At the opening of the session, the Secretary of State brings in the initiatives that have been filed. One of the bigger ones you had to deal with that year was an initiative to the Legislature, Initiative 200, and I think this might be Tim Eyman's first appearance. He is a co-sponsor with another gentleman, Scott Smith, of this initiative on repealing affirmative action.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, that destroyed it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Repealing it, yes. The wording is "Shall government be prohibited from discriminating or granting preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, education, and contracting. Filed in March of 1997 by Scott Smith and Tim Eyman." His name, I think in those days, was not on everyone's lips, so I don't know how many people would even know who he was at that point.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't realize that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They collected their signatures and the measure was certified and brought to you. The record said, "The Legislature failed to take action, and as provided by the State Constitution, the measure was submitted to the voters, November 3, 1998." Was this something that was just too contentious? Better that the people vote on it instead?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We couldn't deal with it. The Legislature can do three things: they can either accept as is, they can rewrite it, and submit both proposals to the public – the rewritten and the original – or they can avoid everything and send the initiative as written directly to the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember if there was discussion about rewriting it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think there was any discussion at all; I think the issue was just plain black and white. There was no gray area and so no one could figure out how to do it. I wasn't on the committee that handled the proposal, anyway. I think it would be State and Local Government. And so we sent it to the people. And did they pass it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'd forgotten that! I knew the national had passed something but that was crazy, that was too bad. We probably should have done something. This was the Republicans in control though.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if you discussed this in caucus, but did the Democrats think it would be safer to send it to the people? That otherwise you would lose it for sure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We didn't have any power to do anything. And as I remember, no one even talked about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For such a big issue, that's interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Same thing with that land bill, we didn't bother. You have to have a real motivated chair to redo an initiative. I think that we probably should have offered another, a less restrictive one. But I wasn't on the committee; there was nothing that I could do. Apparently, it wasn't of sufficient interest among the women who were on the committee. Mary Margaret Haugen wouldn't have cared. I mean, she's not exactly a liberal Democrat. And so there was no interest in doing it. I can remember back when I was in the House of Representatives, under Republican leadership – Bob Curtis from Wenatchee was the chair – we rewrote an initiative and sent it to the people on returnable bottles. They wanted to return bottles and we wrote an initiative to clean up the highways, suggesting that you don't have returnable bottles

because nobody wants them, but that to clean up the freeways, you have an Ecology crew do it, funded by state government. And we sent them both to the people and they adopted the one that we rewrote. And I helped do that as a member of the House Commerce Committee at that time. I think it was called Business and Professions Committee at the time. And I'll never forget we did it. The committee did it and we worked hard and long on it, but we had a chair who cared.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's the difference between taking it up – or not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And doing it. And we didn't call people "ranking majority" or "minority" at that time. I was just on the committee, but I remember rewriting that initiative and how we all had input on it. And we were so proud that it had passed. But it's rarely done. You have to have a motivated chair and one who cares and one who's willing to see it through come hell or high water. Curtis did, but the Republicans, in this instance, and the Democrats, neither one cared apparently, on the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or is this the type of bill that should go to the people? Was this the type of social question that the people should weigh in on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It shouldn't go to the people, but you can't stop it. When it's an initiative, you have to either re-do it and send both of them to the people or pass it un-amended as it is presented. And that's where you get your policy written into the initiative. And it should have been. Because they have scientifically proven that ghetto children, who have not had the benefit of any education – like magazines in the home, newspapers in the home, even crayons – they found out when they did the Head Start Program that some children who were four-years-old had never seen a crayon before. They didn't know what it was; they put it in their mouths to eat it. This happened, I heard. And so you know this has occurred. You know that through the ages we have discriminated against certain working class people, blacks and minorities. And some of them turn out to be brilliant. And that's one of the reasons the

United States has led the world in innovation. And the reason our Democracy has worked. And these people aren't going back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We need to bring in everyone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So, I think that policy should have been written into a comparative initiative; yes, I think it should have. But if you don't have a chair – at that point we had ranking minorities on committees who were supposed to speak out in behalf of the Democrats. Well, we didn't have a ranking minority who cared, apparently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All I have are the bare facts here, but it's so hard to know what happened or didn't happen in this case behind the scenes. Why this just went through that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, apparently in our caucus there wasn't a sufficient movement to force the ranking minority to do it. And the ranking minority, apparently, was not a self-starter to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it just too hot to handle? This got an enormous amount of press. There was a lot of activity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the same amount of press would have been devoted to the other side if we had presented it and I suppose our caucus could have insisted and all worked on doing something about it, but by that token, we all had our bills to watch and try to pass, and in a minority you have trouble passing any bill with your name on it. So it was a case of insufficient caring.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd been in the minority for awhile. Does the minority get sort of demoralized after awhile?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, if it lasts long enough. They finally decide it's not worth it to even be in a majority because it's a lot more work. And so that what I always laughed about when the Republicans won one of those years, and Irving Newhouse laughingly came to me and said, "You double-crossed us." See. Because they were able to be the challenging side and a lot of them didn't want to do anything but challenge because they'd been challenging for years and never...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They got really good at that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were good at it! You bet. But they weren't good at leading because they hadn't led.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a very different place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And unless there is a self-starter in a Party, nothing happens. And you know, some legislators are not self-starters. There are some that are; you either are or you aren't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just like the general population.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I guess that, even at that point, I was getting older too, and I didn't have the energy to put up a big battle without a hope of winning it. Because we had a number of women in our caucus who were rather conservative. And to fight your own caucus on an issue, I had other things to do and I just didn't have the energy to do it. That must have been the reason; I can't think of any other reason. I had come a long way in helping women and if they weren't interested in carrying that forward, then there wasn't much I could do about it, I think was the way I felt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or maybe there was the feeling that the public surely would not vote for this. But they did. Actually by a surprising margin. More than a million voted for it and just under 800,000 voted against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I wonder if it was properly presented with the facts?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was kind of all over the place, you know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I wonder how Pierce County voted. I never checked that out. I don't remember. You see, I was getting toward the end of my rope there and our caucus had changed. We had a majority of women, I think, about that point and yet the women were not copasetic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Women start just being senators rather than "women senators" and that's progress of sorts. I mean, you'd never expect all men senators to vote the same, would you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I had always said, "If it was right for a man, it had to be right for a woman." And also, that if a women's group brought something up that was important to them, that as a woman, I would never disagree with them. Being a woman, I needed to follow what women wanted. And the more women who wanted it, the more persistence I had to work on it. But some women, I think, had been under the thumb of the Old Boys Club too long and they either didn't care or didn't have any incentive to do anything about it. I don't understand that. That's what I can't understand. And I couldn't understand when they couldn't believe that it was right. That doesn't mean that everybody has common sense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a big issue, at least in the press and for the public, if not for the Legislature. One other unexpected outcome was that Tim Eyman started to come forward. He had a couple of other initiatives that year. I don't think that everyone would remember it this way, for two of his initiatives he didn't have enough signatures to turn in and they failed, but nonetheless, he began to make his name. There was an initiative to the Legislature, 218, about license tab fees being thirty dollars a year. And that's the first time he brought it forward – in 1998, although with not enough signatures. And then he tried an initiative to the people, 691, "Shall motor vehicle excise taxes be cut in half for 1999, repeal beginning 2000 and the Legislature and Governor directed to address the revenue impact?" That was filed in 1998.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was those people who had the expensive cars who wanted that passed because they were paying \$3,000 and \$4,000 for their license tabs. But if they could afford to drive a Mercedes or any other very expensive car, they needed to pay more to help maintain roads. That was the money that went to local government. And that needed to be told to the people right then. Then what he did the second time, and whenever he got it, they had not been properly educated. Not that they would have remembered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps because his first tries were not effective, people didn't see this



coming, that he would continue to attack this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and he used the fact that Oregon plates were so much cheaper. You see, Oregon has a different tax structure. They have an income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have an entirely different tax structure. It's apples and oranges.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right. But people don't understand that. People don't want to understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, they want to save money. But then came Referendum 49, which asked,

"Shall motor vehicle excise taxes be reduced and state revenues reallocated \$1.9 billion in bonds for state and local highways approved and spending limits modified?" The measure was submitted to the voters at the November 3, 1998 state general election and was approved.

His campaign to tinker with these fees and the impact on transportation is suddenly coming to the front. We'll be watching this. This is something that's going to come in and really have a huge impact on the Legislature. The tip of the iceberg.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It's going to be a disaster unless something isn't done to control it. We should require more signatures or require a fiscal note; I think that needs to be done. If the public is going to exert its will, then they better do the research necessary to perfect it because otherwise they won't be able to understand how much it's going to cost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the impact on other programs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the impact. Either way, the cost to the citizens and the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't suppose you had any inkling that this was the beginning of a movement?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, we didn't, because initiatives usually required so many signatures, unless it's a really, really good idea, it didn't pass. But that's before they started paying

signature gatherers to gather signatures, so much per signature. The more they wanted the initiative, the more they paid – up to five dollars a signature, you know. But that was never done and then all of a sudden it became a thing and the Supreme Court said it was okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember taking note of any of these and wondering where this was heading?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I think that the Rainier Institute is taking that up as a study now to find out how it can be corrected or improved, because the people should always have the right to initiate, but there's got to be some kind of control factor in there, that the public has a right to know. And the public never knows until it gets into the Legislature what the cost is going to be. There's no way of finding that out. Because you don't have the resources to do that and you don't do it because we don't have people researching initiatives on the side. Maybe we need a staff at the state level who follow initiatives and puts an estimated cost on them. That would be a way of handling it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If it came from the Legislature itself, would the general public trust those numbers?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We can do that. Oh sure, because it's done by staffing, not legislators. They don't trust legislators. I think they trust – well, maybe they don't trust bureaucrats, I don't know. They maybe need an independent body.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It depends on how it's presented.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They need an independent "think tank." That makes sense, like the Boeing Company when they weren't able to sell airplanes they entered into a "think-tank" mode and were able to do a lot of good things. Maybe that's the answer. I never thought about it before. It makes sense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking if the Legislature was to put out material like that, it would just look defensive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But even if it was the staffing of the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would people make the distinction?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, they might not, but they could do it by bringing in a non-partisan group of people with the ability to work figures and figure out costs. And that would do it; I think that might be an approach. Let me tell Senator Pat Thibaudeau to start thinking about that. Because people then would trust that body, where they don't trust legislators or legislative staffers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there would be no self-serving about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing self-serving. And maybe they should assess the drafters of the initiative a fee to do that, to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be interesting. When you look at the list of initiatives posted, there are a huge number which never collect signatures. It appears to be sort of a private hobby for some people because the same names file six or eight a year and trot them out and there is a cost to that. The code reviser has to look at it; it goes through an expensive process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There's a cost. And the Attorney General has to give it a title. Then they have to reproduce the thing, they have to raise money. And if they are going to raise money for that, why not let them pay for it as they're doing it. Why not? They certainly don't pay legislators enough money to be doing that. It's getting better. When I started I was making \$300 a month. And they had just raised it from \$100 to \$300.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's an idea. Anyway, this will be something that we'll be watching because it's about to hit you like a tidal wave.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm going to suggest to the Rainier Institute. I think that's a great idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at the session. This was percolating in the background. Again, you were on just two committees that year. A carry-over from the previous year. You had Health and Long Term Care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I gave up Ways and Means to Lisa Brown. I gave up my seat. I wish I hadn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps you can concentrate your energies on these two things. At least you were still on Rules. Your chair for Health was Senator Deccio; the vice-chair is Jeannette Wood. The other members were: Benton, Fairley, Franklin and Strannigan. And you were the ranking minority member. These are quite small committees.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Strannigan never came to meetings. And neither did the other fellow from Vancouver.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don Benton? Oh, well, that would make it even smaller.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And when they did, they just mocked things. They were dreadful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any allies on this committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I had Wood and Deccio; they were my friends. And they were offended by the other two Republican members who never showed up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there were splits within the Republican Party itself?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Wood and I sponsored the diabetic bill together and she was on the osteoporosis bill with me, and Deccio and I were on things; we got along fine. We were "old health care people," we knew what we were doing. We'd been doing it for years. The other two were newcomers and were only on there to try to control Deccio, I guess. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the other Democrats, Fairley and Franklin?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Rosa Franklin was fine. Darlene was brutal with lobbyists because she had been so badly injured, you know, that some of her questions were quite brutal. But she was a good member and kept the lobbyists honest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But she would have a real interest in the subject matter?

**Sen. Wojahn:** She had a real interest and she cared in her own way, but I thought she was a

little outspoken. Was it just Fairley, Franklin and me? Was that all?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Deccio, Wood, Benton and Strannigan are all Republicans.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they had four and we had three.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On Rules, of course, Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen would be the chair and Irv Newhouse was the vice-chair. We haven't really talked about this, but you've now been on Rules under several different leaders. How did Brad Owen compare, to say Joel Pritchard or John Cherberg?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was good. He listened to both sides as Joel Pritchard and Cherberg did.

Cherberg was a little conservative, you know. And Pritchard was more liberal than Cherberg, I think in some ways. And Brad was sort of in-between. It depended on the issue. I didn't find fault with any of the chairs; they were good and they listened well. And sometimes voted wrong, but whatever! According to Wojahn!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The law according to Wojahn! Were you fairly active on this committee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. I let them know what I thought. Always. I had to. I was one of the outspoken women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's one of those places where you can have quite a large influence.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you can speak your mind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you ever remember persuading anyone, one way or the other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's usually a party-line vote. But I remember once when I was chairing it later – I guess it was before we lost the majority because I was Pro Tem twice and chairing the committee – and I said I was going to take some liberties as the chair of the committee. And I wanted two bills and before they thought about it they voted for it, and then they caught themselves. And I'd already gone on to the next issue and they never forgot it! I got two bills! I said they were sort of closely related, but not

entirely. It was just a riot. They did a double-take after they had voted for it and it was just so funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you just keep a straight face and keep going?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. And then we all laughed. Then they tried it and we laughed again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then they said "never again?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, we'd go to Rules Committee and I'd chair, they would say, "You don't get two bills this time." It was a friendly group usually. I don't even know what the bills were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, just pulling it off is kind of amazing. You were talking earlier about how hard it is not to get lost in the detail of legislation and how to stay connected to the big picture. How did you do that? Especially in the heat of session.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When you're a sponsor of a bill, it becomes a very precious commodity and you follow that carefully, especially if you're emotionally involved at all – which you never should be, but you become so – and then you follow every bit of it. Then you try everything you can do. Usually you sponsor bills which are going to come out of a committee on which you serve so you can follow the dialogue of the opponents and the proponents very carefully. And nothing much escapes you until it gets to the other House where you have no control and then you can't follow it particularly. All you can do is read between the lines of the questions that are asked and try to find if in asking their questions they're an enemy of the bill. And to anticipate a response that would make them a friend of the bill, perhaps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you try to forge relationships with House members, especially from your own district, so that you have somebody over there watching for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You always have a forged relationship, but usually we don't select the same committees because that short-changes our

constituents, so we usually have alternative committees. So I could never follow Ruth Fisher's bills, particularly, because she was in Transportation and I, at no time, served on Transportation. And so I did pull her bills from Rules, always, whenever I saw one and rarely knew what was in them except an overview. But presumed it would be a good bill if it came from Representative Fisher.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if Ruth Fisher is sponsoring it, then you could trust it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. If I had a question, I could always call her. And occasionally you will call a member from another district, or even a Republican with maybe a bill they sponsored that you liked and wanted more particulars on. Maybe you didn't serve on the committee in which it was being heard and you see it in Rules Committee and it sounds like a great idea. So you call and find out. And also your staff can answer questions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you're well-placed if you're on Rules to get that inside information.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You get an overview of bills and then you always have a lot of people haranguing you for their bills. Mostly they are bills from the Senate and very few harangues from the other, because frankly they don't have time. They're too busy shepherding their bills through. And so when I was on Rules, especially when I was vice chair, I used to get a long list of bills that people wanted. And you accommodate to the extent that you can. But sometimes you've got to fight a bill if it's a bad idea or if it's something that you are unalterably opposed to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's different. You said, though, that you shouldn't get emotional about your bills?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's hard not to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But so many of your bills – their origins are heart-wrenching stories from your constituents or something that you were close to.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That you become emotionally involved. You try – and I don't think women are as emotionally involved often as men. I think

women are really more detached from things. Except on some things – I was extremely emotionally involved with firearms. I am absolutely adamantly opposed to the wrong use of firearms and I think they should be more tightly controlled. So on those I did become involved. And when I tried to hang the amendment on the assault weapon bill, I became emotionally involved and we lost the amendment by one vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it have an impact on your effectiveness?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I think it was very effective. I think if I pull people in; normally if you don't do anything on the floor debate, nothing happens. People have made up their minds prior to going there. But that was such a controversial bill that I had become emotionally involved. I think I did attract maybe people who would rather not have voted for it because of the firearms people. But they voted with me. And that was the one in which if we had tied, Lieutenant Governor Pritchard said he would have voted with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty close.

**Sen. Wojahn:** See, that's where you value your Republican counterparts who share a similar philosophy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that's one of those kinds of issues; it's partly your district, but is it partly just your philosophy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Philosophy. You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could probably argue that one both ways. I don't know how you would make all those decisions without some guidance.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of those can be sold to the highest bidder and that's not a very nice thing to say, but they gauge their vote by the funds they attract to run for office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I hope those are in the minority.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I'm sure they are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you are passionate about an issue, how do you keep your balance? How do you keep yourself going? Some of these are long fights – year after year – other ones are a little easier. Some you never win, some you do, of course. Did you have techniques for kind of keeping yourself going?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. I can't think of anything I ever did. I tried to learn my subject matter well enough to respond and usually – except on something which was extremely controversial – I managed to maintain a professional approach. There's always the ability to forgive someone who felt equally strong. It's easy to forgive that. But when you sense that someone really doesn't care, then it hurts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose indifference would be harder to take than conviction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Indifference is very difficult to take. But someone who feels as passionately in opposition to you as you feel, you can forgive them. And it's not anything that you hold against them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's what they bring to the table, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And they have the right to their opinion and to their position. So you really honor that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's representative government; it takes all kinds of people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and that's what makes it work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I hope so. The process kind of staggers along; some things that feel extremely urgent take a long time and you just hope that in the long run they work out. One thing you were able to come together with in a big way in 1998 was the issue of drunken driving. There were nine different bills in a package; it seemed like that was one of the biggest focal points of that session. Some stiffened the penalties, some made sure that better records were kept – that once you had a DUI offense, it didn't just sort of get washed out of the picture. That it stayed on your record long enough that if you had a second one, it made a difference. The whole

issue of deferred prosecutions – I guess there was a record of some people getting them repeatedly and never really coming to terms with their problem. And this bill limited that to just once in your lifetime could you get a deferred prosecution.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was good because that eliminated the continual drinking and driving, or you would hope that it would. Of course, they would suffer the consequences after the first offense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If I recall, there was some horrendous newspaper accounts of repeat offenders getting into accidents where they then kill someone. And the outrage of the public that these people never seemed to be called to task for what they were doing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The one that I recall, one of the worst ones, was a woman who was killed on her way home to Olympia. Her husband was driving another car – they had two cars and she was ahead of him – and someone came out of the NCO Club at Ft. Lewis, and came down the wrong side and hit her head-on and killed her. And her husband witnessed it. It was a dreadful thing. And he got his comeuppance; he's serving prison time now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a kind of murder.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was murder, plain and simple. And then there was the case in which a person had been on probation and stole a truck and killed a woman in Tacoma. On North Union; it was just a dreadful tragedy – with three small children – drunk. I don't know that he was drunk, actually. He was escaping the police.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, I remember that one. I think he wasn't exactly totally sober.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I think so. There are repeat offenders going free and they are going to eventually kill somebody. You can't let that go on. Eventually they end up as homicide. But I kind of like the idea of confining them at home with electronic devices, it saves money on prisons. You know, we're having to let them go because it's costing too much to put them in prison.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were nine different bills; strategically, would it have been easier to have these all rolled into one? Or is this a case where a whole bunch of members are involved and they each have a piece of the pie? And when it adds up, you've got something big?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that often, rather than placing them into one bill, they give individual sponsors some attention by individually honoring them. And then, when we had a collection of similar bills, we would often have one afternoon or one session set aside to just do those bills to call attention to them. This would give each person the right to call attention to their particular bill and to get some press on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you had hearings on this, would you have just one giant hearing on all these issues? Or would they trickle through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Usually if it's the middle of the session when most of the bills are introduced, you could do that. However, if they are trickling through from the beginning of the session toward the end of the cutoff, you don't know that they're there. In other words, you can't hear a bill that hasn't been introduced yet. And so if there have been several that have gotten into Rules Committee and have lain there and not been placed on the calendar, then we can coordinate them at that point. And put them together on the calendar. The leadership would more or less decide that. So in a case like that then they would come together and having not been put together in committee, because they weren't available at the same time, they would be clustered together and we'd have one session dealing mainly with child pornography, or one dealing with drunken driving, or whatever the subject matter happened to be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see three of these were House bills and the rest came from the Senate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think if a chairman had a clutch of bills that were sponsored about the same time, and wanted to hear them all, he could or she could hear them all at one time also in committee. And then at that point, they would probably be placed under one title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was curious, this can't be happenstance that you'd suddenly have all these DUI bills. Would the caucuses have gotten together in some way and said, "This is one of our big issues this year, and we're going to all put our heads together and come up with great solutions."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think the caucuses would do that; it that would be the leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What causes an issue to come forward in that sense? Suddenly, it's the issue of the year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The attention of the public has been called to it, by the public and by the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something bad has happened and people demand action?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Something bad has happened, that's right. So it's public demand as much as anything. I remember when that initiative passed way, way back. It was an initiative to the voters at the same time we were doing the "twelve percent is enough" on credit when I was in the House. It assessed a penalty for drunken driving. The first drunken driving penalty. Because the physicians were seeing the results of drunken driving in the hospitals. And so, the physicians sponsored this bill. And Senator Woodall was so offended by that, because he thought it was a stupid bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He thought it wasn't an issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a non-issue, yes. And so he made the remark to the press – I think it was at some meeting – that "while the attorneys in the United States were writing the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, and the Constitution of the United States, the doctors in the country were putting leaches on people to cure ills." I'll never forget that! It was so funny. I put that in my humor presentation. He actually said it! And of course, he was an attorney. The bill passed, but that reckons way back in the sixties when I was a lobbyist and heading the campaign for "Twelve Percent is Enough" for the State Labor Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Memorable! In the Olympian article they say, "The bill package represented

eight months of concerted effort from the Governor down to small town prosecutors.” That’s a wonderful alliance for such an issue; it sounds like they hit all the different levels who would need to be involved in some way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Often there is a commission that has been assigned to study a particular issue and they come up with several thoughts which are all turned into bills, and rather than doing it in one fell swoop, they did it in several bills. So that could be a committee designated by the Senate or House or by the Governor to study an issue. Or by the public demanding an issue be studied. There’s a Law and Justice Commission which does that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One remarkable part of these bills all going through is that, according to this article, very different kinds of legislators got together on this. It crossed all lines. Very liberal ones, very conservative ones – it was bi-partisan and everybody could agree.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That this was needed. It transcends party lines and helps to make a more unified body. If you can do that, it’s very valuable. And you make friends with the other side on some issues. Some issues you’ll always be apart on, but you remain – not friends – but co-workers, I should say and it makes it easier.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So not only getting all these bills passed, but the feelings of goodwill that spread to other bills?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. It doesn’t last always, unfortunately. It may last through one session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, any of it is better than none. And the memory that you did work constructively at least once before with some person, that you didn’t necessarily have that much in common with, that would be good? You’d have that bond?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, to probably shatter that rosy picture, another bill which was discussed, that actually didn’t go through, involved the issue of “partial-birth” abortion. That must have been a difficult discussion.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, the physicians had come forward, OB-GYNs, and said there is no such thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain that? I think that this issue has become one which people kind of wave around but hardly anyone can explain.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No one can define it. It’s never been defined. It never will be defined because there is no such thing. I think what they’re talking about is a late-term.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A late-term pregnancy? I read in the background that the only people getting that procedure were cases when the health of the mother was severely impacted or that there was something really radically wrong with the baby. When it just wasn’t going to be viable. Is that what it meant to you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that that’s very true, but you can’t tell some of the anti-abortionists that this ever happens. They don’t think that it ever happens, I’m sure. And they think that even if the child is badly malformed, it has a right to a life anyway. But you know, that’s a philosophical difference that will never be accepted. It’s never going to come about that they are going to accept abortion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m sure anybody’s who’s gone through a pregnancy and gets towards the end and discovered that there’s something terribly wrong with the mother or the baby, it’s a tragic issue either way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it’s hurtful. And it’s hurtful to the parents who have made the decision that this has to be done, to have people come forward and say, “You can’t do this. It’s criminal!” They’ve gone that far and they don’t stop. And I don’t know how you ever reach them; I guess you never do. And then, how bad is bad? I mean, it’s a degree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other issue that was very difficult to place is how often does this happen? Wouldn’t it be fairly rare?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very rare, I’m sure. And doctors are reluctant to ever perform this because of the stigma against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you know, medically, what would be one of the deciding factors? If the mother has severe toxemia, or something like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There are several things that they can have that can create problems; severe toxemia would be one. It would be something that the mother suffered from that would determine whether to do it or not to do it. Or it even could be psychological. And you can't tell me that a child getting pregnant, that it would not be better to abort that baby, especially if it's incest that caused it – a thirteen or fourteen year old, caused by incest or rape. That it would be better to abort than to force that child to carry that baby to full term; the psychological damage could affect her for the rest of her life. That's not a partial birth abortion, of course, but it could be. What are some of the conditions that women suffer from that could cause that baby to be severely deformed? I'm not a physician, I can't think of them. I can't get down to cases because every case would be different and the degree would be different and it would be up to a physician to determine the degree. And I would rely on the physician to make the determination, not somebody who opposes abortion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this one of those issues in which people were all emotional? Not impartial in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. Well, if you listened to testimony from physicians as to the time in which this would be appropriate – and the only time it would be appropriate – and then have people ratting at you that it's never appropriate; you listen to the physician. And now Congress has taken up the whole issue because of the anti-abortionists and they don't listen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this seen as one of those wedge measures, to break down that wall between legal abortion and illegal abortion – to make abortion illegal again by chipping away at funding, notification of parents, making some abortions illegal – certain kinds?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's just a reason for anti-abortionists to get attention again and again and

again. And I think that the Planned Parenthood people are aware of this. And they obviously fight it or attempt to quiet it down because it should not be, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For staunch anti-abortion people, that is just simply the way they see it and for pro-choice people, they are going to see it the other way. Is there ever going to be a middle ground where people can meet? A place to have a true dialogue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does seem like neither side can give an inch without it looking like they are giving away the whole issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The part that's so destructive about it is the fact that some of the anti-abortionists are so possessed of this that they shoot people. They shoot doctors who do abortions – legally. The pro-lifers can be dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's taking the law into your own hands.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This argument, of course, is at least twenty, thirty years old. I don't know if any progress has been made in all that time about how we discuss these things as a society.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Family planning has made progress, I think, and they continue to make small inroads, I'm sure; otherwise we would not have any type of funding at all. And we always bury that in the standing budget of the state. There's money buried in there and nobody is really sure how to get it out because they don't know where it is. And you do that. And I shouldn't even talk about it. The one way we've controlled it, the one thing that we can always do – and that is the stand that I've taken – is the cost of abortion is so insignificant as a public payout, compared to the cost of maintaining a child who wasn't aborted, in foster care, or wherever. It is twenty times more than the insignificant cost of financing abortion. And by putting it on a basis of dollar and cents, we've been able to maintain some sanity in the whole process.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are some fiscal conservatives won over by that approach?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I saw it happen. I was on one side and Margaret Hurley was on the other and I won with an argument based upon fiscal responsibility and fiscal procedures and money. Yes, \$20 million against maybe a million.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are big numbers; they show up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not so much anymore, now that we're forcing people off of welfare. But it's still there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For some people, quantifying that sort thing is a chilling exercise. Quantifying caring for children, quantifying life – but yet there it is, in real dollars and you have to choose.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's there and I don't say that we don't quantify it; you have to take care of some people. So it was never done with rancor. It was done in a logical way and I won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's certainly a compelling set of figures.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Compelling, you bet. And others have won, you know, using that method.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's part of the issue, however one feels about it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And children who are born handicapped, mentally deficient, we're seeing as adults in Rainier School and also in Fircrest. They're there. Although, I don't think that's the purpose of Planned Parenthood; it's not the purpose – of any physician or minister – to force them to do that. It is not. And we try to accommodate these children. Parents are more accommodating and more and more are keeping them at home. And we're getting jobs for the developmentally disabled; we're helping them and we continue to seek ways to assist them. The Developmentally Disabled Bill, the trust fund which was set up, was wonderful. It's never done punitively.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, I'm glad you said that because I wouldn't want to misinterpret what you were saying.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't ever want to be misinterpreted, because we are sensitive to those issues and we do care. I would never in any position force any child into anything. But I think that it should be between the adult or the child and her minister and her doctor who makes that decision. And it should be done with care and sympathy. It should never be forced. If I didn't care, I wouldn't have worked so hard for developmentally disabled people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a nice balance in this case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You do care and you do work, but there's a time and a place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The important thing is who gets to choose for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if it was a different group of people – or the same group – but some legislators that year were working very hard to put a ban on same-sex marriages.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It need not be marriage; it should be some kind of an arrangement, a legal arrangement, so that they could share health insurance and things of that type.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To address the benefits of marriage that unmarried people lose out on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There could be a civil procedure which would permit the sharing of assets and well, you hear stories about long-time partners being denied access when one is ill in the hospital. Or they can't inherit, or they can't adopt children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were the moral and ethical issues, but there were some strategic issues that were kind of curious with this bill. A Seattle Times article ran down a list of things that happened in that session and they said about this bill, "In the most unusual parliamentary moves of the session, the Legislature adopted a ban on same-sex marriages. The Governor vetoed the bill and both the House and Senate overrode the veto, all in the same day." Do you remember that? It said, "Governor Locke said he had to veto the bill in part to remain

consistent with the position he took last year when he also vetoed a same-gender marriage ban.” And then it gets really complicated. “Some gay rights advocates urged that he let the ban become law without his signature to avoid a Republican plan to send the proposal to the ballot. After a drubbing on a gay employment rights initiative last fall, a fight over gay marriage was untenable, some gay rights activists said.” If he let the bill become law without his signature, then the Governor doesn’t need to take a position one way or the other and that, I gather, gets him off the hook?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But that never happens. I can’t think of any case which ever happened where the Governor let a bill become law without signature or without vetoing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it’s possible, but rare.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I can’t think of an instance in my tenure that that has happened, but it may have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then the article goes on to say, “But when Locke refused to go along...” In other words, let this happen, “Democrats suggested the override as a way to avoid the ballot fight which also would have brought conservatives out to the polls in droves.” So this gets rather Machiavellian to me. “Republicans were only too happy to oblige. The bill was passed and the veto overridden within hours.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** I just vaguely remember that. But it wasn’t painful for me because I knew what I was going to do. I was going to vote for the bill and I was not going to vote for the override. And they probably had to beat on some of our members to vote for the override because it would take two-thirds, I’m sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Two-thirds, right. And the Republican majority was a little thin for that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn’t seem to be very important to me because I can’t remember it. I remember vaguely the chat about it but I don’t remember any of the details. And it wasn’t because I didn’t want to; it just wasn’t important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, then the kicker, the last paragraph in this article: “Some argued that the fight was inherently meaningless...” Maybe you understood that. “... since gay marriages are not recognized in the state anyway, even without the new law declaring them illegal.” So this is an exercise in...?

**Sen. Wojahn:** ...futility. Yes, I think that was my position. It didn’t make much sense to me, but whatever you have to do, you do for the public. And that was for public purview only.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly got a lot of press.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course! That’s what the press likes; it sells more papers because it creates more discord. I have absolutely no respect for the press at all. I think that they should be judged and I judge them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody was certainly playing to the crowd with this one.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They needed to do that in order to show how irresponsible legislators are. No, believe me, the press loves to find legislators irresponsible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some legislators were quite game to do it, at any rate. They must have made some promises or had some reason.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I’m probably out there as having voted against it. I’m sure I voted against the veto; you know, it didn’t make much sense.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then, here’s another hot-button one: medical marijuana was also a big issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The state passed the bill, passed the initiative and yet the federal government will not let us sell it; it’s still against the federal law. It’s not state law; it’s federal law. And I don’t know whatever happened. There’s nothing we can do about it except memorialize Congress to leave us alone to let us do our thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you think that it should be legal?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. For medical marijuana, yes. Medical purposes. And we thought that the government was raising

marijuana for that purpose so that people could get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In a controlled setting?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. Anything that makes them more comfortable. With cancer, if you can't cure it, you should be able to help people be more comfortable. And I think Jim West will probably agree now. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a harsh lesson if that's the case. There was an initiative, as you said, 685, that had been defeated which would have allowed it. And then it failed again in the House.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Didn't that pass? I thought it passed. It did in Oregon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, but not here. So that's still a live issue. There was another big discussion, I think more than just that year, but for a few years and including that year, about farm worker housing – always a difficult problem. The building codes which would bring farm worker housing up to a higher standard...it seemed to be such a complicated thing and it involved whether you ended up with any housing at all. How did you understand this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought that we were able to reduce the requirements of the Building Code.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you relaxed the Building Code.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Relaxed them in order to provide for migrant housing, which would be better than what they've had in the past. They hated it; they had nothing – they were living in tents or nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this kind of a half-way measure so that at least something would happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It kind of goes both ways. There were certainly good people on both sides of this issue. Some people did see that relaxing the building codes would allow improvement in the situation like you said, that at least some housing would be provided. Other people were

worried that once substandard housing was okayed, that you'd never get to the next step.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm not so sure that all of the building codes were appropriate. In other words, sometimes when you set a group to do a program or a project, you don't have skilled or knowledgeable people always writing those rules and regulations and therefore, they may have been too rigid to the extent that people could not afford to even build a house, or only the very wealthy could afford to build a house. So there has to be some rationale or some reason there. And I would have been with those who would have relaxed them for some migrant housing – within reason.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So keeping safety measures, sanitation measures, but maybe forgoing...?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Instead of using a two-by-six, they could use a two-by-four. Where one would be preferable, but the other would be acceptable. Acceptable building standards. And I think there had to be some moderation there. Because we could actually price construction out of the market.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly there were all those photographs of people, as you say, living in tents, living in their cars, with nothing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My son worked with that issue. He was with the Department of Labor and he had to go – during the quieter times – up in the Skagit area to review. One time he was really impressed that this structure was fine, except that they only had a Coleman stove in there to cook on. And it was hot. And the one thing he observed was they left a grandmother, who was very elderly and not capable, with a baby with a hot stove. And that really disturbed him. So there has to be some sanity along with the other. You don't have a Coleman in an area during the summertime for cooking purposes and have that stove going during the day when a child can be harmed. There has to be some sanity. Maybe there needs to be electrical wiring in there for an electrical range or gas or something. Always there has to be common sense used along with rules and regulations. So I don't know how you relax that and make it common sense, that

there's got to be moderation there and a way to do that. And as usual, there are the two sides haranguing with no common sense following it through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What I gathered from reading about it was there was a basic lack of trust, that if you relaxed the standards, what would you be taking advantage of? Would it be sensible?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was difficult to see which way it would go.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And how do you enforce this? You know, that's the part that is difficult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think this came from a long history. It would be hard to overcome it and say "Okay, you can trust us now. We're going to do the right thing."

**Sen. Wojahn:** It shouldn't be that difficult because you wouldn't have to have indoor plumbing; you could have port-a-potties, you know. There are ways to accommodate this within common sense. But common sense doesn't always rule when there are two sides on an issue and both sides fighting. And maybe you'd have to have community showers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like in camp grounds, you mean?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Maybe not greatly convenient, but at least sanitary and clean and appropriate. And there are ways to accommodate that. But I'm sure that the farmers didn't want to accommodate that. They needed the workers, but they didn't want to take care of them. Then there are the good farmers who did want to take care of them and did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine the farmers, themselves, would want a level playing field. That they would want standards.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. If we're going to have migrant workers, we have to provide decent, sanitary housing for them. And the building codes didn't even need to get into that area. I don't think they should have gotten into that area. We should have had DSHS, or the Department of Labor, or whoever is going to

investigate, should be setting the standards. Not the Building Code people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe there's a different way to get at this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. You have to have the appropriate group taking care of that and not bringing the building trades into it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a rather inflamed issue. A lot of things going on this session. And now a fairly familiar issue which you took up that session that had to do with privacy, about requiring or not requiring Social Security numbers on various licenses and different things. Here again, there were two sides to this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I don't know how you can control that. You have to have identification. Everybody has your Social Security number. The Department of Licensing has them. DSHS has them. The banks have them. I've never hesitated to give my Social Security number to legitimate places, but then you've got the ACLU out there screaming bloody murder.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This may have had more to do with identify theft. People going into public records and getting a sort of composite on you and creating an identity by which then they empty your bank account.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's true. As long as there are thieves out there and people who want to short-cut, there's a danger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So people worry about making it too easy for those types, but the other side of this issue is that all those licenses are used to track down certain kinds of people – people who are late on their child custody payments and things of that nature.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Fraud.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, so there are certainly reasons for it and reasons against it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** "And never the twain shall meet."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't seem like there's a happy medium.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There is no happy medium.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which way would you go on this sort of issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, there was a time when we needed to have that for DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it for what they call "deadbeat parents," tracking deadbeat parents on their payments?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the only way you can track them, through their Social Security number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that outweigh the privacy issues for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was part of the problem. And they had to have that number in order to track them. And some of my friends in the Legislature were absolutely opposed to it. The ACLU people. One of them was my friend Senator Adam Kline and we fought over that very issue. And he wouldn't give and I wouldn't give. And we never did resolve it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a matter of personal conviction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you have to have it in order to collect child support. And the thugs wanted to get out from under paying child support; they didn't want it. So the bad guys were predominant there too, but there were good guys caught in the bind. I'll never forget that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't sound like a win-win situation.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think anyone won; I don't know whatever happened with it. I think we managed to get them but we worked around it some way, but I don't remember how.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's one of those things that takes a fine hand to figure out where that line is.

The other hot-button issue, which got some play that session, was charter schools.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, I don't like that at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people, of course, are adamant for charter schools and think that they will act as a spur for innovation, for experimentation in education and also to give people a real choice. And other people see them as just a drain on public schools and as too difficult to manage. How did you feel?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It siphons money away from public schools, for one thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Should there be a kind of soft edge in the school system where you can have experimental schools, but within the system? Would that be an approach that would bridge these two camps?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think there are some that are being done. The alternative school, for one thing, in which we accommodate kids who have not been able to produce, or pregnant women – girls – you know. Alternative schools for whatever reason and we do have them. So, in effect, we do have charter schools, but they are not the kind of charter schools that people want – people always think their children are brighter than other children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What's that line from Prairie Home Companion? "All our children are above average."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right! And if parents can afford private schools, that's fine. But to take public money and permit charter schools which would not have to operate under the same regimen as other schools, we need to refocus our rules and regulations and relax some of them. But of course, the Feds don't permit that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it trying to solve a problem with the wrong solution, in that case?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. The Feds won't permit it so the state wants to do it. And they can do it, but it takes public money. And public money's in short supply and therefore, I do not favor charter schools. If we had a great economy, like we've had in the past, maybe I would consider it, but not now, not under the circumstances. With the charter schools, it's just an attempt to undercut the federal rules. Because the Feds are the ones who are causing the problem with the rules and

yet they don't supply very much money. If we were doing it the way we should do it – in my opinion – the Feds should pay one-third of education, the state would pay one-third; we'd share.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where would the other one-third come from?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The local taxpayer would pay one-third. And that way then we'd get a shared schooling. But we don't do that. The Feds give very little money for schooling. Nothing! The state is more or less responsible and local levies are the last resort, but it should be done in a more democratic way. And it's not being done that way and consequently there are problems, and there will always be problems until the funding system is changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On another front, there was a little article that caught my attention in the Seattle Times which talked about what they said was an unusual coalition of women legislators, some in the House, a few in the Senate, who were looking at women's health care issues. That there was a group trying to get things like family planning issues and insurance coverage for maternity care – trying to get together a package. Representative Cody was the person quoted in the article; she talked about how in 1996 you had been successful, banding together despite party affiliation, to improve health care for all women. The article said, "She was referring to a bipartisan vote to push through a measure requiring insurance companies to pay for hospital stays for new mothers for at least forty-eight hours after giving birth and longer for caesarian sections." Do you remember women legislators coming together as women to look at some of these issues that session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not strongly enough. And I think we needed to do that. We needed to do it – we never did – because women suffer heart attacks just as much as men do. And they tend to be neglected. And then there are certain things that women suffer that men do not suffer. There needs to be a focus on women's health. I would totally agree with that. But it always

takes money and it always takes perspective and nobody wants to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What caught my eye about this is that it didn't seem like I'd read for quite a while that women legislators banded together as women. It seemed like that day had almost passed. In your early days, that was more common. But it seemed to erode and be pretty much gone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It eroded once women's rights became more prevalent. Then it didn't seem to be necessary to accommodate that type of legislation, but I think there is a reason to. We did come together but we were never able to approve it. We met several times up at Sun Mountain.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be just legislators, or would it include other people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It included others. The Department of Health was there – Mary Selecky. I don't know if she ever came, but she was included in it and we tried. But we never really succeeded in achieving anything because we never could focus on the things we needed to do, particularly. The leadership was not there and finally the lobbyists gave up. I think it was the Sun Mountain group and we had a lot of people who were sincerely involved and interested. Among them were some pharmaceuticals, like with the diabetes – women's diabetes and with heart problems of women. And we had a nucleus of really great people. We met also at the Sleeping Lady twice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nice. Would that be in this era?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. During that same time. They all came together, but there was no one to take the lead on it and then I left and it sort of fell apart, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some of the ingredients were missing still? Well, it sounds like it had potential.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think there's still a need for it. Because women's health is entirely different than men's health. We focus on prostate problems for men and we're beginning to focus

more on things like breast cancer for women, but one of the most common deaths of women is caused by colon cancer and that's a leading cause of death. And women suffer just as much as men over that, and also with heart problems; they never get the attention that men get because the man was always considered the breadwinner. So there's no focus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those early medical studies, of course, were of men, not women. I think they are different.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there were expensive treatments for women which never got taken care of because the focus was more on men's health than women's health. And when I was trying to get the money for reconstructive surgery after a breast amputation, I got a call from a woman who said that they could get corrective surgery for a man's sexual organs but not for reconstructive surgery for women, and she was incensed over it. We finally got that bill through. But there was no attention focused on women prior to that and we wouldn't have gotten that if the Association of Washington Business hadn't come in and supported that. They were a big factor in getting that bill. So, there's been no concentration on these are items that are typically for women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it hard to break out of the mold and cross party lines and create these coalitions? Was that part of the problem here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and although we did have women Republicans and Democrat women coming to these things, but no one really took the leadership on it. National groups have tried to take leadership. I belong to Women in Government and we tried to take the leadership. We couldn't get it at the national level. We even had a press conference at the Press Club in Washington, D.C. and got some national attention, but very minimal. So this has to be a whole national outlook and it isn't happening. Women have come so far with equal rights, but health care's never been the priority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it also because health care itself is so problematical? People have very different points of view. I mean, are there other

issues that would be a lot easier to come together on? Health care is – nobody's got the answers.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right because the whole issue of health care...we state philosophically and legislatively that everyone has the right to health care, but we don't provide it. And we've done it, but we don't provide it. When we declared alcohol a form of illness, we did something about it and I led that parade and I got it. But for some reason I can't get the women's care. I couldn't even get the bill through which added language on the application for a marriage license saying that your spouse is not your personal property and you have no right to harm them. It was "spouse," either spouse. I couldn't get that, but it's important. Especially now with the police chief of Tacoma shooting his wife. We need that reminder that you can't do this and get away with it. Of course, he shot himself too, so he can't be prosecuted. But it's the same thing – because part of the whole health problem is domestic violence. That's a big part. It's a big part of the mental health problem for children. But they don't see that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We have come some way. There's a vocabulary for it now; people are talking about it. There's some awareness.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But until we recognize that mental health is part of the whole thing, we're never going to come together. And we don't recognize mental health; we don't put enough money in it and we don't talk about it. So it's out there and it's a big one. It's not on par yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing about this latest case, as tragic as it is, it is raising awareness of what domestic violence really is all about. There's a greater understanding about domestic violence. Even a few years ago, the way this is being written up now, I don't think that that would have occurred.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, first you had to get the attention of the men. Because mostly – it occurs with women too, beating their spouse. But it starts with men. And we didn't even recognize incest, and some states still don't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still more to do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We recognized incest was one of the big issues with the Equal Rights Amendment. That was a big issue, but nobody talked about that; they talked about all these ancillary things, but that was the big one. You know, it's crazy! And we still don't get it. With health care, we don't get it. Mental ill health is often responsible for the state of poor physical health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that will be the next battle, won't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you've got to get the men to listen. Because men don't think that that's true. A lot of them. Women are more tractable and listen, in my opinion. This is me talking, you know, nobody else. It's me talking. Women are tractable; they listen and they hear and they listen to their children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are often the caregivers, so perhaps they have a more direct experience.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But I'm more encouraged with more men becoming caregivers and being house-husbands. You know, it's going to happen, but not in our lifetime, not in my lifetime. And probably not in yours. Your children's, yes. In other words, there's hope out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, we have to think so.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We live in hope. If we didn't have hope, we'd have nothing. That was Ray Moore's favorite word. I loved it! And he got up on the floor and it was one of the best speeches he ever made on the floor of the Senate and he said, "If you don't have hope, you have nothing."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you have to think you're going to make a difference and make things better.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to believe. And when people don't believe, they are mentally ill. You know, so I guess it isn't believing in God or anything else; it's believing in belief and hope. Me talking. Amen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Otherwise, how would you get up in the morning?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, I know. Sometimes it's hard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm always impressed by the hard issues that you're willing to tackle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Women are not afraid to tackle anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how many years you got up and still did it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You get knocked back and you still get up and do it! Because you know you're right. It's not ego; it's knowing you're right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That you still cared after all these years. And some of the issues come up again and again. Others, you actually take care of and then move on to new issues, but of course there's always something.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And something comes from something. You know my favorite saying was: "From nothing comes nothing." In other words, when you give a percentage raise to someone who has nothing, it's nothing. You give a percentage raise to someone with a huge income, it's something. So, from nothing comes nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this session, you were still looking out for people who have few spokespersons. You had three bills that dealt with developmental disabilities or dependent people: Senate Bill 6751 that insured a choice of service and residential options for citizens with developmental disabilities. I'm really caught by the word "citizens" in there because that was a whole change in thinking right there. That these people are citizens. There were a series of meetings with DSHS and various people who are involved in caring for people with developmental disabilities, including parents and other kinds of care-givers to create this discussion. One thing that interested me is that there had been a kind of argument for years, about community-based care versus state residential care and the outcome of this bill is that you don't have to have one or the other. There should be a choice.



**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. You have a choice. You have to maintain some institutions because some people can never, never be independent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's not one or the other. It's both. That seemed like a real breakthrough.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Deccio fought for that real hard. Very good senator on that issue. That's the reason that I think that others were brought into thinking about the developmentally disabled – that's the reason. It may not be the main reason that McDonald thought about the DD bill to provide a trust fund. But from all this inner workings, inter-weaving, he began to think right and brought that bill forward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing this seems to acknowledge is, when you're talking about people with developmental disabilities, that it is not one thing. It's a huge spectrum from really severe cases – the people whom I gather need to live in residential care with twenty-four hour care and a lot of special facilities – to people who can live in the community with some, perhaps, supervision or some kind of oversight, or maybe even independently, but just like any other part of the population. That's a really wide spectrum of degrees of need.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What started the whole thing was the developing of facilities to accommodate crippled people. You know, that was the beginning of the DD, the whole thing where we accommodated buildings where they had to have ramps for getting into buildings or elevators where they didn't have to climb stairs. And we made it necessary, finally, that any public building had to have access; even the curbs in cities had to be fixed, so we went about that. But we didn't talk about these DD people who were mentally ill. And then we got into the mentally ill and decided that they deserved a chance. And there are people who are not mentally ill who are disabled, like with cerebral palsy, who have great minds that, with the computer age, are able to use computers to prove that. That brought them along and then the DD people who were mentally developed, we found that there were jobs that they could hold and we encouraged industry to hire them.

Like Microsoft hires DD people to do some of the busy work and some of the things that can be done. And so, we've come just oceans, but starting with the access for the crippled and then the parking places for crippled; you know for wheelchair people. Now we assess a \$250 fine if someone parks in a designated space. Now we do it for private property, which was the first step we've done there. We didn't do it in shopping malls because that wasn't public; I mean that wasn't patrolled by police officers. Now we do it for everybody. And it used to be \$25; now it's \$250. Senator Fairley got that increase.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That gets your attention!

**Sen. Wojahn:** So from a little bit, from just the beginnings. Senator Al Williams was the one who really started the accessibility issue. I remember him talking about it, thinking, "Well, it's a good idea. Why hasn't someone thought about that before?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It has to start somewhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. It started there, as I remember. It might have been before, but I know he was an architect and he recognized the problems which needed to be addressed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is it a matter of public education? Imagination? Funding? Changes in technology?

**Sen. Wojahn:** All of these things have helped. The need has always been there, but they never responded to the need with the technological changes, etc.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the early days, anyone with any kind of problem was shoved willy-nilly into the same institution and there wasn't any attempt at differentiating kinds of care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Anybody – you could get your child in an institution, but then there became the problem of paying for it. There was the knock-down, drag-out with the DD people who felt there was an entitlement, that they had suffered – which was probably true. And they thought they were entitled to this. And then there was a move to try to require parents to give up the child. Even though the child was in a facility

and they weren't paying for its care, they were still getting to claim it on their income tax. And there was a move, yes, to get them to not claim them or have that money they were claiming on their income tax go to the state. That was the first move to try to get them to acknowledge. And then we moved into the area of health care, where if they had health care, that they should be taking care of their own child in the institution, and not relying on the state to do it all. That's the time you had to give up your child civilly and they become a ward of the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been heartbreaking, too. That's a rather awful choice for someone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Eventually these things get ironed out and from that comes help. As people begin to think through these things and allocate what needs to be allocated to the certain problems and take care of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think we know so much more now about these different problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there was computerization. That helped everything. Computers – you don't even have to compute anymore now, with computers you can compute numbers. You used to use a slide rule. My husband tried to teach me to use a slide rule, which I never did learn to do it. But he had a real fancy one, I got him the latest thing – one of the new slide rules – and then computers came in and he didn't need it anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure there's a museum somewhere with all those! No child today would even know what it was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think I gave his new slide rule away. It was very fancy, with a leather case. Earlier, he had used it while working for the government. He was attending a seminar on engineering principles at Wright -Patterson Air Force Base and was asked a question no one could answer. Gil got out the slide rule and figured it out and everybody 'oohed and awed.' But anyway, so we've come so far – not only in philosophy and legislation; through technology

and knowledge – that we're light years ahead of what we were ten years ago.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And just think of all the different kinds of wheel chairs they have now that can do so many things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Think of all the types of computers that can even talk to you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's really wonderful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They can do anything. If you have your fingers available, or even your toes, you can do anything. I knew a neighbor boy who was born with no arms; it was during that time they gave the women this pill...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Thalidomide?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And he was born with no arms, and he learned to paint. He became a very famous painter with his toes, a Tacoma boy. So, anybody can be taught to do anything if they have a brain and the will to use it. You can be mangled bodily, but you can do it. Or you can even be mentally retarded and still do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We see a lot more potential in people now than we ever did before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, if you remember "LA Law," in which they hired this mentally retarded person to act as a messenger boy and he could use the copy machine and empty waste baskets and things like that. And that was twenty years ago. I loved it. So it's a combination of connecting the human brain with the technology of today and having businesses willing to employ these individuals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With each breakthrough, of course, then we see more potential.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We have a lot of Albert Einsteins out there who we don't even recognize. You know, when I think if we could ever harness the ability of an idiot savant, we'd have the world by the tail. There was one at Jennie Reed Elementary School who I met. Give them five numbers multiplied by seventy-five numbers and they can compute it or divide it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's the tip of the iceberg. Understanding how the brain works.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We're learning that and now we're taking imaging pictures of the brain and they are figuring things out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's the new frontier, exciting as outer space. Inner space.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. There may not be any new physical – geographical – frontiers, but there are new frontiers as far as thinking and producing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's plenty we don't know, that's for sure. There were two other bills to help people with disabilities: Senate Bill 6737 which regulated property taxation of residential housing occupied by low-income developmentally disabled persons. Do you remember that? Senator Deccio sponsored it and you were the second sponsor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Is that the one in which we gave a property tax exemption? Oh, that's a great bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. The background information on it is: "All property in this state is subject to the property tax each year based on the property's value unless a specific exemption is provided by the law." And then the bill talks about how different kinds of people get these exemptions: non-profit organizations, churches, blood banks, the Red Cross, that sort of thing. There's a whole list. And then this bill is to extend this exemption "to provide housing for eligible persons with developmental disabilities."

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a take-off of a bill which I sponsored to give a property tax exemption for housing. But this is for special needs people. So they could get a special property exemption to build facilities for DD people. That was a copy of the bill that I did for all property and for economic development.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No one voted against this. This was one of those things that went right through.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, because we'd already done it. We'd already done it for property exemption. Was it ten years or more? Mine was ten years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't give any time limit. It just says: "The housing must be occupied by developmentally disabled persons, whose adjusted gross incomes are eighty percent or less of the median income for the county adjusted for family size." But it's an extension of a very familiar program and it just extends it to house people with disabilities. So it would be just including them, I gather.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was a great idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This kind of tweaks your original idea slightly but in the same direction, just to make it easier and more affordable?

**Sen. Wojahn:** For people to remodel their home for a DD person. I mean a crippled person. That would be a take-off of Senator Al William's original bill. That's a step which came along later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your other bill, in that cluster, provides for adult family home and boarding home training. Many different kinds of people are sent to adult boarding homes: stroke victims, people with different needs, some for short periods of time, others, really, for the rest of their lives. This bill addressed the need for training for the people running those homes. So that they can work with all these special needs people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Does it register them? Or certify them?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think it goes that far. Let's see. This really deals with quite a large population. This report talks about 27,000 people who live in these facilities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, we did that to accommodate DSHS so they could develop these places and relieve the nursing homes. Yes, I remember that bill. It was a good bill. And the reason it was done was to establish a more home-like atmosphere for people who can move out of a larger nursing home or institution, and it would be less expensive, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure. The bill summary says: "Currently, caregivers in adult family homes and some boarding homes are required to have a minimum of twenty-two hours of

training in infection control, first aid, and residents' rights. Caregivers in homes where there are residents with dementia, developmental disabilities, or mental illness are not required to have any specific training related to caring for these special populations." So, you were saying that they do need training.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We gave them the right to do some things too, like help with diabetics, with the shots and things like that. We did that too, because they were doing it and it was against the law. So we required them to have a certain amount of training so that they could do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The first thing this bill does is try to get these groups together to develop recommendations for training standards and to write a report to give to the Legislature. And then look for standards, look for this specialized training for these different needs. It brings up how to care for all these different kinds of people, so that these adult family homes would be not just more accountable, but more skilled. It's quite an elaborate bill. There's even some money appropriated. Sometimes these things come without appropriations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it wouldn't have worked then. But that actually saved DSHS money, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think so. And it would add some flexibility.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a request bill, I'm sure, of DSHS. I remember the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one of the several bills which was supported by your steady interest, in these last few years, in developmental disability care. Then you had a whole menu of other bills that you sponsored or co-sponsored. You were still watch-dogging the Impaired Physicians Program. You put in a bill to fully fund the program, but it was vetoed by the Governor because he said it was identical to another bill, so perhaps there was a House bill of the same nature?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We did have an impaired physicians' bill we passed some time back. This probably expanded it, but there's money in the

physician licensing, I think, to take care of that. We just had to authorize it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it didn't turn out to be quite enough?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't know. I know one thing, that no one can touch that money for any other purpose except for use for physicians for licensing problems. Impaired physicians would come under that, also. And it's always appropriated. But that's a problem, you know; with the trust fund I set up for the trauma care, that they only appropriated enough money and then they stole the money. Literally stole it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember. There were some more, housekeeping-type bills. One to eliminate the expiration of the state Cosmetology, Barbering, Aesthetics, and Manicuring Advisory Board. Sort of a technical bill. One to implement amendments to the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. That's quite a mouthful. This was a federal bill passed in 1996 to do with welfare reform and the changes to this one concerned child support enforcement systems between states. This, again, raised the whole issue of using Social Security numbers. There were several bills which touched on that.

You also had kind of an interesting little bill, with many sponsors, establishing the Washington "Gift of Life" Medal. This is for organ donors. It was just kind of a nice little thing for people who had died and donated their organs, where the donor's family would get an inscribed bronze medal awarded by the Governor.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know a fellow who used to do our landscaping when we had the house, whose son committed suicide. And he had signed on his drivers' license that they could take his body parts. They charged the family of the boy who committed suicide the fee! It was \$2,000.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the organ donation surgery? That's incredible.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And I never could get a hold on that and they had to pay it. And I wonder if that was an excuse that they gave that

they could do that. I have never figured that out. He should have had an attorney fight that. That was ridiculous! That's been bothering me ever since then. That bill has nothing to do with that, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's certainly something people wouldn't anticipate. No, I don't see anything in the language addressing that issue. Just honoring organ donors.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They wouldn't want a medal; they wanted their \$2,000 back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that would be kind of incongruous, wouldn't it? To be getting a medal and also a bill at the same time.

There was another bill, I was thinking, which might be a little closer to your long-term interests. It's a bill to control drugs used to facilitate rape.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Date rape.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Something dumped in drinks to make the woman fall asleep. The bill reclassified the substance to increase its criminal penalty.

**Sen. Wojahn:** As it should.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's considered a controlled substance. Under this bill, the penalties are made the same as current penalties for unlawful acts involving controlled substances, classified under Schedule Two instead of Schedule Four, where it had been. I imagine all these things are tied to degrees of penalty? So this makes it a much more serious crime. Would this have been controversial in any way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like it passes fairly handily. There was a partial veto on it from the Governor, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Did he give a reason?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Provisions regarding the crimes of second degree rape and indecent liberties in situations involving the use of a controlled substance are vetoed. Also vetoed is the requirement that sexual assault investigators receive training regarding the use of sedating

substances in committing sexual assaults." The Governor's language, more specifically says: "I support the main goal of this bill with the seriousness it deserves. However, prosecutors and legislators who sponsored and worked for passage of this bill have asked me to veto Sections Six and Seven. Those sections would add confusing language to the definitions of second-degree rape and indecent liberties, two very serious sex offenses. The language is not necessary to convict people. They use drugs to make victims helpless and it could make conviction more difficult for other crimes by requiring proof that the accused person knew of the victim's helpless condition." Did his veto actually strengthen the bill?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Put strength in the bill, yes. You couldn't prove it. If you couldn't prove it, you couldn't punish it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it muddy up the whole issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's what made it easier to prove.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was one bill, of which you were not a sponsor, but I'm sure you had interest in it because it touched on things you had worked on in the past so I'd like to hear your comments. Some legislators wanted to revise the bill known as the "Becca bill" that you had worked on a couple of years previous to this. The bill wanted to change how the law worked. The Becca bill required the courts to review the case quickly, within the first few days of a child being detained. This measure was to take that early review away from the courts and give it to DSHS instead. And DSHS, apparently, was planning to farm that out to treatment centers. They were actually for-profit treatment centers and this was somehow to facilitate their business. Frankly, it's a business. Many legislators had a real problem with that. That people who would be actually making money from this, would be evaluating the child. That was seen as a conflict of interest, I guess. Quite aside from that issue, there was a different problem with the Becca bill in that it had never been properly funded.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. There you go again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that shelters for runaway teens were mixed in with detention centers for criminal juveniles.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Criminal – that's right. And they were charging the parents of the runaways for housing them, too, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are not the same population, necessarily, and certainly different issues going on there. So, how did this discussion go? Were you involved in some aspects of figuring out how you wanted to treat this and whether you wanted to change the bill or not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know how I responded to that. I didn't like the Becca bill because it was never funded properly in the first place. So I probably wouldn't have liked it being sent out of the courts. Although it was done, probably, because the courts are getting too crowded and there weren't enough judges to review these problems. Plus the fact that in detention, we were putting them with criminals, with young criminals. And their parents were having to pay for it. You see, if your child is a runaway, and they detain you, then they charge you, the parent, board and room. And then they were putting them in with young criminals, which was the worst thing you could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like a training school for future problems.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where they learn more bad than they already knew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think it would be not a good thing! It's very complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I probably voted against the bill. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It goes through quite an amending process so perhaps in the end it's not as first proposed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I probably kept my hands out of that because Jeanne Kohl-Welles was always involved with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The original sponsors are Senators Hargrove, Long, Franklin, Winsley and Oke.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They were all probably on Hargrove's committee and I wasn't on the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Human Services and Corrections. I imagine this is a difficult problem which will come up again and again because it's not one of those things that can easily be solved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Until they fund it properly, it will never work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to touch on something; it's just one of those little things that happen during session. Towards the end of the session, it looks like there was a kind of breakdown in the process and I'm not sure if it was just weariness or what was happening, but it almost seems that the Republicans are pushing things through faster than your side feels comfortable with. There was a bill which sounded innocuous, named "Increasing the Maximum Height for Motorcycle Handlebars." It was on second reading and Senator Snyder arose, on a point of order. He sounded apologetic: "Mr. President, I reluctantly rise to a point of order; I don't necessarily disagree with this bill, but I don't think ..." He says something about cutoff resolutions and being pushed forward in a way that didn't fit the calendar. I'm mindful that just the previous session he had stormed out because of rule violations; he's much quieter this time, but he notes: "I think, in order to keep some decorum in the place, that I must raise this point on this bill." He's soft-spoken but he's making a point there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it's the same thing, breaking the rules again to force the bill through after the cutoff. Without getting a two-thirds vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you also then rise on a point of personal privilege – which you didn't do very often – and you say, "I'm getting very disturbed because I don't have these bills on my desk. I don't know what I'm voting on. Senator Snyder has already said that we don't know

what we're voting on. I don't know this bill. I'm not on the committee that heard this bill, I've had no chance to review it and I don't have anything on my desk to tell me whether or not there's a conference report, or what it is. We're voting blindly and I think that is a mistake." Did that happen very often? Would there be bills that would just come out of the air, and you wouldn't even know what they were about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, usually you have everything. And you know when a bill comes over. And apparently they were playing a game, as I believe it, in trying to force something through that hadn't been thoroughly studied and should not have been there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You go on to say, "We are all elected to represent the same number of people and I think that my people have the right for me to know what I am doing." This sounds very basic! "I would suggest we clear this up because there are calendars that are not here that have been disposed of already. I'm told that the old yellow calendar had all these bills on it, but the old yellow calendar went down the tube about a week ago." So do you remember what you were talking about?

**Sen. Wojahn:** At the end of the session we have calendars and anything that has not been voted on, on one calendar, if the calendar is disposed of, it goes onto the new calendar. But apparently this bill was not on the new calendar; it had not been taken off the old calendar and put on the new one, so we didn't know what we were voting on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So somebody was slipping up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It could have been just an oversight on the part of the staff, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you're catching them on it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Rosa Franklin also rises – and you're all being pretty sensitive and light about this, but I'm sure there's a serious purpose underneath it – she says on her point of

personal privilege: "Mr. President, many years ago there was a legislator who was here who was from the Twenty-sixth District and that senator, many of you probably will know, he was quoted as saying: 'Mr. President, I am confused. I am confused.' Well, Mr. President, at this present time, I am confused because the process that is taking place..." and then she goes on about the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What happened to the bill? They probably disposed of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When Senator Snyder stormed out of the Senate the year before and resigned, it was a major statement for everyone.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A disruption, to say the least.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this session better? Were people on better behavior, shall we say?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that we ever quite trusted the Republicans because they broke rules all the time. They had people – you know, if you're a Pro Tem, you're not supposed to be a committee chair – and they have all these rules. And I remember when Irving Newhouse did several things. He was on Rules and still was a committee chair, which was against the rules.

They did things that were absolutely taboo. They did it after John Cherberg died; they got away with it. And I think that that was the final straw with Sid. He'd sat and watched it and talked to them on the side, apparently. He didn't bring it up or maybe he had brought it up on the floor of the Senate before. But maybe he told them on the side to "stop doing this." And finally that was the last straw.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think he kind of brought everybody back up to scratch?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, because he had been Secretary of the Senate for so many years, he knew the rules backward and forwards far better than anybody else on that floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering what an impact his actions had for the next session. You all start fresh, whether some decorum was recovered?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The decorum was restored, but there was always a suspicion that it would happen again, I'm sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were you acting...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Defensively? Not really.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More like watchdogs, though? Keeping people in line?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering whether there was an uneasiness...this is kind of gentle humor that you're employing. Is there a different approach?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was maybe gentle humor, but it was meant. It was deadly. "Don't do it again!" I think everybody, the Democrats – I mean the leaders – needed to know that the rules needed to be watched and noted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if this was an unspoken thing or if you actually talked about this in your caucus.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody talked about it, I don't think. It happened and I don't think it was ever brought up after Sid came back. We didn't talk about it. We didn't talk about it the next year, as you say. I think it was an undercurrent that we all recognized that it could happen again. And part of it was the fact that the Republicans had never been in the majority enough to really believe they had to follow the rules. I just feel that way. That they were insensitive to the rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can that happen when a party feels an urgency, shall we say, with their program? That they – not just a party but any legislator who thinks what they are working for is more important than the actual institution – can that happen that way?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, probably. I'm sure it does. But you don't break the rules to do it. That's the reason it's so dangerous now that nobody there really knows the rules. And that would be very dangerous because now there's no one there with any knowledge of the rules – the background of the rules or anything else, with the exception of, well, even the Secretary of the Senate is not, because he's new, too. Although

he would be more apt to know the rules and all the rules, but no, there's no living memory down there anymore and we desperately needed an historic memory.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that one of the dangers of the quick turnover?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The danger of term limits?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, that's the reason term limits are such an abomination. It won't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Only legislators who have been there a certain amount of time can really feel that institutional deep tradition; if you've only been there a year or so, I suppose it's a little harder. Especially if you think you're only going to be there for a couple years, I would imagine the temptation to push your program might outweigh other considerations.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, following the rules got eased a little bit when Joel Pritchard was Lieutenant Governor, because he wasn't really a good parliamentarian either. And we loved him and he finagled, but he didn't get away with it. And it could have happened during that time. Nothing did happen because someone was always there and alerted and he was caught. But it was just because he was gregarious and didn't care that much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different emphasis for sure. Anyone coming in after John Cherberg would be challenged.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, Cherberg maintained order with an iron hand. And Sid worked under those circumstances for a number of years. And I know that Sid gritted his teeth a few times with Pritchard, but we all survived. But when they attempted to sneak something through – that was too much. And it wasn't done light-heartedly; it was done with vim and vigor and seduction. They knew what they were doing the time before that and I think he figured they were doing it again. And he didn't want to go through the throes, the same as before, but I'm sure he meant it and I'm sure he was hurting over it.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** 1998 was the last year you were in the minority and it seemed like kind of a frustrating session. It was less productive for you than other sessions, perhaps. One of the things which kind of put a lid on the session – for everyone – was that even though the state had large reserves, you seemed to be trying to put a real limit on your spending. There were not a lot of new programs or new initiatives of any kind. You kept your spending well under the 601 spending limit. Was a policy choice, or other circumstances?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was the policy of the Republicans and they insisted on keeping the spending level low. I think that some of us felt that we were heading for a recession.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Need to get a bit of a reserve there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. We did not have the votes. And if I remember correctly, the House was Republican at the same time. So we didn't have much choice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just one of those times. It was characterized, though, by tax breaks for businesses and a lot of wrangling over transportation, which didn't really go anywhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a move to increase the gas tax but there weren't the votes to cover it. I think that the chair of Transportation really wanted to increase it, if I remember correctly, but as a Republican, he couldn't even get the votes to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There didn't seem to be the political will. That missing ingredient.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, there wasn't. I think the Democrats were depressed enough that they didn't think there was any point in fighting for these things. Also, we'd had our own way and had gotten programs in and we were trying to preserve the things we had done which were viable and that the people wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So more of a holding pattern?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were all kinds of press summaries at the end of the session which have

pretty evocative titles: "What the Legislature Did and Didn't" is one of them. Another one was headlined, "Families Pay a High Price for the Legislature's Inaction." This was especially zeroing in on the Children's Budget Coalition, a group representing thirty state and regional organizations who tried to put children first and slammed the Legislature pretty hard that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** An Op-ed piece by Brewster Denny noted that there was an erosion of support for children's issues, that basically, the money went elsewhere. They gave legislators some points but not very many. The quote which seems to sum it up is: "It was frustrating to see so little effort to address the real concerns of working families, including those moving from welfare to work when the gap between income and need is so clear."

**Sen. Wojahn:** The children's alliance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there is that sense of not progressing. Another article said, "After years of big tax breaks for business, the theme this time was 'think small.'" Generally that was the tone of how people felt that session.

Something else we may want to discuss was – especially in transportation issues – the trend of using the referendum, to hand big issues over to the voters. As a legislator, what do you think of that growing trend?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't mind a referendum to the people, particularly when the Legislature can't come to terms, because the people can initiate that on their own if they wish, if there's no emergency clause so that the bill goes into effect immediately. So people can do that or we can do it; as a legislator I state that in saying this. And that seems to be an appropriate move. But for the people to initiate against the Legislature, when the Legislature has made every effort to do the will of the people, seems sort of fruitless, especially when the initiative idea is so flawed. I don't like the idea of giving up the right of initiative, but I think perhaps we need to do something to make it firmer and more difficult to do. Either require more signatures, or require

an outside commission to review the proposal to see that there's enough research done to see if it could possibly work. But to just abruptly sponsor an initiative because someone has a wild idea that there ought to be a law on something, is not good enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that it's hard to integrate the things that initiatives mandate into the structure of all the other laws that already exist.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And I don't know how you can do that except to require that they present their ideas with a proposal of how to pay for what they are asking for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that's one idea a lot of people have talked about. When initiatives call to cut taxes that it ought to say from which program. Not just generally, "across the board," because that still leaves some pretty hard choices with no direction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was a lady standing over at the store the other day; she had six initiatives. She didn't know what was in any of them and she was preaching about all of them and didn't know what she was talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So not knowing didn't exactly slow her down?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And I asked her how much she was getting paid and she wouldn't tell me. She said, "Not enough." Whatever it was, it wasn't enough. And she was just "exercising her rights as a citizen." And I said I agreed with her that she had the right to do this, but I thought she ought to know a little bit more about what she was asking the people to sign. And she said, "Well, it has to go to the vote anyway." I said, "Yes, but if people misunderstand what they are voting for, even when it gets on the ballot," I said, "because people are not wise enough to read and some do not always understand the full impact of what an initiative is saying."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly the text in some initiatives is pages long and in very small print and if you're trying to get to the grocery store, there isn't really the time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Now, the voters' pamphlet is supposed to be in the hands of everybody, but I'm sure that a lot of them go out with the garbage not having been read, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As discouraging a thought as that may be, and yet people do still vote on those measures.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it's hard to respond. You know they can state it in one simple sentence that doesn't have any meaning. It takes five paragraphs to explain what it will or will not do and people don't read that far. They read the lead line and forget it. You've got to get the meat of any initiative or of the opposition right in the first sentence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the idea that initiative drives should have to report their campaign sources to the Public Disclosure Commission?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, absolutely. Not that that would help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People don't read that either?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They should have to at least report those that come from out of state. A lot of them originate in Vienna, Virginia, which is the most conservative area in the United States. And they are bought and paid for at that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll see what happens. There was a lot of turmoil about initiatives at this time. 1998 and onwards, the issue heats up pretty drastically.



## CHAPTER 29: A VETERAN LEGISLATOR AT WORK, 1999

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The state election of 1998 turned out very well for Democrats, even though your national standard bearer, President Clinton, was in pretty deep trouble by then. The national-level problems didn't seem to have any impact on what was happening in the state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, their snide remarks were going on all the time, but they were politically-motivated and I don't think it had a great deal to do with the political structure of the state of Washington. It didn't affect the election in our state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Democrats, because of the national scandal, and the failure of health care reform, and some other things that just weren't working, did you have to craft a new message? There was a perspective emerging of a "new Democratic Party," a new style of Democrat. Some people called them "business Democrats." Did you notice any of that trend happening in this state? Were people coming out with new rhetoric and new solutions?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that some of the candidates were coming out with, not new ideas, just a rehash of some of the former proposals. You know, I never really did much of that because I had always prided myself on listening to both sides and going with small business when it was appropriate and doing things for small business. And remember, I had chaired the Commerce Committee at one point, and I knew the hassles they were undergoing and I tried to understand. And if there was an issue before the Legislature which would help them – which didn't have too many ripple effects that injured people – I could go along with them. So I think I was always looked upon as, not an enemy of business – I may not have been looked upon as a real great friend – but it was moderated. I had done things with the small business group in Tacoma and with the executive aid group, the retirees, to help small business and had also done legislation to provide some tax incentives to business, and one of them we granted the incentive for housing

which has worked miracles in the city. And so because of that, I think I escaped any negativism. I didn't have to bring it up in my campaign. So that may be the reason, I don't know. Some people learn to trust, I guess, after a while.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were not up for re-election, but during election season, when people are thinking more about issues, is that an opportunity to go out and speak about issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but actually if a person isn't running, they tend to stay in the background in order to let those who are running have an opportunity to express themselves. You don't want to lessen that if they are of your own party.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you help campaign for your House members?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. We always attended each other's fundraisers and helped them in any way we could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would be one way of keeping your face before the public.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It's tougher to be in the Senate because you're not before the public that much and you can get lost by your constituency, if you're not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On the other hand, you don't have to be out there pounding the streets constantly, which could be a little tiring.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We relied upon our annual newsletter. I only did one newsletter a year. I figured a questionnaire was silly after I had represented the district for so many years, I should know what they wanted. You know, you don't have to ask them any questions again and again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unless there's some brand new thing happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Unless there's something new. We listened. I had telephone calls and letters and we knew pretty much what the district

wanted. And what they didn't want. It was a great district to represent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you still go to meetings and connect up with different groups of people? You had ways to be out there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Still do. I told you the day I was at Costco, about a month ago, and the second time an older woman demonstrator thanked me for the bacon bill. That was thirty years ago! But she remembered. I saw her again the other day when I was in there and she reminded me again. It's just a riot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's amazing!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Demonstrating food items, where they give out the samples. And she said, "There's the bacon lady." First she thanked me the first time, but that was six months ago or so. And people still remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That bill is really important to people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And everybody thought it was stupid at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It touched real people's lives, obviously.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I think the biggest surprise to me was when I was before the packing company here in Tacoma that used to be Carstens Meat Packing Company, one of the larger packers of bacon in the United States. I was down there at 5:30 in the morning shaking hands with everybody for my second election and the U.S. Department of Agriculture guy there came up to me and said, "You're the lady who changed the packaging on bacon." And I said, "Yes." He said, "I thought you were nuts. I thought it was the stupidest bill I'd ever heard. But," he said, "You know, it's a good idea. We're not having to take back packages to be repackaged all the time." He said, "It used to be a battleground in the bacon section; now we don't have to do that."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because people would rip open the packages to see what the meat looked like?

Taking the issue into their own hands.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right, yes. So it was kind of neat. So you see, it works.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just a matter of noticing things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** One of my campaign slogans was "Working Together." It was a great one; now others are using it. First, when I was running for the mayor of Tacoma, I used "Together for Tacoma" and now everybody's using it. And then I used "Working Together Works."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's catchy. When you get all the w's in there with "Wojahn."

**Sen. Wojahn:** "W,w,w, with Wojahn." Yes, "Working Together Works: Wojahn."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democrats regained the majority, so your final two years in the Legislature, at least, were in the majority. Your Party had twenty-seven to twenty-two members. It was a flip-flop. The House was split and you again had the phenomena of two Speakers: Frank Chopp and Clyde Ballard, which can't have been very much fun for them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no it wasn't. It was not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They tried to rise to the occasion, but it must have been rather difficult. Because the Senate Democrats are in the majority, you were elected President Pro Tempore again. This was your third term. Were you still enjoying it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I liked it. It opened a lot of doors because I became the vice-chair of Rules and when the Lieutenant Governor wasn't there, I presided over the Rules Committee where you have a lot of options. You have a lot of opportunities there. Also, I became a member of the Facilities and Operations Committee, for the overall operation of the Senate, which I was on before and then lost. I still remained on the Facilities and Operations Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would that duty entail?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, one of the most serious things that we did was to send a letter to Senator Roach suggesting that she needed help and that we were willing to assist her in the funding of



*Being sworn in as President Pro Tempore by Supreme Court Justice Phil Talmadge, former Senate colleague*

any help she needed for her own benefit. She had blown up at one time over some flowers on her desk and we found out later it was one of her own people who did it, who was allergic to flowers and was sneezing and so put them in the back of the chambers. And then she used some rather revealing remarks on the floor of the Senate, sexual remarks that were way out of order, and we did not want to be sued by a constituent or someone over these things and felt that she needed help. She rejected it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you are the presiding officer when a senator speaks outside the bounds of propriety, say, is there a way to address that right on the floor? How would you do that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You suggest they are out of order.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then they should “cease and desist?”

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you cut them off. “You’re out of order.” You cut off their microphone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that would do it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You do it. You don’t have to be nasty about it. You can say, “The President believes that you’re out of order. Do you wish to restate your statement?” And you cut them off if they don’t.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you give them a chance? Did you have instances of being Pro Tem when you were presiding where you had some tough things like that happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had some tough decisions on a challenge, but they were usually ironed out. We would just recess and get together with the attorneys and figure out what needed to be done. And then there were a few times – one late night meeting, after hours about ten o’clock at night, when the same group, back in the corner, Roach among them, were

making so much noise that we couldn’t hear ourselves. We had to ask them to either quiet down or go out into the wings. So those things occurred. Sometimes the lobbyists got too close and had their toes inside the chambers and you had to ask them to step back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you need to summon the Sergeant at Arms?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, you try not to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that too heavy-handed?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You ask the Sergeant at Arms to close the curtains. I don’t think I ever had a demand for a call of the Senate when I was there, or if I did, it wasn’t successful. I don’t remember. That becomes bitter, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that practice start to diminish? It seems like in earlier years, it was a fairly frequent mechanism.

**Sen. Wojahn:** When the vote is close is when you need to do it. And if one of the majority members is missing, you better do it because you can lose a bill if it’s a controversial issue.



*Tabulating votes under the watchful eyes of Senators Ted Bottiger, Rick Bender and Alan Thompson, Senator Warnke in the background*

Usually when there's a member missing, in the Senate we tried to avoid the controversial issue. It was just standard practice for either Democrats or Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would just move it down the calendar?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just skip over it. We would just skip over it because the majority leader can pick and choose the calendar. Even though it's on the calendar on a certain spot, the majority leader can call up another bill farther down the calendar or anywhere. It doesn't have to go in sequence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought at some point, if you were going to do that, you would have to make some kind of motion to defer or whatever?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, unless it's challenged. If it's challenged, you do and you can lose, but it generally was not challenged. So you can move all over the calendar. It's done during the dying days in order to get to bills which are real significant, with the consent of both sides, usually. You don't do anything in a vacuum; if you do, you're going to be squashed. You anticipate things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are there times when a group can block action on major bills so that they just simply die? So that the clock runs out? Is that a strategy?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a strategy, but if you don't have the votes, you better not try it because it won't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's all in the counting, isn't it? Did you still do your vote count? I remember in the beginning of your career you were known for that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always counted votes. In the House you have to because a lot of members are too new and they are not aware of a program and it might be good for their district, but they don't recognize it. So you've got to talk to them and count your votes. In the Senate, it's not so much that you need to count, you need to count for quality. Because if it's a good bill and it looks as though it could go – unless it's really controversial – you better count your votes. If it isn't controversial, you don't need to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking of those photographs of you, literally tabulating. Was that a practice you kept up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was usually on an amendment. On an amendment there were changes in the scope of the bill. And always on final passage, because there's a ninety-to-ten chance any bill could be controversial of which you're not aware, and the other side might not tell you they're going to kill it. It might be an innocuous little bill. I almost lost a bill once because I thought it was so innocuous that no one – and it was one of my own caucus members that damn near killed it. But we managed to get them turned around and got it straightened out. We had to reconsider, I think. So, you usually count votes in your own caucus if there's any slippage that you suspect. And then you go to the other side to count votes, if there's some slippage in your own caucus. There were usually members of the opposing party who have the same philosophy on an issue that you have and you always ask them about their vote, even though you're relatively certain that they are going to be with you. But anyone can disrupt; it can be very disruptive and very shattering.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would guess. And I understand that the courtesy of asking someone also helps cement their vote, in case they were wavering. That you bothered to talk to them about it would help a little.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's not so much – it might be for a green senator, but not for old timers; they know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have heard of instances when people said, "Well, nobody even asked me, so yes, I'll go with you." But it must have been on things that were a little less...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Less controversial. On abortion issues, I usually asked on both sides – and you know, you're surprised sometimes at the position of the Republican Party – some of them just are great. And yes, I expect on a point like that, where it's really controversial, they would appreciate being asked. I don't think they would change their vote if not asked, because of the philosophy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just a little extra that you can do.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A little extra. There were always members of the opposite party I could go to and ask for things. And sometimes when you didn't ask, they did it anyway. I remember we were fighting the issue of the Pantages money and I didn't know where my votes were and Sid Morrison came over and said, "Do you have enough votes?" And I said, "No, I need one more." And he changed his vote. So it was a courtesy extended, and it was good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, for him, perhaps, he voted against it, but without any conviction one way or the other?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No conviction, but it was money being spent out of his district and so he was courteous and asked. The same thing happened when we were battling the Cascadia issue. So in those days it was good to be in the Senate because there was a mutual respect, always. It wasn't a dog-eat-dog situation. I remember fighting the issue of putting the Seattle Convention Center over the freeway; I thought that was the craziest thing I had ever heard, because of the danger to the underlying portion. They had to reinforce all of that. It was very expensive. And I remember battling the issue of the Mariners baseball field. I didn't think it was appropriate, for the state to buy into that. So I'm known for fighting issues for which I didn't believe it was appropriate to use public money. And handing over the taxing base for the state of Washington to the group in Seattle who wanted to do the Convention Center was wrong – and it was done anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did set somewhat of a precedent, didn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It became a state building. But we managed to require that the operators pay the fringe benefits for all the state employees. That would have been all state employees working there. I think I went along with the World's Fair in Spokane as an economic development issue for eastern Washington. I didn't fight that. And I didn't fight anything which was appropriate for Seattle. But some things were not. Not with the use of state money. I was willing to go along with the Convention Center tax credits with



motels and things like that, but not letting them get a hand in our tax base. So, what goes around, comes around. And I remember when the Mariners Stadium was being talked about, there was something stated in the paper that eastern Washington was unfairly not supporting this and it was so strong that most of them did support it. It was crazy! They didn't talk about Tacoma – when we tried to get a tax credit for the Tacoma Dome because we had raised the sales tax in the fall when the bids had already gone out for the Tacoma Dome. And the sales tax had not been taken into consideration; it was going to cost \$245,000 more because of that. When we imposed the additional sales tax, I asked the Senate to not assess the additional sales tax on the building supplies for the Tacoma Dome because this was raised after the bids had come back and I couldn't get it. And I always used that as a reason to battle the Mariners Stadium in Seattle. They wouldn't give the \$245,000 for Tacoma to take care of its sales tax break and yet they were asking for millions for Seattle. I got up on the floor and made that little remark and everybody listened. Another thing I always made a remark, was when they required us to come up with five million dollars to build the history museum; in the history of the state of Washington, they've

never required a state building to be financed by local government before. They did it to us. And I used that to get money for the Sprague Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least you were able to leverage it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** After the fact. That's the thing about having a historic memory: never forget!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can call up stuff from ten years ago and amaze everybody.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And no one was there long enough to challenge me. If done nicely...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, of course, with a little twinkle.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And an iron jaw. A twinkle and an iron jaw!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least a strong backbone. Let's look at what you did that session. The previous session you weren't on very many committees, but now you were back with four committees. Plus the Facilities and Operations Committee.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got moved out of my office to the other building – you remember – it was traumatic. I'd been in the Leg Building forever



*"At home" in Legislative Building office with Page Stuart K.*

and I got moved out of the Leg Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you came back, I'm assuming, because you were in power again. So, as you say, vice-chair of Rules and back on the Ways and Means Committee – Veloria Loveland was the chair that year. In fact, all the committees that you are on, except for Rules, have women as chairs. You were on Health and Long Term Care; you're the vice-chair of that with Pat Thibaudeau, your good friend being the chair. And you were on the Labor and Workforce Development Committee with Darlene Fairley. Now, that's a new name for that committee, I believe. Can you tell me why it was now called Labor and Workforce Development?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was called Labor and Commerce and then it didn't fit. They are two opposite philosophies and it never did work. At first it was just plain "Labor Committee," so then it kept getting watered down and changed and finally it was called Labor and Workforce Development. We arranged the committee structures which were copasetic so that Labor went along with Workforce, because a lot of it involved training programs which were initiated by the Feds but picked up by the state of Washington. And so they went together quite well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is a committee that seems to be tweaked every couple of years with a slightly different assignment and name.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That was the time they brought in the binding arbitration for small-town police officers. That's when I lost the endorsement of the police officers because I didn't go along with them. They wanted binding arbitration for small towns and cities of less than 5,000 people, which was ridiculous. In the first place, most of those are holding places – a learning area for experience – so police officers could move into major cities. The mayors of Milton and Fife and Fircrest, which is a city within a city – I had about six precincts in Fircrest – and those mayors all called me and asked me to please not support the bill. That was part of my district. And so I didn't support it. I tried to divert it and

I amended it so it was so bad that nobody wanted it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's one way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Then that got removed and it finally got loose. I know that another person who was opposed to the bill was Irving Newhouse. Usually we're not on the same side of an issue but we were on this one. And he fought it all the way too, but it finally got into the Rules Committee and it got out, and I couldn't stop it, and it passed. And Irving voted for it when it passed. But I didn't because I didn't like it and I didn't think it was necessary and would probably never be used. But anyway, the police officers went after me because of that one vote. I had protected them on their pensions; I had worked for them for improvement of their pension system. In my thirty years down there, I had done nothing but help them. And the firefighters, too. And they went against me and endorsed my opponent when I next ran for office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that seems a little harsh. You often hear about one-issue legislators, but that sounds like a one-issue interest group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, with a lot of clout. But that shows you what happens in the legislative process if you don't use your head, or don't listen to your constituents. And the police officers tried to revoke my endorsement by the firefighters and the firefighters said "No, she's been our friend all these years. One vote does not make an issue."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems a little hasty.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was heinous. Anyway, that's part of my history. From that and from other things, I lost their endorsement; I lost the endorsement of the News Tribune. It was very bad. It was such a small issue that I guess I never...well, I couldn't have done anything, anyway. It wasn't the city; Tacoma was not involved, but it was the overall lobby group, the Washington State Council of Police Officers, and one of the members – the assistant lobbyist was a spokesman for the City of Tacoma police, James Mattheis – and I talked to him about it

and he refused to do anything. I'll never forget. Their chief spokesman, Michael Patrick, had been a Republican state senator with whom I had served. So you see, politics entered into it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We've touched on the phenomena of initiatives, but that year you had I-695 kind of hanging over you, the license tab fees being restricted to thirty dollars per year. That was filed just before the Legislature convened.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That passed, but it was thrown out by the courts. The thirty dollars could not be done because local government had the right to assess a small fee for a license and that was fifteen dollars, so the least it would be forty-five dollars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All through the session, you had this cloud of rhetoric and animosity towards the Legislature hanging over you generated by that campaign.

**Sen. Wojahn:** So the Legislature capitulated. I voted no because I thought it was wrong. You don't capitulate on an issue that's wrong and that's where I blame the Governor, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He did rather jump on that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, popular.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also a great deal of pressure from teachers to grant cost-of-living increases. They wanted fifteen percent, and they, too, were threatening an initiative drive, which eventually they did organize and it was passed. You were on Ways and Means; do these kinds of efforts influence your decision making when you are trying to put together a budget? Whether you have this kind of issue looming on the horizon?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would never have endorsed the fifteen percent because we couldn't afford it. But I would have insisted on their getting some kind of an increase in salary. Especially teachers, because we had teachers entering the teaching field who qualified for food stamps, for goodness sake. And I think, at that time, the base salary was about \$20,000 a year, which was ridiculous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For first-year teachers, yes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And so I would have held firm to giving them an increase, but not what they were asking for because we couldn't afford it. Because once you do it, that becomes a budget-driver for years on end, from there on out. You'd never get out from under it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Once you give it, you can't really take it back?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You can't take it back. And so, I guess I would have been willing even to give a cost-of-living increase on a percentage basis to everybody – the same amount – which helps those in the lower income bracket and doesn't hurt the people at the higher income bracket, administrators especially. And I liked the idea of giving across-the-board increases, the same amount to everybody. In order to try to bring them up to parity. Ten percent of nothing is still nothing!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were under considerable political pressure from these initiative drives which got a lot of press, a lot of attention.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The initiative which didn't pass was to give them an increase. But it wasn't fifteen percent, as I remember. I don't think I signed the initiative. I don't think I ever signed – I rarely ever signed an initiative unless it's a great idea; you should let the Legislature do it. About the only time I ever signed one, I think, was the one on the basic minimum wage. I think I signed that one because I thought it was revolting – five and a quarter percent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have their place in the system?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But they have to be researched and done properly. The only one that's ever been done properly, actually, was the one which established the commission on Public Disclosure. That was done properly and they brought the facts out; it was well done. And that's the last one that was really done well, in my opinion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** My, that's thirty years ago.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But we had one we put up that established the Ecology crews who clean up highways and it passed. And it was the last time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, we still have that. You can see those crews everywhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was appropriate and people loved it to death. I thought it was a brave move on Representative Bob Curtis' part. We all endorsed it. If it's done well and thoughtfully. And I know that he spent a lot of time with the committee working it out. It was well done and it passed. That was clear back when I was a freshman, I think. Or a sophomore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were involved in a lot of legislation this year, some big, some not so big, so let's see what kinds of things hit your desk. Or originated at your desk, more likely. One bill which may have impacted your district took two years to pass, but the discussion started in 1999, which involved finding better funding for Northwest Trek and the Tacoma Zoo – and parks in general – in Pierce County. It was interesting, first of all, that they weren't confined to the City of Tacoma, they were county-wide.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, it's a metropolitan partnership. We're the only city in the state which has a metropolitan park district. It could take up parks which are outside the city of Tacoma. It's bitten us several times.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That year you sponsored a bill, SB 5710, but it didn't pass; it took more work, I guess. I'd like to talk about this issue all in one unit, even though it didn't pass until the following year. You were looking to have a slight increase in the sales tax to create this funding source. But I understand this bill required the issue to go to the ballot – I imagine the county-wide ballot, not the state-wide? And then there was a little wrinkle in here which seemed very characteristically “you” that I'd like to ask you about. Included in this bill is funding for the mentally ill. Now, not many people would connect housing for the mentally

ill with support for the zoo, a different kind of thing altogether.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. Because the mentally ill are housed at Western State Hospital. The state had authorized the use of a lot of their land to the county who was supposed to pay a certain amount of money every year for the lease of the land. And they were supposed to clean up the land they were using, and they were supposed to build a storage unit for Western State. They did none of these things. They just took the land and used it. They built a house for the caretaker instead of the unit for the storage. It was absolutely the most revolting thing I have ever witnessed done by a group of public employees elected – or appointed – to the state. It was all wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This arrangement had been in place since 1976, I believe? So a long history with this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. And as a matter of fact, when they first started, in order to get it through, the county was getting their water – they were using the water to water the golf course the city had there – using a water system on Western State Hospital grounds, using the private water when they weren't paying their monthly rent for the property, and hadn't built the building they were supposed to build, and had abused the contract! So Western State Hospital went out and cut the waterline so they couldn't use the water anymore. Because when the water was low, Western State was having to buy water from the City of Tacoma and pay for it and pay for the water for their golf course at the same time. The inmates were supposed to be able to use the golf course, but the manager built a fence so they couldn't access the course. The whole thing is so bad and it was so entangled that I said, “I want some money from this parks bill, for the mentally ill because it's getting worse and worse; there's less and less money going to the mentally ill. They are dumping from all over the state into Western State Hospital and Pierce County is taking the brunt of it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you see this very attractive parks bill as your chance to get in there and clean up a rather bad situation?

**Sen. Wojahn:** At least to get the cemetery cleaned up. This was a way to provide money to get Western State to take care of the mentally ill, for the things which needed to be done. So I said, "The state can collect the money, but they get to keep two percent for ten years." We forgot to repeal that ten-year, so they get it forever. It was all bad faith on the part of Pierce County Parks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you dream up this connection? Was this just sheer opportunism? It's pretty ingenious!

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was done by skull sessions with people who could help. I think that actually it was the brain child – in discussion with me – of the Senate staff attorney for Health Care, Jonathan Seib. He was a dear. And it was done. And if I were going to give my vote, before I would even lift my finger on the bill – or my foot – because the county could have done it anyway. They chose not to. It was the Republican-controlled County Council; they refused to do it because of the problem of re-election. They could have done it, but they chose not to, and I said, "Well, you can do it anyway. You don't need this bill." So they came back to the Legislature for the authorization; they got frightened because there was such a hue-and-cry to take care of the zoo. They got frightened and then they came and pleaded with us to take care of it for them – to assume the responsibility for them. And so we did, and I thought it was wrong. So part of it was political on their part – it became a political football, which then became political on my part. Because turn-about is fair play.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You certainly grabbed the opportunity.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wish I'd asked for more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As it turned out, your Senate bill was not the vehicle; the House bill was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, that was a double-cross by a senator who now is on the Pierce County

Council, Calvin Goings. There was a double-cross. Because no one in the Senate was going to sponsor that bill and he went outside of the wishes of the caucus and did it. Only he had some support in the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work closely with the House members to get your provision in here?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I did. They were going to kill it and I didn't care, but I said, "If you don't kill it, then I want this amendment." And one of the Republican members, Joyce McDonald, came over and talked to me about it and I explained the whole thing to her and she went along with the killing of the bill. Then she sponsored the bill to do it, which was fine, but it was my amendment. She created it, but it was done fairly and squarely. She came to me, we chatted and we agreed and that was that. I have a lot of respect for her. And then her caucus got mad at her for doing it. You know, and then she lost her next election. She's back in now, but it was kind of a sad day for everybody, in a way. Except for the zoo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The zoo was in pretty dire straits, I understand, or at least that's the way it was written. So you were able to help them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another curious feature is the way the language of the bill is written. It authorizes the county, with a population between 500,000 and 1,000,000, to submit to the voters a ballot proposition. How many counties besides Pierce County have that particular population?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Only for Pierce County. These are one-issue votes. One issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you're not really supposed to just say "Pierce County," but you kind of work it around with the population-numbers ruse?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a subtle way of doing it. It's so subtle that everybody understands it, except the voters might not understand it. You can say, "Well, they offered it to everybody else, but nobody wanted it." That's just the political part.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Should there be other counties with this population, then they can take advantage of this rule?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Eventually, if it's still on the books, I don't know, it may be repealed. Unless the bill said "one-time only." It may have had a cut-off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There doesn't seem to be anything like that. There were a few other little wrinkles in there but I don't see any cut-off date here.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that was '98, '99?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** 1999 and then 2000 is when it actually passes. This particular one. There were two provisions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You see, normally, the state could collect the money and they could keep a collection fee of two percent. Or they can do it for free. Well, they're not doing it for free; they are keeping the two percent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. Well, here in the bill review it says, "Some park tax revenues also must be spent on properties," and then in brackets it says, "Fort Steilacoom, the subject of a Memorandum of Agreement," and this gets real specific, "between the Federal Bureau of Land Management, providing counsel on historic preservation and the Washington State Historic Preservation officer." Well, that's got to be only one thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the only person who could change that in the United States is the Secretary of the Department of Interior.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then it talks about how that will be administered. But it gives this other option: "In lieu of a tax collection administrative fee, the Department of Revenue must deduct one percent of the tax revenues collected." And then: "This deduction lasts for twelve years," as you mentioned. "The deducted revenues are to be transferred to the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development and then they must use these revenues to provide community-based housing for persons who are mentally ill." So there were all these steps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Codicils that have to go in there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They line up and end with the money going where you wanted it to go.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was two percent; it's only one percent?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's one percent. Anyway, it's pretty amazing! Only because we'd already talked about that issue with Western State did I have any clue what this was all about. So there are definitely very creative ways of getting what you want. It takes a veteran legislator to get something like this together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It takes a historic background.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did it work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, they have to do it. They are doing a lot of things for me. They are doing that; they're also doing the bill for McDonald which gave the disabled the right to set up a trust fund with the State Treasurer Investment Board. And they are setting up a trust fund for DD people, which people can contribute to. It's a good agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was very interesting looking at your work of the last two years of your career, how certain long-simmering issues get resolved. It was that last plug and something you've been working on for a long time suddenly gets done.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Gets done!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another bill, Senate Bill 5746, you worked on that year "modifies certain exemption language for new and rehabilitated multiple-unit dwellings in urban centers." Was that part of your longtime efforts to redevelop Tacoma?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's the bill that permitted the using of the property tax for the new structures, or the remodeled structure, going up for housing, which could also be used for commercial property. We had a real battle over that because someone added an amendment in committee which said that it had to be used only for low-income housing. And that was not the purpose. I wanted mixed housing. So I had to

try to correct that. It was done for economic development purposes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You needed a mixture of incomes to make it work?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is right. I wanted it for the waterway in Tacoma. That's what we needed. But the bill got limited to low-income housing and I think I know who did it, but I'm not going to say. It got over to the House – it slipped by me in the Senate – and I didn't realize it did that. I didn't catch it and it got over in the House. I found out about it and went to the Commerce Committee in the House and asked them to change the wording there. It was a Republican-controlled House and here was a Senate Democrat who had sponsored the bill coming over and saying, "Please amend it and take out the low-income and make it open." They scratched their head and said, "What's she asking for?" They didn't trust me. The bill was going down the tube. It was about the last week of session, and I finally got to the building trades people and said, "This bill has got to go because it will help building trades, it will help contractors, it will help developers and economic development for Tacoma." And I got hold of Dick Ducharme who lobbied for the Building Trades Association and said, "It's got to go. You've got to get their foot off of that bill." He called Bill Riley who owned the building that Gigi Talcott's husband rented for the Republican headquarters in Pierce County. Her husband was a big Republican in Tacoma. But it was Gigi Talcott who had her foot on the bill. So I understand Riley got to him and said, "For God's sake get your wife off of that bill! We need it!" And that is all true. It happened! She didn't like me; I mean, it was an immediate lack of trust on her part and certainly on my part with her.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So by using an intermediary, you could break through this wall? You figured out who was interested and worked through them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And so the bill went. And that provided the opening for all the construction that's going on in Tacoma now,

because they still pay for the land underneath the property and the sales tax on the building supplies, but the building above is tax-free for ten years. But we did not make it just for seniors; we said it should be used for low-income, senior citizen housing, and for housing and economic development. So if it was a storefront they could maintain the storefront below, put housing above it and still be freed of the tax cost for ten years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a big thing!

**Sen. Wojahn:** So they are building all these condos. They redid an old apartment, the Annobee, a large, four or five-story brick building which had sat vacant for a number of years. It was falling apart. The windows were all broken out. It was just sitting there, decrepit. It took up half a block right up on the north end, right off of Division Avenue. The owners were out-of-state – from Alaska – who would do nothing because they couldn't afford to. The minute the taxes were removed, they went ahead and redid the building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they had this incentive plan?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They had incentive to do it. It's now a retirement home, a senior citizen home; it's a beautiful building. And a lot of other construction is going on using this tax-free thing. The City of Tacoma asked for it as an economic development tool. But they were being pushed by the developers and the thing is, when I put that bill in, every community in the state wanted to use it. Former Senator Nita Rinehart was staff director of Ways and Means at the time and she said, "We can't afford it because we don't know how much money we're going to lose." There was too much of a loss of property tax. So we agreed and negotiated and said, "Well, let's try it in Spokane, Seattle and Tacoma first to see if it works." Bellingham and Olympia and Everett all wanted to use it. They wanted the bill and were lobbying for it. And so we limited it to the three larger cities. It was for a two-year period. Then we could expand it if it worked. And it did work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The first line of the bill said, “in cities with a population of at least 100,000” or “the largest city or town in a county, under the Growth Management Act.” Did you get to expand that category?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We got to do it. It was extended by another member two years later. I think it was Representative Val Ogden from Vancouver who sponsored the same bill for other cities in 2000. I was moving on to something else by that time. So it expanded to other first-class cities, or whatever. And it worked, because the sales tax on materials purchased – that’s what I had argued – that the sales tax on materials purchased, plus the property tax on the land itself, depending on where it’s located, should generate enough money and should give the developer an incentive to go in and do it. So now it’s good for everybody. Because they found out that they did not lose money because the property under the building was often worth more than the building itself. Especially in the downtown area along the waterway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there would be a way to recoup the tax base?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. Between that and the sales tax on the materials being used to reconstruct, we figured that they wouldn’t lose any money, and they didn’t. And so Val was able to get it the next year. It became her bill the next year. But it was my bill to begin with. It was a great bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s substantial.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to give to get. A lot of people objected because we were giving away stuff. Well, it’s proven to be the most successful thing that’s ever been done in the City of Tacoma, if properly controlled through authorization of the city.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It allows people to live downtown and to get around without cars because they are closer to stores and services. It has a lot of benefits.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it encourages development for grocery stores in areas where there is a lack of grocery stores. Now, like downtown Tacoma,

they are going to have some markets down in there with the development of all these apartments and condos.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it revitalizes a whole area?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. And we’re still seeing the symptoms. The people who buy condos in these places do not pay property tax. They are excused, so they are getting it tax-free for ten years. It works for everybody except maybe, I guess, the people who don’t like tax exemptions; they wouldn’t like it. But sometimes you have to do it in order to encourage economic development. It was one of my first bills in the Senate. You could do it if it was for economic development; you could do all kinds of things. And that’s the way we got around the State Constitution about not using the state’s credit – for economic development. No one’s challenged that yet. Phil Talmadge and I were talking about it the other day and I kept laughing about how I sponsored it way back when I was a freshman senator and I said, “Phil, no one’s ever challenged that yet.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe you don’t want to say that too loudly.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nobody realizes all of this, it’s all – you know, you try to tell people and they get glassy-eyed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, tax policy is not exactly a best-seller.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But there are innovative ways you can get around it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It isn’t all my ideas; you know I have a lot of help. There are a lot of attorneys and tax attorneys and people to whom I listened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were willing to run with a good idea?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of your interests carry over year after year. There was a bill that year, SB 5134; it sounds innocuous but I want you to explain how this works. It provides for the enforcement of out-of-state protection orders. It



was part of a larger campaign against domestic violence. At this point you were a member of the Pierce County Commission Against Domestic Violence, but how long had you been a member of that organization?

**Sen. Wojahn:** About two years. I was a charter member, from its inception, maybe two or three years out. I don't remember how long. We met once a month to do solutions. It was at their behest that I sponsored the bill on the wording on the application for marriage licenses. And then this was another big bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you describe what it's all about? It was to "authorize the enforcement of out-of-state protection orders." In the bill summary it says, "Removing barriers faced by persons entitled to foreign protection orders."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, when a protection order comes through and a gal flees from any state, say from Oregon to Washington, with a protection order against her husband, that protection order has to be enforced by the prosecutor in the county in which she is located in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But previous to this bill, they wouldn't pay any attention?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some prosecuting attorneys did not pay any attention to that. And the same member who tried to kill the Trauma Bill – Representative Carrell – asked me if I would mind if he took out the demand that the prosecutor honor these protection orders – which would kill the bill!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it would kill real people, too.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Kill the bill. And I said to him – and I guess I got this real flared look in my eyes – and I said, "Go ahead and do it and then anyone who dies or is injured, it will be on your shoulders." And everybody sort of went like "this!" It was in the House and he was on the committee. And he asked the question.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be the justification?

**Sen. Wojahn:** There would be absolutely no use for the bill. And this was the bill that was approved and endorsed by the Washington State Supreme Court.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe I'm naïve, but it just seems like a no-brainer. Why wouldn't they already honor protection orders?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because they don't have to. This insisted; this made them do it. Unless you make them do it, the prosecuting attorney in each county is elected by the people of that county and he is not subject to state law unless it's clearly stated in the law of the state. This was clearly stated and Carrell wanted to take it out, which would have made the issue null and void. And let me tell you, the guy who wanted to take it out too, in the Senate was Senator Hargrove who chaired the Human Services Committee. He wanted to take this wording out, too. I have to tell you the ploy I used; it wasn't a ploy – it was sincere. He was mouthing off in the Judiciary Committee, where he was also a member, about taking this wording out because the bill did other things. It did other things, but that was the key of the bill, and so Pat Thibaudeau who also served with him on Judiciary, said, "Watch out, because he's going to try to remove it on the floor of the Senate when the bill gets to the Senate. He's going to try to take it out, and he's going to be able to explain it, and he's liable to get it because people don't understand it." And she said, "Even if you explain it well, he might win." Because he always was sort of ambiguous with the Republicans – he was their vote some of the time; he crossed over a few times. And so she came to me and said, "Watch out for him." So I called the florist and I had them send him a big bouquet and I thanked him for his support of the bill in committee and I said, "It's a really good bill and it will do good things for domestic violence." And he didn't offer the amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you kind of called his bluff? What made you think of doing that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** He got up on the floor and said, "Thank you." I don't know. What makes you think of doing anything?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Instead of a confrontation or a fight on the floor, you went the other direction.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I sent him flowers and thanked him for voting the bill out of committee. I think I asked him to vote for it; I pleaded that it pass through the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is that the “honey versus vinegar” approach?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t know. He must have told Carrell. But anyway, he reminded me that he did a good job for me and he did. You don’t forget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was very effective.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Occasionally, when someone really did something that was tough or against where they were, kind of ambiguous, when they voted yes or no, I would send flowers. It wasn’t unusual. I didn’t constantly do it, maybe once every three or four years I would do it to someone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it makes a bigger point, then.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Someone who had listened and condescended, or agreed or listened to my point of view. Yes. And it could be a Republican or a Democrat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s nice. Well, you were honored by the Commission for shepherding this bill through. You got a special little plaque and a public “thank you” for that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. And I was invited to speak to the state group, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So piece by piece, you are one of the architects of creating this much safer situation for women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I had started doing domestic violence but I wasn’t getting very far. And that’s when Phil Talmadge was elected; he was really a force behind a lot of it, because I’m not an attorney, you know, and it’s tough to argue something unless you have the proper credentials – a law degree. And he did, and he’s the one who did the Stalking Bill, for men who stalked women or vice-versa. He did a lot of good things, but I did, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were certainly involved over the years. The issue shows up again and again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Between that and fetal alcohol, we did that. And women – the displaced homemaker bill – good things for women.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would serve on this Pierce County Commission? Would it be advocates and people in the field?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Everybody. It was the prosecuting attorney, a member of the County Council, the sheriff’s officers, various women’s groups, Ft. Lewis and McChord.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Domestic violence shelter groups and things like?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Shelter groups; like the YWCA, and there was a shelter group started by the Trinity Lutheran Church in Parkland who started another shelter, because the one at the YWCA was not enough to take care of all the problems. So the chair of one of the ministers of that group served on the Commission, and then we had an emergency physician, a member of the Washington State Medical Association.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So really quite a big group?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was an expansive group. About twelve members, but it was comprehensive; even the Armed Services were represented because a lot of it was occurring there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even the creation of such a group – quite a set of luminaries, you might say – speaks to the progress in this area. The awareness and all the different groups playing a part – it’s quite an achievement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And this brought in all of the groups involved. Not the Tacoma police, because it was a county group. I think that they may have been involved; the police chief spoke to us, I know, once or twice, but I don’t think he was a member. It was started by a group of women – attorneys, I think – or they were at least the instigators. I think it was my friend Judge Filis Otto who recommended that I be a member of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you the only legislator?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. I was the only legislative person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how long did you stay with this group?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was on until I retired. They kept me on, but I don't go anymore so they've taken me off. I don't think they have ever appointed anyone else because no one else has picked up women's issues in the Legislature. I didn't recommend anybody because there's nobody that I knew. I don't know that I could now, but they need to make it a point to say they are willing to serve. If you're not willing to go – I went to the meetings even during session when I could. I was always there. Some of them take a position and then never go. And that's no good. You've got to go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Make the commitment. Well, that was a big bill for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's certainly come to the foreground now. But the thing is, now they're showing how the Tacoma Police did not cooperate with the domestic violence group. They did not cooperate. The women in Tacoma could not use the Pierce County facilities because the City of Tacoma was not involved. It's really bad. Buckley or Fife or some of those areas which participated had much more access to it than the city women of Tacoma. And that's coming out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That certainly turned into a tragedy with this recent horrible murder case involving Tacoma's chief of police. Well, unfortunately something bad has to happen before things change.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What they did is set up a one-stop domestic violence center within the courthouse. They had the sheriff's people there, there's a prosecutor always there, and a counselor always on hand. Twelve hours a day when the courthouse is open. The woman can go in – go to one place with her children. She doesn't have to drag them to all these other places to get help. It's incredibly good. But it's

done for the county. The City of Tacoma police did not cooperate, as I understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, perhaps it will be different now.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They will now. That's right. I know a district court judge, Betsy Verhey, who is on it, so it includes the court system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's one of those one-step-forward, one-step-back, kind of fight that you got involved in.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We went forward with the county, but one-step-back with the state. But now it will be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another issue you have tracked for a little while and made some headway on, you helped create an ombudsman program for long-term care issues. This year you tweaked the bill a little to allow this office to help resolve complaints on behalf of residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. DSHS oversees this program, but the ombudsman is not actually an employee of DSHS. They are an employee of a private non-profit agency. But what was really interesting is this is a volunteer program. And then the new piece for this session was just reworking their duties a little? The bill notes that there are 350 volunteers who work in this area. Could you tell me about that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It's incredible. They are doing it for peanuts. A marvelous job! And they are there and they are very active.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This bill appears to give them more authority, if I'm reading it correctly. So, it's strengthening that program?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that's being phased out now because of money. I hope it isn't, because they are getting so much for their money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Especially if they use volunteers. Part of how you got the funding for this was in a budget proviso; I imagine you did that through the Ways and Means Committee? Maybe you could explain how a budget proviso works. This might be an opportunity to talk about that particular mechanism.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You either get it written in at the request – during the drafting of the bill – or you get it in by an amendatory process. I think it was done during the drafting of the bill. It was suggested. I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This one looks like it was done during the creation of the budget. Kind of tucked in there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, it was tucked in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, say, when the budget is up before the Ways and Means Committee, you would propose an amendment and then it would be put in at that point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, not an amendment. I'd talked to the Ways and Means people, the staff and they sometimes tucked it in. I know that Joanne Conrad did it for me – on my behalf – when it came to one of the provisions in one of the other budgets in which I had recommended during the passage of the Family Independence Bill – the second one which passed, the one that went later – that DSHS be required to counsel women on adopting illegitimate babies, on the adoption process, and give them positive counseling on that. And Joanne got that in for me in the proviso. So you can do it that way or you can talk to Ways and Means staff and ask them to put it in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it has to be voted on or not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no. The Ways and Means chair always asks the Ways and Means Committee to contact the staff if they want something put in the budget. And that's the way to do it. I did that on several occasions without a bill. I did it for the Sprague Building, but I couldn't do it without a bill. I had to do a bill. But I tried to get it in, about three-quarters of a million dollars without a bill. But they said, "No, you better..."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a bit too big of a lump to swallow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, if it's small enough, they will do it. And so usually, I would go to them with a list of things I had requests for from

constituents and ask them to put a proviso in the budget to take care of this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There would be some discussion, though? It's not just like this...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not blindly done. It all had to be covered during the budget process. In other words, when the budget is presented, then people come forward and speak to these various issues in the budget. The people on behalf of whom I had done this would be there during the budgetary process and would recommend that be a part of the budget – that would remain in the budget. So that's the way it's done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine this is a good mechanism for smaller "under the radar" kinds of things. So you wouldn't have to go through the entire bill process but you could still get things taken care of?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It was done to get money for dyslexia – a small amount – I mean, like \$100,000 put in for dyslexic kids in Tacoma. I got that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So being on Ways and Means is a very effective position!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely! If it's small enough, you can get it. The budget is full of goodies. And my goodies were always in behalf of people; they were not selfish goodies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another thing along those lines was this trust fund for the developmentally disabled. You had been talking about this for awhile, but the bill passes that year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was Senator McDonald's bill, but we were in the majority and he needed the power of my office, I guess you might say. So he offered the bill to me and I said, "No, you do it." And he said, "I don't want to, you do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're the first name signing on and he's the second name.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. A good bill. I take no credit for that. Except that I supported it. I became the prime sponsor of it, but it was his idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also stayed with this issue in the following year.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, I was always supportive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this creates a fund through private contributions and with matching state appropriations, I gather, to be invested by the State Investment Board. There was still some tweaking to do when this bill passed, trying to figure out who should be on that board, clarifying how exactly that will work. But at least your foot's in the door, you got this established.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But we had to do a constitutional change. We passed the bill, but it could not be effective. The only money which could be used was outside money; no state money could be put into it without a constitutional change. And so I was a sponsor of the constitutional change also, which went before the people. And we were able to sell it to the people when they had not adopted many other constitutional amendments which did the same thing in the past. It was incredible!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it was something people could understand?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Then the Treasurer could take in the money, the Investment Board could invest it – because they could only invest private money before the constitutional change was effected; then they could invest any public money. We gave them five million dollars to start it up – public money. And that was the beginning of the investment fund. And from that anybody who wanted to invest had to agree to come in and honor that and pay into it. And they could do so much a month or however they wanted, or so much a year. Any relative or family member of a developmentally disabled person could invest in that and any money that they privately invested would accrue to the individual child.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a pool, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But any of the public money then would accrue to anybody. And now we need to get a 501(c)(3) or whatever that public entity for non-profits to pass so that we can accept donations from private companies. Then



*Senator Wojahn and Senator Dan McDonald (center) being honored for work on establishing trust fund for developmentally disabled*

we can accept money, like from Microsoft if Bill Gates wants to contribute, to a fund for DD; and that fund would accrue to anybody. And it would build.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that one of the issues you then had to face was what about those children whose families can't afford to donate? What happens to them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I mean, they can come into it, too. We had to get the money first. We gave them five million dollars; Veloria Loveland did that. And it was at my insistence and McDonald's. We asked for it and we got it. And she did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is the beginning of more complex solutions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. But we were never giving money to families with DD kids. We never gave enough, we just never had enough. They could put them in an institution if they could get in – space was limited in public institutions – but that was not the answer. We wanted people to keep them at home if possible. And this will encourage them to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The point made – when I was reading about this – was developmentally disabled people have that condition for their whole life. You can understand this need when they are children, but what about when they are older and their parents or caregivers are very elderly – then what happens?

**Sen. Wojahn:** This was a fear which I had been hearing ever since I was first elected: "My child is being taken care of at home, but what's going to happen when I die?" Or, "My child is in a state residential facility, but what happens if that is closed and I have died and can't take care of him?" And that was a problem, I've heard that from the minute I was elected from people who had DD kids. Especially if they were taking care of them at home, what happens? And this will answer that question for them. They can help to take care of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must be a terrible kind of anguish.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You have to live with that. So it is a responsible approach and I think it's working. But we needed to start it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, here it is.

**Sen. Wojahn:** People cannot afford unfortunate circumstances. The same with the mentally ill; they cannot afford this unfortunate circumstance of being mentally ill. We don't do for the mentally ill what we should be doing. We never have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the things – I don't know if it played into this bill or not – but in the press at that time there was an ongoing investigation of Western State Hospital where they were discovering that developmentally disabled patients were being mixed indiscriminately with mentally ill patients, some of whom were violent.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Vicious. Vicious is right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was, of course, not a good mix and there was a lack of proper facilities and a lack of segregated care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We need to separate those populations and put them in separate facilities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would this add to the emotional punch of a bill like this? What happens to these people?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that ever came about. I think we tried to resolve that and now at the institutions – at Buckley, for instance, at Rainier School – we don't take anyone but adults. There are no children there. But they could be vicious. But then you get the conglomerate of persons who are mentally ill and the developmentally disabled. They don't belong in Western State. Some terrible things have happened at Western State.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can imagine.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I'm not going to tell you about the one thing that happened that was so bad.

Just awful things. These are predators. Predators are moved out of there. They need to be put in a maximum security prison or a maximum security area or an area separate from

a DD area. So, and I don't know where they all are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is something society is still working on.

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the meantime, we have the child development area at Western State in which they try to work with kids and turn them around and help them. One of my grandson's buddies, who graduated in psychiatric social work, is working out there and it's deadly, too. It's really sad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a hard field.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Not a nice place to work. You have to have good people and you also have to have people who care. And this is a young man who is dyslexic and had trouble getting through school until we got some help for him and he's doing wonders. Because he can understand and he likes it. But even he's challenged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anybody would be.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He had to have special help getting through college, but thank God, the University of Washington in Tacoma were the ones who finally helped him. I really applaud them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And now he's giving back something, that's really wonderful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And we changed the language. We disposed of the term "idiot" and that was a big deal. "Idiot" and what else?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Moron," I believe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. And called it "developmentally disabled," which was a kindness. They couldn't help it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, yes, nothing like coming into the twentieth century. There was one more of these smaller bills that I wanted to talk about which was SB 5499; the description says: "Making modifications to the home health, hospice, and home care agency licensure law." It updates the regulations on those groups. I think it was established in 1988 and you looked at it again in 1993 when you looked at all the health care issues and then revisited it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think we licensed more homes for senior citizens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's for a whole array of people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** In order to allow people to move out of an institutional or nursing home care, which was very expensive, into a less confining area where they would have more freedoms. It saved the state money, but also was a good thing for the participants because they had a much less structured environment. I think that's part of that review of that, to be sure it's working.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the really big bill that session – which doesn't pass then – was your push for the Patients' Bill of Rights, SB 5587. You had been working on this for several years already; I want to step through it because it's pretty complicated.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I started working on it at the request of Women in Government, who first introduced the bill to Congress way back in about '95, I think. It was based upon the HMOs. Because some doctors were not referring patients. If they had something a general practitioner was unable to treat, or they were not referring them to a specialist when it was needed sometimes, the people suffered because of that. It was usually happening when it was done to save money or to protect insurance companies from large reimbursements. Something needed to be done to correct that situation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The big question that everybody was asking: "Are HMOs – insurance companies, in other words – making medical decisions? Or are physicians making them?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Insurance companies were making medical decisions for the physician. The physicians' hands were hobbled and they were threatened sometimes by insurance companies if they did refer. Maybe not threatened outwardly, but the undertone was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was definitely something there. The usual discussions of health care reform always bring up that very sacred relationship between the physician and the

patient and that worry of putting government in the middle there. There was a very clever speech by Phil Talmadge on the same issue and he alludes to that, “You know, we’re always talking about government intruding between the physician and the patient; well, how about insurance companies intruding in that relationship? Where do we want them?” That seemed like a really pointed way of asking the question.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The HMOs started imposing their will on people way back in the nineties when they told them how long they could stay in the hospital. Refusing to extend their time in the hospital and it became the insurance company demand that they get out, rather than the doctor’s best judgment that they not be released as soon. From that has come some good things because people have gotten on their feet sooner, which is probably good in some cases. But in some instances, not always.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, you’d like a doctor to make that decision.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They should be making the decisions. The doctors were dragging their feet because they were afraid of being sued for not doing enough testing. They were not cooperating either, so it worked both ways. Except that it became a hue-and-cry of the public that the insurance companies were making decisions which should be made by physicians.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was said there should be a right to sue HMOs for denied coverage – which was new. And that there needed to be an independent review or grievance procedure so that if your HMO denies you a procedure there would be some place to go.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there should never be any entanglement which would preclude them from doing this. It needed to be open and pure, that they should be able to challenge if they felt the decision was wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This issue was certainly right up your alley, but you also had a constituent, Victoria Doyle, who perhaps came to you – I

don’t know – or you heard her story somehow? She had a heart transplant and needed a lot of post-operative medication and care and for such a drastic procedure that seems pretty obvious. But she was denied coverage for the medication and care she needed. It was denied and she also had trouble finding out why it was denied. It was just kind of a brick wall. Did she come to you? Or was this just a story that you heard?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t remember her coming to me with that. We heard various stories about the lack of cooperation and listened to some of the problems which had occurred because of that. The whole thing was that people had few rights as far as medical care was concerned, even though the rights were there. They should have had them, but they were being denied. One of them was a man who had multiple sclerosis. He needed stem cell treatment, and he was told that he could have it. He got to the hospital and was ready to have it done and then the insurance company denied it at the last minute. So he went home to die. And I think that Microsoft came in and paid for it. He was at the signing of the bill. He had been in a wheel chair; he couldn’t walk. He was on his feet – he was walking. He was a miracle!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it worked?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It worked!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know it was considered somewhat experimental.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they said it was experimental, but it really wasn’t experimental because stem cell surgery has been going on for at least ten or fifteen years and it was working. And they had agreed first and then they denied it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot of publicity over that, I remember. It was very poignant.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He was there and he was in Ways and Means. I had a picture with him in the paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wonderful for him, but is that really how we should regulate medical care, though? Do people have to make the front page of the papers before they get what they need?



**Sen. Wojahn:** We shouldn't have to do that. Every insurance company writes its own rules. There's no uniform plan and there's no uniform regulation of insurance at the federal level. It's the only industry in the country which is not regulated. The banks are regulated; the auto dealers are regulated; everybody is regulated but the insurance companies. They rely on the individual states which cannot do it. They cannot regulate across state lines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You read about – you know, if you've got a really tough medical issue – what you need to do is find a celebrity to publicize it. That is a very bizarre way to get care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's terrible! It shouldn't be. It isn't a celebrity, it's getting the publicity. Getting a number of the newspapers and television stations to pick it up. Before that nothing will happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it's the extreme edge of our celebrity-loving culture. But it's a very strange way to do public policy.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right. And anyone who has to do that, they lose their privacy, which is rotten. And it's not a celebrity particularly; they become a celebrity because of the illness and that is not right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, for people unwilling to hold themselves up in that way, they get nothing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They get nothing if they're not willing to do it. Or they give up. Most people just give up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they're sick for starters. That's really not the best time to be fighting anybody.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And if they don't have initiative within themselves to do it – and some people are just built with that initiative and others are not – it doesn't happen. Or unless someone else picks it up and carries them forward on their own, on their shoulders. I guess that's what I felt we were doing with this bill. We were picking up the unfortunate and taking them all and saying, "Look, these are the misfortunate; these are the things that are happening. This is

not right. A physician should have the right to make the call. It should not be a third party who may be an administrator of an insurance company." And we got it! It was a miracle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It took you two years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because we were one of the first states to get it. We were one of the first states to require that if care was denied – if a third-party denied – the person had the right to go into court themselves. Texas didn't even include that. Texas was the first state to get it and we were about the second.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But your bill went further?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Only our state has a stronger law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, some of the things in the mix here, when you're battling for this, the individual insurance coverage industry was collapsing all over the state, for whatever reason.

The industry was falling apart. Whole counties were left without coverage, especially in eastern Washington. It was quite a bad situation. That was in the background of your fight for this; there were real issues in the insurance industry. You also had an Insurance Commissioner who was a very vocal champion of this. And for some parties, too vocal. Deborah Senn really got out there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Broke her pick on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's one way of putting it! She "gave no quarter," shall we say. At the same time she was also running for U.S. Senate. How much did that make this more difficult?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It made it impossible!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she politicize it in a way that was not ultimately helpful?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they politicized it for her. The Republican Party did not like or trust her and they let it be known through their various meetings and party structure and I think she became fully hated by every working member of the Republican Party. It was really bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to polarize – and personalize – the issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. And she didn't have a chance. It was too bad. For one thing, they said she was trying to write law. Well, she was pushing the pencil pretty hard to do the things that needed to be done and she may have kicked a few shins and nudged a few people in the process that required statutory authority, but she was a friend of the underdog and proved it. And is still speaking out and is still considered dangerous by the Republicans. It's too bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was a lightning rod. A display of political courage seldom seen during campaigns of whatever stripe.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And willing to take the heat. She is with a very good law firm in Seattle, one of the larger law firms in the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she landed on her feet, in any case? During this fight, Senator Deccio went so far as to push a measure saying the Insurance Commissioner should become an appointed office rather than an elected office.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed particularly a pointed jab at her. Did that animosity make the discussion of this bill much more tangled?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think so. I don't think that the man on the street was interested in talking about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anybody who had been sick recently, or knew anyone who had, though, might have some sense of this issue.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Insurance Commissioner handles a lot more than just medical insurance. People always had a place to go if they had a complaint with their auto insurance bill or lack of coverage. And every Insurance Commissioner I know has done a pretty good job of fronting for the public on issues that were important, so I think it's good to have as an elected position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one of those constitutional provisions that had its origin in a different historical era, a much more populist

era, that we still have with us. It's interesting to watch.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I liken it to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Land Commissioner. No, I think it's good because they are being reviewed by the people all the time. And that's the reason the Insurance Commissioner – if they speak out in behalf of people – usually lasts forever if they want to stay. And I think Deborah would have been able to be re-elected forever if she had wanted to stay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was certainly a champion. Even though Republicans really despised her, you managed to get some Republicans to support this bill because of the dire situation in eastern Washington, mostly. You had Clyde Ballard and Linda Evans Parlette, who could see that their communities were being hurt by this insurance mess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The Speaker should have known because he had an ambulance service. And it should have personally bothered him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he is intimately tied to this. Were you able to speak with some House members about this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I spoke with Parlette and she was with me. The year before we hadn't gotten it, as I remember, because it had been stopped by the Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And now you have some real leaders behind it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Representative Eileen Cody worked really hard for the bill and couldn't get it. So it's time had not come. There were still enemies – the real conservatives didn't like it – but Deccio finally came along, too. You know, when you get his support on a bill in which he chairs a committee – in which the committee chairman is with you – it makes it a lot easier. He didn't fight it. He was pure gold to us!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when Deborah Senn was, by then, out of the mix, did that make it easier for Senator Deccio to come around? This didn't

pass the election year; it passed the following year. She was then no longer the Insurance Commissioner, so did that make it easier for Senator Deccio to support this measure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It may have, it probably did. I never thought about it as being that way but it maybe did. Because we always got it through the Senate, you know, a couple of times, but never could get it out of the House. There were personality clashes between some House and Senate members, which didn't help the situation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The chemistry of how things happen – or don't!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Chemistry of things working. Deccio became much more supportive. So it all worked for the betterment. Whatever! We got the bill we wanted. The House put the final touch on the right to sue which we had lost and when it came back to the Senate for final vote, I was afraid it would not be adopted by the Senate, but it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a real sticking point at one place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a real sticking point and the House got it for us. Representatives Shay Schual-Berke and Campbell were key players in the House who got the "right to sue" amendment adopted. And Senators Shirley Winsley and Don Benton were always sympathetic and helped in final passage. And it passed!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are many pieces to this, but the right to sue provision was probably the issue that stalled the discussion for 1999; members just couldn't quite go that far.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Various states had passed various portions of the bill, but no one had done a comprehensive bill. Texas did, but they did not give the right to sue; there was no remedy. And I know our bill did under certain conditions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems rather critical. It's the teeth.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course it is, that's the teeth that makes the bill work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wanted to ask you about some of the other issues that are involved. There was the waiting period. Should there be no waiting period? Three months? Up to nine months in some cases? There were quite a few different thoughts on the issue of waiting periods of when a person could qualify. There was a huge discussion about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There were so many discussions around that bill, as always on controversial issues. Some amendments were offered more in an attempt to kill the bill than help it. I don't know what it ended up being.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also the issue of screening for pre-existing conditions.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and we let a public body do that, but it had to be an independent body, which was good. But I don't remember how long they had to wait.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you already had something, say you had emphysema or cancer or something, would you be denied insurance?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think so. You could be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the very people who need it most are unlikely to get it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Often the need was acute and could not be delayed for long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty tough. There was some talk about creating a high-risk pool and the state would pick up those people or they would be treated differently. They would have to pay a higher premium.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A higher rate. I think that was resolved, that you could get insurance but it would be high-risk insurance. It would be very expensive and very few could afford it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you were first working on the Patients' Bill of Rights, how much did you study what other states were doing?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We were following them closely and then also listening to what the various medical groups were saying, like the Kaiser

Foundation and some of the foundations who were really on it and believed we had to give the people the right to sue. And we were watching Women in Government – a private group – who were introducing legislation in their various states: I did it in Washington State. And so, yes, we were following it. Several states had bits and pieces of it, but nothing with the full scope of the problem. Texas had passed a bill, but they did not include the right to sue. It had to go through a commission and so if the Overview Commission members found there was no cause to sue – or didn't support the right – then they couldn't sue. If there was not enough "just cause." And so our bill was very strong in what it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington State wanted to go further? It wanted to take all the bits and pieces and put them in one program?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We wanted to provide people with all the availability, all the relief they could get. No state at that point had authorized the right to sue. Some of them had a commission; some of them didn't even go that far. Some of them were just no-law laws. "Look good" but were not useable at all. I worked with the citizens' group. We worked with a lot of people, but one of the groups, the citizens' group, was particularly active in the area and we generally adopted the things they wanted whenever possible. They were lobbying along with all the members of our committee and talking to House members during the two years we worked on the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The right to sue was the issue that was the sticking point for the bill. It was something that I guess the insurance companies were most afraid of.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. If the commission found there was no cause, they could still sue. But it had to go to the commission first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there would be at least some kind of oversight? It wasn't just a free-for-all.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no. The prediction was that there would be very few suits, anyway. It was just a principle that needed to be offered to the

people; you have to give them their rights. It's like the program now, that physicians are trying to get malpractice reduced. Actually, in the state of Washington there have been very few malpractice suits brought. You know, they just don't bring them unless they've got a really good reason to. So I don't know what the insurance companies are afraid of.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must happen somewhere to make the rates so high?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, the insurance companies are trying to build up the reserves because of the bad economy. They are down – their reserves are not filling up as fast as they want and they are not going to pay out. And the reason the rates are so high is that insurance companies, rather than going to court, settle out of court in order to prevent a law suit where they would probably lose big – or maybe not. But they don't go to court. They pay out of court and they settle. And so the reserves are bad. And the doctors blame it on the people and the trial lawyers blame it on the doctors and the insurance companies are the culprit all along, I believe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maternity care seemed to be a big sticking point, as well. There was talk – and I don't know if this is just a story or this really happens – that women would get health insurance, get pregnant, and then drop the insurance later. Did that happen on a statistically relevant scale?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that was in buying insurance and they would drop it after they had the baby. Yes, it does happen. Or people have a serious illness and they drop after they get paid; it does happen and consequently there has to be some kind of accommodation made for that. And that would be the high-risk pool.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was surprised about the maternity care one because I would have guessed that people with small children would go to the doctor more often than anyone else. Losing your health care with a baby would be a scary thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You would think so. I don't know how prevalent it was, but I know that it happened. Or sometimes they would drop the

insurance on themselves and just carry it for the children, which we made available. We made available health care for children even though the parents didn't have it. That was one thing they are talking about dropping now because the Feds are paying for it. And so, they could get care for their children, but they couldn't get maternity care. I remember now the reason that happened. It happened in Texas when Bush was Governor; he refused to authorize this and he was taken to court by a citizens' group. And the court found him out of scope. Because the money was there and he wouldn't spend it because he found out that when they could get Medicare for their children, they also would be eligible for public assistance. And he was trying to control costs. This actually happened!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the other end of life, people were most concerned about prescription drug costs.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's never been resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were so many different pieces to this; it's a wonder that anyone could get anything passed.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It gets all wound up together and the insurance companies did everything they could to stop it from happening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The one other piece that was discussed, when all these things were brought up, was alternative therapies. People wanting chiropractic care, or naturopaths, or whatever.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's pretty well resolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A burning issue for some – I was wondering if the whole weight of all these issues together was prohibitive?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It prolonged the passage of the bill. And as you know, it started way back several years before, at least six years when the first bill was introduced in Congress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, for 1999 it was again lost; it just couldn't get through the labyrinth of all the steps.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The House wouldn't pass it. And if we had gotten it back over to the House in the dying hours, there was no reason to think that we would ever get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, with a split-even House, things were just not moving very quickly over there. It was too difficult.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And sometimes they were just dragging their feet because of the split.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like the longer the split went on, the less it worked. The good will kind of eroded.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It eroded, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the bill was lost and we'll have to pick up the thread again the next year. We still have the budget battles of this session to discuss, which, in fact, forced the Legislature into special session. A lot of those were tied to health care costs. So this issue was everywhere. And because of all the lengthy discussions, many bills just fell by the wayside. Apparently, Senator Pat Thibaudeau, for instance, lost a lot of bills which got wound up in the whole debate and didn't make it through the process.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was so much animosity on the House side with the split in the House that anything that was slightly controversial, even though it was only slightly so, didn't pass. And it was because the House members were not accommodating one another – the committee members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did have Representative Eileen Cody as a good standard bearer for some of your issues. She was pushing for the Patients' Bill of Rights in the House. She wanted to expand children's health care. She was very interested in the coverage for contraceptives for women and was roundly attacked for that. She thought it was a medical issue; others thought it was a moral issue – two very different ways of looking at things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Another thing we had problems with was unemployment compensation for women, which came at the same time. If their husband was transferred and they had to quit their job in order to go with their husband, the woman could never get unemployment compensation, even though she had as good a job as him and we granted it to the men.

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**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean if a man relocates with his wife, and loses his job, he gets it. But if she relocates with her husband, she doesn't?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If it was out of state; I don't know about in-state. I would think the Equal Rights Amendment would plug in, but it didn't. We had to have a separate bill. It should have, but if they moved out of state, to a state that did not have equal rights, then it wouldn't work. And many states do not have it. But it didn't work here, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's a piece of unfinished business for women. Finally, the session did wind up and you managed to go home, just in time to turn around and come back for the 2000 session.



*Making remarks with (L to R) Rep. Shay Schual-Berke, Gov. Gary Locke, Rep. Eileen Cody, Sen. Pat Thibaudeau, Sen. Linda Evans Parlette, Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney and House staff Bill Hagens looking on.*

## CHAPTER 30: LAST SESSION, LAST THOUGHTS, 2000

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was your last session, 2000. The Senate Democrats still had a fairly decent majority – twenty-seven to twenty-two Republicans, but the House remained split with forty-nine/forty-nine members from each party. You were again elected President Pro Tem. Did you know this would be your last session going into it? Had you made that decision?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I hadn't. I really had not planned to run the last time and if I hadn't had that editorial comment in the News Tribune, I wouldn't have run. But I thought the Tribune editorial was gross and I just decided to run again. But I probably would not have run, because I was approaching eighty years old at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were ready for a break, perhaps?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I know that Sid and Al Bauer and I talked about it and we always said, "If you do, I will." You know, it was one of those things, but when Al decided he was going to retire I decided to retire, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he made the decision first? And then you said, "Alright, it's time?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, then we started wavering, but I knew that he was wavering on the side of retiring and I guess that pushed me over the edge, I don't know. Because we'd fought the good battle with historic memory to keep things going and to help whenever we could to prevent bad things from happening – obviously we couldn't stop everything. And the feeling in our caucus was changing and some of the women we had in the Senate were conservative. We had problems. It got to the point that it wasn't worth it. We were not enemies, but it was not very friendly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just colleagues, then?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Colleagues, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you announce your retirement? Or did you keep it to yourself and mull it over a bit longer?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't know whether I publically announced it; I probably mentioned it to colleagues who were friends. I didn't go public with it; I just decided not to run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are two ways to look at letting people know this is your last year: some people think that makes you a lame duck and that you lose your power, and other people think people will go the extra mile for you and give you certain things because it's your "last hurrah" and your last chance to do certain things. What did you think?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, but I didn't do anything very big that year, except with the Patients' Bill of Rights and that was going to happen anyway; I knew that. So I don't think that was any special concession, either way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn't feel any different?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn't. I know it's thought about. I don't think so. The fact is, very casually, I announced it. I was shocked when they had the party for Al and me. I didn't know it was coming; I wasn't prepared for it. I would have worn something different, probably! I don't know. But I didn't. They got what they saw they were getting, what they had seen all along and that was it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have moments during the session when you were either relieved or sorry that you were thinking of going?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just a normal session for you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just a normal session. And all the pitfalls that go with it and the problems. The one thing that I lucked out with was with my staff. They were so good. Evie was just priceless and so was Bob and they were really helpful. Then Evie left, you know, so I didn't have her for the last part, but I had Bob and that was good because it was an easy transition out. He made it easy.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if, just during the heat of certain battles, you would be saying to yourself, “Well, soon I won’t have to do that anymore.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I didn’t do that. You don’t even think that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose once the session got started, it was the same whirlwind as usual of activities.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you sort of fit into a groove every time you get down there. Everything seems to fall into place; after you’ve been there as long as I have there’s nothing new. Nothing can shock you anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’ve seen it all?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very few surprises.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would hope so. Either that or something might be either very wrong or very different!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you go at it again, good and bad; it’s actually a ho-hum. But you are always responsible to your constituents. They are contacting you and you always are aware that there’s someone out there who is not going to like something you do. But it doesn’t bother you because you know that basically you’re trusted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you’re doing your best. There might be differences of personality, I suppose, and different little wrinkles like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Could be. I’ve snarled back at people on a couple of occasions and then they become very good friends. You just don’t take it and you can’t be real tactful sometimes because it doesn’t work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you’re there to get something done. They still esteemed you enough to elect you President Pro Tem; you were up on the rostrum again. You have a hefty list of committees again. You were the vice-chair of Health and Long Term Care; serving on Labor and Work Force Development; vice-chair of Rules; and on Ways and Means. So you had plenty of ways to get your fingers in there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a couple of things I wanted to just ask you about before we really dive into the session. I don’t think we’ve talked very much about one of the duties of senators which is the responsibility to confirm gubernatorial appointments. I came across one mention where the appointment came out of the committee “without recommendation” and I wondered what happened in that case. If the Senate is clearly against somebody, then that’s the end of their appointment, I suppose?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You sometimes don’t get enough signatures on the sign-out sheet. And even though it comes out without recommendation, enough people – if they signed the sign-up sheet – it comes out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s not exactly a ringing endorsement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. It hasn’t happened very often, but it did happen with Joe King, the Speaker of the House, who was nominated for a trustee of one of the four-year colleges. I’m not sure which one it was, or if that was the actual appointment and whether the recommendation did come out of committee, but enough people were so opposed to it and offered a floor fight with the attendant publicity at that time, that he never got the signatures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just languish?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They languish, but they work at whatever the appointed position is, but they’re never confirmed. That happened to Ted Bottiger; he was never confirmed because of politics with some Republicans. He was appointed by Governor Gardner to the Northwest Power Planning Council and he served, but he never was confirmed by the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would he be any different from any other commissioner then? Is their tenure a little shakier?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, if they are appointed, they can serve until confirmed. If there’s no confirmation, sometimes the two-year period passes and they’ve served and they get out

because they've enriched their pension; that's usually the reason they do it. I really don't know the particulars about King's appointment. I know that his confirmation did come out of committee, but enough people spoke against it that it never came up for a vote on the floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He did serve as a trustee for Washington State University, so I wondered how this process worked. In the Senate Journals, you see stream after stream of names that the Governor appoints to the various agencies, boards and commissions; there are really quite a few appointments. Mostly they appear to be pro forma, but I guess not always. The Senate does have a say.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's very rare when someone opposes an appointment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I also wanted to mention that Senator George Sellar, at some point in the session, became ill and actually, I don't think he ever came back.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember we talked about a type of "gentlemen's agreement" once before when he was ill, that the Democrats would help out with votes or not pushing their advantage. And I understand some freight cars were named after him? The "George Sellar" cars.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Refrigerated freight cars. When he was in the hospital – after he had open-heart surgery, I guess, but he hadn't yet died – they did that to try to cheer him up and to give him a reason to come back. He was very much loved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We've discussed freeway overpasses but I'd never yet heard of refrigerator cars. I wonder if they were painted with his name.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Done with the cooperation of the railroad, of course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like a very different kind of tribute.

**Sen. Wojahn:** There was also some friction within their caucus because a group of extreme conservatives, I guess it was, were trying to get him out. He was the chair of the caucus, and I

understand that Senator McDonald put his foot down and said no. But there was friction there. And that was another reason for the Democrats to follow suit and honor him, because George Sellar would go with us on a few issues; he would go on health care issues. He was usually a good vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd really miss him?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I remember on the Health Care Bill that had passed in 1993, prime sponsored by Phil Talmadge, and they were having trouble getting the votes, and as I remember it, Sellar did vote for that. Sellar and Dr. Moyer from Spokane. There were a few people that we didn't know we could depend upon, but who did come through in a pinch: Shirley Winsley; Bill Kiskaddon was another one that thought things through carefully and would go along if he felt it was right, and Zimmerman was another. So these were the moderate Republicans who could reason things out and would go sometimes with the Democrats. There weren't very many, but there were a few.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that give a pall of sadness to the session when one of your members is ill and possibly dying? A little bit of a shadow.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, there was. I don't remember whether we ever acted on this gentleman's agreement to not push things – that we ever had to – but it was done. And if it had been necessary, we would have done it. I don't remember anything happening that was conspicuous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a nice gesture – I hesitate to say, old-fashioned, but perhaps a sign of civility among senators, that there was still that feeling of a special relationship among you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. You know, just like Harold Hochstatter sending me this book. He was the most conservative guy and I violently disagreed with him ninety-nine percent of the time, but he sent me his book, you know. You like them. You don't believe in what they do, but you like them. You don't dislike

anybody. You try not to, and about the time you decide you dislike them, they do something kind; you know, it happens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody has their quirky side, I guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps the other thing hanging over this session was the impact of Initiative 695. It certainly had huge budget implications, rippling through local city and county governments and what the state was going to do with their shortfalls. There has been a lot of ink spilt over this issue, but one thing I was curious about is whether you had discussions about whether it was better to find the money for counties and cities who were really hurting, or whether it was time to "let the chips fall where they may. If people vote for these measures, their services should be cut." That kind of response.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. Well, you don't do that. You try to pick up the pieces and run with what you can. In other words, you don't become abusive because you've been abused.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a notion expressed in some circles that if people vote to cut taxes to that extent, are they saying they don't want these services and should they, therefore, learn the lesson to "connect the dots," so to speak? But if you cover it over and keep providing the services, will they then think that there was "fat" in the budgets? What was your view?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know what you're saying. That factor enters into it, but I can remember when the Reagan administration took over we were cut back and I think we lost over \$100 million of federal funding right off the bat and we struggled and managed to make that up. You do it because it hurts people. But when someone does it in your own state, there's that feeling that you want to get even. But you don't because it hurts too many people. And you do the best you can with what you have to work with. But when you have to do that, then some things fall, and the other things gain and maybe some of the things that you were particularly

supportive of go down the tube so that money can be spent in another area. And that hurts. We need to educate people that over fifty percent of property taxes are special levies that people have voted themselves in their communities. An example of that is in Pierce County in which over sixty percent of the property tax goes to support schools, parks, fire districts, and etc. If you reduce your property taxes, you threaten these services.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were on Ways and Means, helping to build the state budget – what kind of internal discussions did you have trying to deal with this issue? Did these kinds of arguments come up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I don't think anyone ever acknowledged it, because politically it's not wise. And I guess no matter what you say about legislators, they are political animals. So, rather, you try to find solutions. And somebody's going to get hurt, but you try to do the least damage you can do and still maintain some degree of sanity in the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With this sort of measure passing, did you feel the state was going backwards?

**Sen. Wojahn:** But if you remember, the reason for this initiative, partly, was because of the high price of the tax. It was a gross tax, I mean it really was. If you owned a Mercedes, you were paying about \$3,000 a year for tabs for that car. And when it passed, if you remember back in 1981 or whenever it was, I was the one who helped to pass that bill. The Republicans were in control and I voted yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the car tabs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, Bottiger and Gaspard and the leaders were all voting no. I talked McDermott into voting yes too, because Tacoma needed it. And that was the last car tabs tax increase we ever passed. I know that people voted against it in our caucus for a good reason. But we needed it, I knew, in Pierce County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All kinds of things were funded with that money, as we are all just learning. Was that perhaps part of the problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And that was the last-gasp attempt to provide help for counties without giving counties more authority to impose taxation. You see, that's the one thing we can always do is give the counties the authority to tax their people more so that every county would be different in their taxing structure. Which it ended up being anyway, that way. We authorize the counties to do it, but some of them didn't do it. I know King County was a penny or two higher than Pierce County until the county got equalized. And we gave them the right to impose an excise tax on real estate, but we didn't do it in Pierce County until we were forced into it; King County did. And so the taxing structure varied from county to county. If you're going to buy a car, it paid you to buy a car in, say, Snohomish County, maybe where the tax was lower on a big ticket item. It happens. That's the reason you have these people that go out and "find cars." If you wanted a car, but didn't want to go through the throes of negotiating with the car dealer, you could go to one of these third-party people to find the best buy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they would just go to the lower-taxed county?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, I know people who got their cars out of Skagit County because the taxing was lower there. So it opened up a whole new world of entrepreneurs, you might say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Close a door, open a window. Interesting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But the thing I think a lot of us couldn't understand, after the bill passed and after it was satisfactorily working for a majority of business people and for counties to be able to repair roads and do the things they needed to do – because they couldn't use the gas tax for anything but highways. And so that was a round-about way to do this. We thought we were home-free, but we weren't because of the initiative. And I think that was Pat Patterson, the Republican, who recommended that approach, as I remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked for a couple of decades almost.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did. I think that was in '81, I'm not sure of the dates here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that initiative have an overall dampening effect on legislators trying to create new programs which perhaps would need a small tax increase or a user fee?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It might have a dampening effect, but they would still be doing it. And they would be taking from one program to get it for another.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sort of like cannibalism?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's kind of a short-term gain.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know. I remember some Ways and Means chair saying, "If you want a program, you'll have to get the money from some program in existence now, because there's not going to be any new money." I can remember them saying that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of makes everybody look around the room and think, "Who's going to end up with the chair?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, who's going to take money from me to do for them, yes, I know. We usually tried to accommodate. It's amazing how you can accommodate people and prevent cannibalizing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Otherwise you'd be building up some program and tearing down another.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We're talking about this huge budget, you know, this huge, huge budget. It's a lot bigger than many states in the Union. Colorado's budget is way, way low.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do we just provide more services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Two billion dollars, something like that, as opposed to twenty billion, or ten billion a biennium. It's now twelve-fifty a biennium. More services, a larger population here, of course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know our transportation costs are greater because we have mountains, ferries, bridges, more things to consider.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the ferries are considered an extension of the Highway Department. That was the law that did that. Before that we didn't have the money to pay for ferries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We have a lot of bridge issues – if not ferries – we have expensive bridges. As some are fond of saying, "It's not Kansas." You can't just have nice, flat roads. We've got a little more interesting geography to deal with.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Colorado has mountains, but they don't have any ferries. So they compensate and people don't understand that. They refuse to accept and understand. They want what they want but are unwilling to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, we have a beautiful state. There are some costs involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The thing is between the legislators and the Ways and Means staff, and Ways and Means staff people are miracle workers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must be.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are. And sometimes we authorize the expenditure of the biennial budget where it was established that it was "so much per year to be permitted to expand into the second year" to pay for a program. And that happened. And then we'd go back in the off-years, and you'd have to correct that problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Figure out something new?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Figure out another way to handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are biennially calculated budgets made complicated by the fact that you start out with pretty firm numbers, but into that second year a lot of things can happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. That's the reason we went to annual sessions because we were having to have meetings every year anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are the supplemental budgets growing into almost annual budgets? So much tweaking has to happen?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are approaching that. They tweak: money is removed from some programs and put into another program in order to satisfy the needs of that program. Especially if one program is floundering and not doing very much, then the money can be expended. Or some of them have a surplus so they all try to spend the surplus. This helps to prevent the surplus from occurring by reviewing it thoroughly every year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So many things can happen. There can be surges of unemployment, there can be Mount St. Helens blowing up...

**Sen. Wojahn:** Forest fire fighting. Or a major disaster of some kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, bad fire seasons. Or Boeing taking a dip, although that's not quite the hit it used to be.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right. We've been through everything. We had Boeing going broke – it actually did – but it never came out publicly. The DuPont Company owned the majority of the stock and they refused to call in their debt. That was when I was a freshman legislator in the late sixties. I'd heard a rumor and I got called into a little closet and told by the lobbyist from the Boeing Company, "Don't talk about that. It's being resolved." Same thing happened with Seafirst Bank going down the tube. We took care of that, but it was bitter. That was Ray Moore; Ray did it. So if you have a little lead time, you can accommodate most anything. Especially when you're working with a huge budget, like we work with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does give you some room. With I-601 are there more constraints? Were you less able to accommodate those things?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Every time it gets tougher.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does the noose get a little tighter each time? A kind of a spiraling down?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We generally give a percentage increase every year; it's based upon cost-of-living and when that goes down the increase doesn't occur. So by collecting the small increases that predominate over the many, many budgets, we're able to generate some additional

funding. Not more money, but we use it more expeditiously. You have to move money from another section of the budget into that to accommodate and every time the Governor sends out a memo to cut back the various state agencies, and they all attempt to do it. That's when we collect the additional money. And that's when Lyle Quasim, with Mental Health, said, "I can't do it," and he got fired. Some say you can't do it, honestly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes real people will be hurt?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Right, the mentally ill got hurt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, getting back to this whole discussion about whether or not I-695 put a cloud over legislators, I was looking at one of your speeches for the "One-Percent Solution" on the health care crisis which you gave just before session. You refer to I-695 and you opened with the bold words: "It's time for a state income tax" – which is either a curtain riser or the finisher! Then you said, "In the wake of Initiative 695, that may be heresy, or a political death wish." I was wondering, were other legislators struggling with this? I mean, you can go ahead and propose anything because you are retiring.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't matter so much to you. But I was wondering if other legislators are bumping up against 695 and saying, "Well, I think I'll just take a break on that and not really push this thing I want this year because the voters aren't in the mood."

**Sen. Wojahn:** Could be. Could be. And you know, some of them have been heard to say since then, "It isn't such a bad idea after all." They've been saying that in the last couple of years. I had about six people in our caucus who would have gone with me. Prentice was one and the conservative from Hoquiam, Hargrove.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me more about the "One-Percent Solution." We've touched on it before but this year you really pushed for it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, number one, the reason I proposed it was we don't have to go to the

people for a one-percent tax. A one percent income tax we can do without a constitutional change. So it doesn't have to go to the people for a vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where it's always failed before.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. However, my better judgment said, you better send it to the people because they may file a referendum against it unless you put an emergency clause on it, which precludes it going to a referendum. So you might as well do it before that. So in the last bill I sponsored, there was a referendum to the people. But then you need to explain to the people that this would provide a health card for every man, woman and child in the state of Washington. And the money is there to pay for it. It would not take a full one percent, so I think the last bill was "up to one percent." It wouldn't take more than that. And I was told when I first started it – this was eight years ago when I first started doing this – that the Department of Revenue estimated that anyone with an income of less than \$450,000 a year wouldn't pay it. Because you had a corporate income tax and a personal income tax. So they wouldn't pay it. Then – six years later – it got down to anyone with an income of \$200,000 or less would not pay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's still most people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And then, I think, this last year when it was talked about, they said anyone with an income of less than \$100,000 wouldn't pay it. Because as inflationary trends occur, and the population growth, you would have to expect that. And then eventually, they suggested when I first started doing it, after ten years it would probably be people with an income of \$45,000. That did not quite work out because it's been over ten years now since I proposed it and this last year it was \$100,000. Those are the figures as clear as I can remember them. It was phenomenal and that's what we talked about. Creating a dedicated trust fund.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you were able to provide health care for everyone that would be quite a savings.

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the first place, you wouldn't have to have as big a budget because the bill called for waivers to throw in Medicare money that comes into the state for Medicare funding, because we wouldn't need that anymore. It would include all the state employees' medical insurance because that would be thrown in. It would include Labor and Industry medical aid portion, which nearly every working person pays into, for industrial insurance. So all these things being thrown together, they calculated would raise about \$17 million, I was told.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's quite a big pot. How would it be administered? Would it be "one-party pay" and so all the administrative costs with all these different programs would go away? That would be a huge savings right there. That would be a substantial amount of money.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. It would work. It would take an awful lot of work to do it. It couldn't just happen overnight. It would take a three or four-year period to do it, to get everything in and get the thing worked out. It would take a year to work out the bugs, and I knew that, but you have to start somewhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There'd be plenty of bugs, I suppose, in such a complicated scheme.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes. But plenty of money too, and it could be done. Then industry and business wouldn't have to provide health care. It would relieve them of paying health insurance for their employees. And I believe they should have helped me with the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You called it "elegantly simple," though. The concept, if not the implementation. What are the chances of this ever happening?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. I understand they are talking about it a little bit in Olympia now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it too simple? Who would be against this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** In the first place, it would throw the insurance companies out. You know, that's a big battle. And it would need to be administrated nationally. But doing it as a one-state on a simple income tax, one-percent, it

could be done, but you would probably have to establish a commission to do it. Which would be put in the Department of Revenue, I presume. And then set up the structure to do it and hire the people to do it. But in the meantime, you're not losing jobs because you're simply transferring people from one area of interest to another area of expertise. And so actually, I don't think it would cost that much to do it, because you'd have the money in a dedicated trust. But you'd have to get the waiver – number one – from Medicare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How difficult is that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Pretty difficult. Although I don't see why it should be because it's coming in here to support people's health care anyway. So it's aligning itself right within the same area of interest and responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could this still work without the one-percent?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It wouldn't work, no. If everyone has their own health card, you wouldn't need Medicaid, which is the medical aid to pick up the slack because everyone would be covered. That needs to be worked out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering as a transition issue, say you got this in place, but you didn't have the waiver, could you ease into it? Could you do it in stages?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You'd have to ease into it. The people who are on Medicare would not be a part of it at the beginning, but would gradually ease into it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this include prescription drug costs and all the different things we've already talked about as complicating the issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We never got into that. I think we would have tried to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I notice in both this solution to health care issues, and in the Patients' Bill of Rights, that you emphatically included mental health care. That's an important thread all the way through your work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes. Absolutely! We have never taken care of the mentally ill in our state and they are still “orphans.” And any little bit we can get for them, we need to throw them a bone once in a while because that’s all we were doing. And in children, mental illness is just dreadful because they never overcome it. I think there are a lot of mentally ill kids out there who aren’t being treated. It isn’t being recognized or it’s being overlooked on purpose, I don’t know. But I still think if we could control mental illness properly with good health care, we would reduce the number of people incarcerated at the other end – you know, people in prisons. Between that and dyslexic kids who have never been able to read because they can’t interpret the written material – between dyslexic and mentally ill people – we could own the world if we could solve those problems, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And substance abuse.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where they become mentally ill because of substance abuse, yes. They destroy part of their brain. Instead of being a full egg, it looks like a flattened egg. Instead of looking like a hard-boiled egg, it looks like a fried egg, I guess. The thing is that there are answers out there if we would just think together. I never got people to think together with me very often.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s pick up that other thread. You did get your Patients’ Bill of Rights that year; it went through a lot of amendments and ended up being a substitute bill, but SB 6199 passes. And in fact, I notice that you have new people helping you. The Governor, right in his inaugural speech, plugged for it. Did that make a difference?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it did. Just like the Supreme Court, the year before, plugging for the spousal abuse bill, it works. You get the powerhouses behind it and it gives a little bit more substance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If the high-profile people step up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And that’s the public, too. That’s the reason legislators go public on issues, the reason the Governor goes public, because

he’s not getting his way and he has to go to the people and say, “Look, we need help.” And the more people you can get to respond with letters to the editor and calling your legislators, the better it is. So, the more people you can get in, the better it is and the higher the profile, the better it is for the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if there just gets to be energy behind a certain bill; does it help melt away the opposition? Or it’s just got so much steam that it just goes right over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It’s part of both. Both. Because some of them never give up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I notice that the Governor, in one story I read, his own sister had trouble getting care; it didn’t say what the issue was, and it doesn’t even really matter, but he had some personal experience within his own family. Does that add some “oomph” to the story?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Of course it does. And the reason we have conservative people in the Legislature is they’ve never experienced some of the problems of the working poor. Maybe people are not “working poor” but they become “working poor” because of an illness, a mental illness, or otherwise. They lose their savings and pretty soon...so if you’ve experienced it as a family, you know what it’s about. So yes, the more experiences people have, the better it is for society. But some will never have problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wonder how they get through life without ever knowing anyone who has had anything happen to them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don’t think the Standard Oil people ever felt any dreadful fear of not having enough to eat. I don’t disagree with people using their money to help others. I think that’s good. Or to stay in business and to produce more and more jobs, I don’t regret that and I’ll help them as long as they don’t selfishly take the money to their own. As long as they are willing to do it with the idea of producing – everyone is self-serving to a degree, I’m sure – but some people have to do these things because of their energy level and their brilliance. They



have to do it and it doesn't matter whether they make any money or not – though they often do. It's like the Bill Gates of this world, they have to do it. They are born to do it and you can't stop them and you don't try. You let them go and you help them. And that's the reason – all the things I did for business – it was economic development to provide jobs and to get a healthy economy. You don't stop there. Even though somebody has to give something along the way. You have to give to get, I believe. And working together works. These are all my little slogans. "Together for Tacoma," that's what I used when I ran for mayor, "Together for Tacoma."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it carried you pretty far.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Working together works, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So why does the Patients' Bill of Rights, after all the work, and every year not quite making it, why this year? Why 2000?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The time had come. The idea had sparked and sparked the imagination of enough people that it happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just finally had enough momentum?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. And that's the reason you never give up. If you have a good idea, you never give up on it. You keep plugging along, you keep revising it and improving it, but always pushing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if you had changed things in the bill, or made it more palatable?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You welcomed conversations about a bill. I always welcomed someone coming to say, "Don't you think it would be better if you did this?" Or "I don't like the bill because of this." It keeps you thinking and so you make small changes, sometimes you make big changes. Sometimes you turn the whole idea around and approach it from another angle. So I listened. And we tweaked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nothing major, though?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. We stuck to our major idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were certain things you wanted to have. Tom Campbell was really active on the floor in the House for this; did that help?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Another one who came to the floor was the Republican from Vancouver. He was with me all the way through. Don Benton. He was a chairman of the Republican Party at one time. Right from the beginning, he was there. I don't think he was a sponsor; I never asked him to be a sponsor because I didn't know he was interested. I try everybody. He was for the bill. He was there; Shirley Winsley was there. Deccio wasn't there at the beginning, but we went through the whole thing with the trauma care and he finally came on board on that, he was good. And about the fifth year he came on board, I think he was a sponsor with me on the bill, if I'm not mistaken. And if you remember, at the same time I was running that through, McDonald wanted me to help him sponsor that constitutional change for the developmentally disabled trust fund. So that brought him on board, probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you found something for everyone. Let's see, the original sponsors were: Winsley, Thibaudeau, Snyder, Goings, Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Fraser, Prentice, Costa, Rasmussen, Bauer, Spanel, McAuliffe, Gardner, Franklin, and Kline. You were the prime sponsor, of course.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Just one Republican. But I don't think Benton knew the bill was sponsored. I sent the bill around for signatures in our caucus. And usually I didn't do that, I just kept my three sponsors/two sponsors, but they all wanted to sign on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it doesn't hurt.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But Benton voted for it. And he got up and spoke for it. Because he had a problem. See, if you have a problem, you recognize the situation. That's the reason we mention that if a person has a problem in any area of legislation, they are usually on board when there's a change to be made.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You accommodated them so then they joined in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Either that or they hadn't thought of it themselves, and someone comes with an idea that they like, because they've had the problem. It isn't a matter of accommodating them; it's a matter of philosophy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You included parity for mental health. You included the right to sue; there were quite few pieces of it that went through. A grievance appeals process; you prohibited health plans from denying coverage retroactively. You required that medical directors of health plans be licensed doctors. Is that to get it out of the board room, so to speak, and back to the professionals?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Rather than insurance types. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, a different mind-set, is that what you were looking for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You required health plans to let patients choose their doctors from a list. To install patient privacy protections. Now, when we go to the doctor or the dentist, we get that little privacy notice, is that what this is?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know if that was a result of this bill, but I think it was a result of the whole privacy issue that's been with us for about ten years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you required plans to make information on coverage rules available to patients. Does that harken back to the woman who had the heart transplant and then didn't realize that her coverage was affected?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So by getting all these cases together, you found out where the holes were?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And you have to answer the questions. But you have to know which questions to ask, that's part of the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, all these experiences added up.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But when you put it in a bill – and if it's well done and covered widely by the press, they can emphasize these various areas so people have a chance to learn what they can do to help themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's no use passing all this if people don't know they have these rights.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's absolutely right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This article says, "to encourage bipartisan support, Senate Democrats weakened the right-to-sue provision of their bill, which was the biggest point of contention with insurance companies." And you're quoted as saying, "It was so costly, that according to insurers it would be prohibitively expensive." Did they still have the right, but it wasn't quite as broad as before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They got it back in the House in a better, narrowed down version. Two House members, Campbell and Shay Schual-Berke were responsible for the great amendment. They narrowed the definition of the right to sue and gave people more rights. But the whole thing is that very few people have the money to sue anyway. And with the statute of limitations such as it is, if it's three years after they discover the problem, it probably wouldn't happen. It will happen very rarely. But in the rare case, when it does happen, it probably needs to be done. So they got a portion of that back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Further down in the article I'm reading from the P-I, it says, "The idea that you go through the grievance process before you sue," so there was that intermediary step? You were liberally quoted in this article. It gave you pretty good press as being the one to push this through. It said that you had worked on it for six years.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't even think I saw it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, the Patients' Bill of Rights does not particularly address all the issues, of course. What about the issue of the collapsing individual health insurance market? Does it do anything to help that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. And we were forewarned, if the bill of '93 went down the tube, no one

would be able to buy private insurance. You'd have to buy it as a group, and if you didn't buy as a group, you couldn't get it at a reasonable price.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Thibaudeau tried to address that issue with one of her bills, which does pass. Several people tried to address it because it seems to be – especially in eastern Washington – a really serious issue. I was wondering if you were able to help prop up that market? There is not much use having the Patients' Bill of Rights, if you don't have any insurance in the first place. Kind of a two-pronged problem.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's true. I don't know that it affected – the people who were affected already were individually trying to buy insurance; it was too expensive, so they couldn't buy it. Between the Basic Health bill, which was out there for low income, the "working poor," and the people working for a group to buy group insurance through, you cover at least sixty percent of people anyway and maybe more. And so that's all you can hope for. We'll never solve all the ills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not until you get the "One-Percent Solution"?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. The "One-Percent Solution." And maybe as health care becomes more and more expensive, maybe it won't even solve that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your window might be narrowing there, I don't know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's narrowing every year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe it will become more precious and obvious as it becomes more expensive.

**Sen. Wojahn:** If we could get an income tax, we could reduce other taxes and we'd have more flexibility on what we could do. And that's what worries me, with an income tax per se, it would be beneficial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you've been trying for that your whole career.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes! My husband always called me and said, "Don't vote for an income tax." Every time! When he was practicing architecture, he didn't want an income tax and he didn't want it after he retired. And I said, "You come down here and do it yourself because I'm going to vote for it." I was one of the sponsors one time. I voted for every income tax bill that has come across the board. When the Republicans were in power, I voted with them. When we were in power, I voted with us and nothing was ever passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No combination has ever quite got that to happen.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And as long as we have people coming from out-of-state, we never will get it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Most states have it, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, but some people leave their states because of it. I don't know if that's true, I swear, they got a relief and they came. But when you stop to think you can subtract that from your federal tax, it's stupid not to have it. Because it's the only thing you can subtract. The only thing you can do, except your license plate for your car and your property taxes and that's it. That's all I can subtract. So property taxes don't bother me too much because it helps me with my income tax. That's stupid to say, but it's true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you like to keep your money close to home – at the state level. People will have to figure that out, I guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's what I kept telling everyone; we're not getting money from Congress, from the Feds anymore. For every ten dollars we sent, we got eleven dollars back when Senator Magnuson was chair of the Appropriations Committee in the U.S. Senate. But when he went down the tube, we lost all of that. We lost our ability to do it at the same time, because when he went down the tube, it was the same year Reagan came into office and we got dumped on that year. And I keep saying, "We need to keep that money within our own state to do things for the people in our state." They can't understand that! What about that

don't they understand? I don't know. I should have an embroidered pillow, "What is it about the federal tax you don't understand?" I should do a cushion! You know, if they drop the dividend on stock – I don't take my dividends, some of them I don't take; I just let them build up but I have to pay tax on them every year. But if I didn't have to pay taxes on the dividends that I don't use – that just accrue – I wouldn't mind making money on my dividends. So there's some interest there. Because I have to declare them even though I never see them. And I may never see them because sometimes by the time they are cashed the value may have dropped way back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if people just don't understand taxes, period. So they don't understand any of it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, they could understand it if they bother to use their brain. I think most people are lazy or they just don't care to use their brain; it's too difficult. And I'll admit I don't use my brain in some ways, but in some ways I do. You know, you have to. You couldn't live independently if you didn't. That's the reason we have nursing homes or retirement homes for the elderly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see, there was one other rather large issue that you worked on which grew out of the rather infamous Linda David case which hit the papers in a big way before session. Linda David was the disabled woman who was kept on a sailboat and allegedly abused by her husband while he received support from the state for her care.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She sued and now has enough money to take care of herself for the rest of her life.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, someone actually unraveled that case and she was rescued from that situation. It was a sensational case.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sloppy work by DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like there were a lot of holes in a lot of places. Some of them had to do with jurisdiction. The police didn't really check it out; there was some suspicion that

something wasn't right there, but she seemed to fall between the cracks between the prosecutor's office, the police, DSHS, different people. Nobody seemed to be in charge, particularly. And that seemed to be one of the issues there, that there was no oversight. Why, is the big question. Why was nobody in particular responsible?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The social worker screamed bloody murder and finally gave up because no one paid any attention. That's the reason we need people who are committed and who don't give up. And if she couldn't get any attention, or somewhere along the line it wasn't picked up because of sloppy work along with the prosecutor or the police, or DSHS, I don't know how you can plug those holes. Unless you have an overseer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think it was systems error or a human error?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Systems error. But I don't know how to plug it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a domestic violence action group appointed by Governor Locke. Did you happen to work with that group?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All kinds of things happened when this came forward. DSHS was asked to review all of the cases – thousands of them – in which the state pays an individual to care for an elderly or disabled adult to see if there was anybody else out there in a bad situation. I don't think that they actually turned up any cases, or at least it didn't get any press if they did. Judges got some training to be on the lookout for this kind of issue. The police, I believe, got some information on this issue. Prosecutors, they were trying to figure out.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you have to have the effort coordinated. You see, if you don't have that, the same thing happened with the Creekmore case – the little boy. The HOMEBUILDERS had been in there and they recommended that they needed to continue or there needed to be a follow-through if they were going to be out because they spent their twenty-five days, or whatever

they contracted for, and there was no follow-through. It was a systems breakdown. The doctor who checked the child didn't know that this had been going on before so he was not careful. It was just a whole systems breakdown.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems to be one of the pieces to all of these puzzles that are so tragic.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Coordination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Coordination of information where people move from county to county and escape scrutiny. It's like they start with a clean page each time and nobody knows.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right and nobody knows that there's been a problem. There needs to be a statewide overview.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would that be one of the pieces, some kind of database? Where people – social workers, prosecutors – all the people involved – can tap in to see if this has shown up with this individual before?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would be easy to do, but before the computer age, it couldn't be done because it meant reading reams and reams of paper. Now you can plug in a certain issue. And I think that we're in a position to control this more. If we do it. First, you'd have to have the program written. You'd need a Bill Gates to write a program to do it. And then you can tie in. And you have to have all the right questions in that, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like you'd have to ask the questions first when someone comes in with bruises, or whatever. Part of what was astounding, at least in the press accounts of the Linda David case, nobody ever saw her and they seemed to accept her husband's word.

**Sen. Wojahn:** She never got any doctors. He was her husband, "he should care for her."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was no explanation of why no one actually came into physical contact with her. Nobody seemed very suspicious about that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, it was more than that. Nobody seemed suspicious because there was a lack of caring.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something happened. There's always the phenomenon of staff overturns, where there's a different person every time and they just don't know.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We rely upon public outcry to enforce most of our laws. And if there's no public outcry or no one there seeing to it that there is a public outcry, things can fall through the cracks. But that's the way our laws are enforced by people: by complaints.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you know that something's going on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. So how you would coordinate all this, except through a computer program; I guess it couldn't be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that one of the things you looked at? You were the prime sponsor of Senate Bill 6400, "changing provisions relating to domestic violence" which addressed this case. The bill recommended ways to improve the state's response to domestic violence. Let's see if we can pull out the pieces: "Currently, penalties for violations of domestic violence, court orders vary depending on whether the underlying case is criminal, civil, dissolution, custody or paternity. A violation of a criminal no-contact order or a domestic violence protection order is a gross misdemeanor." Then the bill goes through and says all these things have different outcomes and that they shouldn't. Your solution, with the other proponents of this bill, believed "penalties for violating the restraint provisions of various types of orders should flow from the conduct violating the order rather than the type of order." So it kind of turns the issue on its head. Can you explain how you got to that particular analysis? Were there so many different types of protection orders that had different outcomes?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And different penalties, too. So you had to really establish a penalty that covered the whole thing so if any of these things occurred, the penalty would remain the maximum penalty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it no longer depended on the type of order but more like, "What is the

person doing?” Not the office recording the problem?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Doing, that’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you asked a different question. I see.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You never know what needs to be done at work, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but that plugs one kind of hole. Then it goes on to say, “Courts may issue protective orders in cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment of vulnerable adults.” Was that new?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don’t think that’s new, I think it was part of the old bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s part of the language of how this bill was described in the summary. Then you define what a vulnerable adult is and you say that “DSHS is authorized to seek orders for protection on behalf of and with the consent of vulnerable adults.” Does that mean if they’re really disabled, DSHS can step in? Whether they know about it or not?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If there’s a complaint. You rely on the public to bring it to the attention of the authorities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Violations of these restraint provisions trigger arrest when a police officer has probable cause to believe an order was issued, the person restrained had knowledge of the order and the violation has occurred.” Does that “up” the penalty right there? They can be arrested; they don’t have to go through any kind of hearing process or anything?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you define what a restraining order is, how close can you get to the person, that kind of technicality.

**Sen. Wojahn:** But you see, if a police officer observed this and didn’t think there was a problem, he wouldn’t arrest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it partly training for police, then? To be a little more sensitive to what’s going on?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, that’s right. Or maybe he’s too busy; it’s toward the end of his shift and he doesn’t want to bother. You know, all these things that occur.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you recall whether people knew about Linda David being trapped in that sailboat, or if no one knew for some reason? Did people observe her? Or suspect she was in there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that there were complaints which were not followed through. I’m sure there were complaints. It doesn’t make sense that no one knew. But it was either too much bother or they complained and nothing happened and they stop complaining.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or were they not sure there was abuse?

**Sen. Wojahn:** They weren’t sure. They said, “I think there’s a problem there, but I can’t prove it.” Or “I think you need to check into this because I suspect that...I haven’t seen her...”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And, “I’m worried about her.”

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, “I’m concerned.” And if nobody bothered to do it, even though there were complaints made, that’s a failure of the system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does your bill compel them to look if there’s a complaint? They don’t have a choice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would say yes. You know, there’s always this thing that nobody does it because they could be sued if they’re wrong. And this would remove the liability for a suit. So it gives them the right to do it. And if they do it and find no problem, they cannot be sued for it. Or they couldn’t make a case. They could be sued, but they probably wouldn’t be able to make a case because the law says that “you do this.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you’d rather have them erring on the side of checking, rather than not checking?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then basically, the rest of the bill details how this is to be administered.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Most of the things we do, we do to prevent law suits. Here's another case: the reason doctors don't want to do abortions, even though they're legal, is because someone could take them to court. You can still take them to court. So it dampens the enthusiasm for doing anything. Or actually melts away, not the desire to do it, but the will to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do these high-profile cases galvanize the Legislature to take some kind of action?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure. Some people just simply make a practice of looking for problems and trying to solve them, you know. I don't think I ever looked for a problem; they just came to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this one landed in your lap. This bill passed, of course. Did you feel that this was going to solve whatever it was that had happened there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It would help. It would help. It was better than what it was. It may not be the final solution. You know, my mother always used to say, "If you see something hurtful occurring, don't just stand there, do something!" And I was conditioned with that, "Do something!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Take action.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Take action. It may be wrong, but do it. My brother and I got a dose of that every other month. "Don't just stand there, do something."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it must have stuck.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It stuck.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This issue reverberated in a lot of ways in that session. There was an instance during a hearing of the Labor and Workforce Development Committee, which surprised me, how it would be talked about there. But Senator Darlene Fairley, the chair, was really interested in the Linda David case and she wanted to use it – according to her remarks – to really take a close look at DSHS. She was most unhappy with how the system didn't work in this and

some other cases. She wanted stricter performance reviews and she wanted restructuring of the agency.

**Sen. Wojahn:** More money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this an opportunity to look again at DSHS as a super-agency to see how it was functioning? Or in this case not functioning? Could you make any changes there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. You know, the same thing occurred with the Creekmore case; they wanted to shake up the whole thing. Everything was being done; there had been recommendations made which had not been adopted. After Creekmore, they were finally adopted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this a matter of poor follow-through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. We then made provision for more social workers and more experienced ones. Because that was the first step; when entry-level workers in DSHS worked in this area they didn't know how to do it. We were losing people because they couldn't handle the job. And so we would hire new people and they would quit. So we made some changes; we also reduced the number of caseloads per worker, but not enough. I think it was thirty-five to one social worker in the most sensitive areas. We got it down to thirty; it needs to be fifteen, at the very most.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That always seems to come back up – the caseload.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right, it comes back. We address it and then it comes back for lack of money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it's always money, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And an entry-level social worker position didn't carry with it a salary that was very good. So nobody stayed. So then we had to increase the salary for the person doing that and hire more workers. But when there's a budget cut, guess what happens?



*Senator Wojahn with Senate committee staff (L to R) Joan Mell, Jonathon Seib, Cathy Colley, Julie Reitz, Rhoda Donkin and Joanne Conrad*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I can imagine. Well, this does hit Ways and Means. In fact, it's a Ways and Means Committee bill that you co-sponsored. It comes out of that committee, not some other ones that you might guess.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right. Because it addresses money. And the philosophy had been established that it was needed. Sometimes it goes to the standing committee for the philosophy to be reviewed, but this was cut and dried.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor is behind it, at least with his speeches. You already knew what you were supposed to do? Did you talk with Governor Locke about this; this is an executive request bill.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When the Governor requests some legislation...does someone assign it to you? How do you pick it up?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Because there had been a problem out in the state. It's offered. And if you want to, you offer to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you then step forward and say, "I'll prime sponsor that."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had been doing the domestic violence things, always; Phil Talmadge was doing it and then I picked it up when he left. I had been trying to do it before that so I guess it was offered to me, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were certainly a standard bearer for kids.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My staff always knew what was going on and they'd say, "Go after it!" And if I didn't go after it, they did it. They got me involved in the thing because it was right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it passed and we all hope that it did some good.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It will as long as there's money in the pool to pay for it. But if they start cutting back on DSHS! And you know, as far as dismantling DSHS, I think we've dismantled it as far as we need to. With the exception of children's programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for you, that reorganization issue was over?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We defined health as a separate issue because my big problem with DSHS was everything was treated as a social problem there instead of a health problem. Health is a pure



science and social science is not a pure science. That was my big argument why we needed to get Health out of DSHS. We moved a lot out; there was so much in there. Veterans Affairs came out first, then Corrections, before that, the Commission on the Blind. They've all been removed because they could throw a pot of money at it and say, "You do it." And the money was never enough. Each agency was vying for the money, competing for funds with other agencies within DSHS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So even though Senator Fairley wanted to go after DSHS, that was not the solution that you were looking at this time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I didn't think so. Senator Fairley believed it was the proper approach; I didn't. We had a lot of other problems out there besides DSHS and besides that, she wasn't responsible for that committee, anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at some of the other bills you worked on that session. Some of them are continuations of things you had been interested in for a long time, like the Diabetes Cost-reduction Act. Did you have a feeling of needing to wrap up and take care of certain things and make sure that your legacy was protected?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, no. We'd gotten the bill the year before and it had been Senator Jeannette Wood's bill and she then lost her next election. Her bill was to try it out to see if it worked and to give it a several-year span and then sunset it. And it had done so well that the people wanted the sunset to go off. They wanted to keep it so that it would go on forever. No, I didn't even think about it being my last year there. I just knew it was right and needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just watching certain things that had interested you and you were kind of taking care of them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** My point was, why wait another two years when we know it's proven to be cost-effective. One thing I wanted to tell you about that diabetic thing. I never got into diabetes things because I had diabetes. But when Senator

Wood had the bill, I avoided going on the bill at first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it look too self-serving? Or be a little too close to home, somehow?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't want to bother with it, I just didn't. Osteoporosis, yes. Because I didn't have that and I figured it was so serious. This other was serious, but it was possible for people to manage. So anyway, I never got into it. I never wanted to, I guess, but when Senator Wood asked me to second-sponsor, I did it. So then they came to me after that. It was easy to kick out the sunset. But I wanted to make it clear that I didn't do things as self-serving interests. I never got into the diabetes area and I had known since 1987 that I had diabetes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But aside from your own health issues, you were well known for taking up those sorts of issues, so I can see how people would gravitate to you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I had so much on my plate, you know. We needed a lot of people being interested in the same things so we'd get more votes in support of issues. And the same thing with women's issues. I said, "I don't want to do women's issues anymore because we need more people thinking properly about this. Get some men to do women's issues. We need them doing these things so that they understand the issues and are supportive. And you don't need me because I've done it. I want to do something else now." And women's issues would always have my vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If an issue gets so associated with one legislator, is it too vulnerable then if they should leave? There's no one to pick up the baton?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that can be true, so you always need someone to pick up the pieces. But I first started with consumer protection, I got out of that because I wanted to be identified with it, but I didn't want to be the prime one. Then I went into women's issues and then I got out of that after we got the Equal Rights Amendment, and the one hundred and forty-five bills that we

changed – all the codes of the state of Washington. And then I went into health care and social services; I'd never even served on Social and Health Services before. So I kept changing, because we needed more people interested in an issue and when I was there, there would just be secondary sponsors and they weren't taking it on their shoulders to do anything about it. And so in order to develop the various areas, I just moved on. And that's the reason I picked and chose the different things I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting to see you circle round on occasion and pick up one of those former interests; you never completely let it go.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never let anything go, but I didn't always want to be the lead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a whole group of bills, again, taking care of some technicalities for the Developmental Disabilities Endowment Trust Fund. One is that constitutional amendment proposal to allow certain trust fund moneys to be invested and authorized by the Legislature. One is sort of tweaking the act a little bit and then one which doesn't pass. I'm not sure if it's part of this or related in some way, but it places the property adjacent to Western State Hospital in a trust fund. You were still a member of JLARC; they continued to study and work very hard on all these different issues. You've been on this committee for a long time; did you still feel this was a very effective method for studying issues?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, but they really didn't resolve anything with the county. The state has it back and we own it all, but the county's slowly infringing on the rights and so is the community college. The community college should get out of there. I wanted them out of there. But we didn't get that far. It has never been quite resolved. Locke helped keep it there in the state hands, but I don't know what's going to happen now. I got \$25,000 in the budget for a contract with an attorney from the Gates law firm in Seattle to research the issue. They researched it and it came out very clearly

that the state should continue to own the land and that the contract had been voided by the county, but nobody did anything about it. So what JLARC did on that I don't even remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They made fourteen recommendations. They talked about coordinating the services for clients more effectively between the mental health division of DSHS and the Regional Support Networks (RSN). And the mental health providers. They said the state oversight efforts should concentrate more on collecting outcome measures that show client improvements resulting from the public resources that we expend on mental health. And then disparities and inequities in funding the RSNs should be reduced and the funding system simplified. These sound more administrative than anything else. Then, they wanted to allocate funds for state hospital beds through the RSNs, folded into their managed care system for public mental health. And the final one, "Cost and outcome information should be used to identify and reward best practices." So perhaps the best programs should be more lavishly supported than the weaker programs?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what it means. It's a lot of verbiage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** After JLARC does a study, then what?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Nothing. They always recommend if there needs to be any legislation and there was no legislation proposed. What they are suggesting is that we need to strengthen the mental health programs; we need to provide more funding for it and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Coordinate it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Coordinate the efforts – but they don't tell us how to do it, because the RSNs... That's what Janice Niemi had done when she was there so that the money would follow the patient rather than being thrown into a pool. And they tried to do that, but it didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, Regional Support Networks are groups of counties that have services?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Groups of counties that organize a network and take care of their own people within that network. But they still end up at Western State Hospital. The serious cases, you know. And now they're closing down a portion of Western State. I don't know, what's going to happen to all these mentally ill people? That was the recommendation of the Governor; they may not do it. They may not get the votes. Winsley needs to get in there and fight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have to go somewhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We ship some out of state, you know. We ship convicts out of state. And when we do that, we pay. And we accept people from out of state in our state. And they pay. I never figured out what happens if after they'd been here a few years and the state refused to pay, do we send them back? I don't know. I never asked the question, because I didn't want to know. There are things you don't want to know. There are things you can do nothing about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that would be hard to unravel that one. That session, another thorny issue filled the hallways of the Legislative Building. The steel workers had been on strike and then tried to settle with Kaiser, but they were locked out. You were not the prime sponsor, but you did sign on to help them get unemployment benefits while they were locked out. I remember those people filling the cafeteria, filling the halls; everywhere you went in the building, there they were. They were making their presence and their plight known. This was really contentious. There was some concern about what was the state getting into here and the rights of employers and the rights of workers; it was a pretty tangled situation. And heated. They were having quite loud rallies in front of the Legislative Building.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Worse than the motorcycle riders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were pretty vocal, naming names of their detractors and their supporters. But with the split-even House, you ran into road blocks here. Clyde Ballard, the Republican Co-Speaker, just could not see his way to even hearing them, let alone passing a

bill. And because of the split and how that worked, he seemed able to completely block the bill from even being heard, which enraged many of these people and upped the temperature a little bit. Could the Senate do anything at all with this?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I don't think so, unless they had the will to do it. I don't know that you challenge the other House or not. The Republicans in the Senate could have done something with Ballard. I think we asked them to go over and talk and try to persuade him to do something about it, but whether they did or not, I don't remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed to be a matter of principle for him. Was there a fear of violence?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think there probably was because we'd had experience with violence when they tried to break down the door of the Senate one time. They had closed the doors and locked them. And then they had to lock the upstairs doors too, because they could have gone upstairs and then gone down the back stairs and onto the floor of the Senate. So they got all the doors locked and they kept them out. I think there was a fear that there could be violence and I think the State Patrol was very active at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these workers were from Tacoma. Were they meeting with you; did you have a chance to listen to them? That seemed to be one of their issues, is that they just wanted to be heard.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was in my district, too. Kaiser was in the district. I always listened. What I could do, I don't know. You know, there wasn't very much that I could do as a senator with House members when it was the Republicans who were stalling this thing. We didn't have the votes to stop it. So, I don't know what I was able to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the bill in response to this issue was a Senate bill. It passed, of course, with plenty of amendments and discussion. But then it was sent to the House. The House sent it back asking for more amendments. You passed

it again and you sent it back to the House and then it just didn't go anywhere.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Back and forth, like a yo-yo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then it died. Could you have forced labor negotiations? Does the government have that kind of power?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you can force them. They go through a ritual. There are negotiations; then there is arbitration. There are three stages; the last is binding arbitration which we use for public employment. As I remember, I think they just closed the shop here. So everybody was out of a job. But I don't remember anything happening. And the best we could do during that time was to keep sending the bill back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which you did.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Which we did. It was like the AIDS bill which jockeyed back and forth about five times before it finally passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that in itself create a pressure?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very much so. But I don't know whether Clyde Ballard ever gave in then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think so.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And the Democrats were not able to prevail.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, they didn't have the votes.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't even know if all the Democrats were with the steel workers, you know. Although the largest steel worker group is in Spokane. So I'm sure they were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A difficult situation. You were again involved with a series of bills which had to do with gun control, with a whole host of sponsors. One that passed was Senate Bill 6206 that required that schools be notified of fire-arm violations by students. I'm not sure what instigated this bill, but it required that when a youth who is still in school, presumably, was convicted of certain offenses using a weapon, "the court must notify the youth's parents or guardians and the principal of the youth's school." So, was that the case before this bill that students could, say, commit a robbery and

their school would never hear about it? They would never know their student had been involved in such a crime?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. It probably would be true though, because juveniles' names are never mentioned in the newspaper. They mention "an seventeen-year-old youngster," or a "sixteen-year-old child" so there would be no way anyone could ever trace that. I don't think the police ever informed the school in which the child attended. I don't know that this went on, but I doubt that it was ever done. It was probably more oversight than actual intent. They just didn't think to inform the school. And the parents obviously wouldn't. Obviously they should know that, but it would probably be a cause for expulsion of the child from school. I don't know, but I think some action probably would be required. Expulsion, counseling for the child, and incarceration, probably. If it was serious enough, they would be incarcerated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. It's just fascinating to see a bill like this and realize that it wasn't happening before. It sounds like there was a hole in the system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, you wouldn't think it would be necessary. No one would even think about it. It was probably a bill that was brought in by a constituent who thought it was a great idea; it sounded to me like a good idea, too. That the school really should know. Especially in view of the fact that there have been some severe cases of youngsters carrying guns to school, like the occurrence in Loveland, Colorado, where they shot up a school building. Yes, I think it's very important that school officials know that. And it was just purely an oversight. And that's the good of communicating with constituents because this is the type of thing that comes out in chatting with constituents; these thoughts which would never occur, probably, to a legislator. If you haven't experienced it, you don't know it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Only after you read the headlines in the paper, do you think to yourself, "Why didn't they know?" Maybe there is even a

prohibition against telling them or at least a gap there in the system.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It could be a right to privacy; I don't know whether it would enter into that field or not, but it seems to me appropriate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another bill you co-sponsored, with Senator Kohl-Welles, which didn't pass – and this is another one of those things where you start to anticipate the headlines – was relating to the sale of firearms at gun shows and flea markets. I gather that you can go to gun shows in those huge parking lot markets and pick up just about anything and there's no check, there's no anything. I guess the guns are considered second-hand at that point?

**Sen. Wojahn:** A gun could change hands through a flea market or through an estate sale, unbeknownst to the law enforcement; it's quite dangerous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you don't have to register that gun or have any kind of background check?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, no check.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a very interesting loophole. That didn't pass. It was sent to Judiciary and just died immediately and never was seen again.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know why it didn't pass. As I remember about that time, I had had an estate sale and I'd found a gun that must have belonged to my husband and I think I turned it over to the police rather than try to sell it, but I could have sold it at the estate sale, without anybody being any the wiser.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And anybody could have bought it.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And anybody could have bought it; that is absolutely right. And so it was a very important bill. We're never going to get hold of this gun problem unless we pass laws which are very firm in this area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is a very large loophole.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a huge loophole. The same thing as the one that did pass some years before

in which the police could confiscate firearms without having to sell them back to the public, which was very bad. They had to sell the guns back. And that was when the Chief of Police of Tacoma came to me and asked me to sponsor a bill, because they had no control over these guns and they had to sell them for the highest and best price. So we were slowly getting to gun control, but there were many, many loopholes which have never been closed and probably are still out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when a bill goes to committee like that and then is just never heard from again, is there something that you can do? Can you go to those committee members and prod them along, or did they say to you, "Well, this is just not the time."

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know what happened with it. I don't think I was the prime sponsor; I think that Jeanne Kohl-Welles was and whether she went to the committee chair, I don't know. If it were a bill that I was a prime on, I usually went to the committee chair and asked to have the bill heard and asked for it to be brought up for a vote. And if I wasn't, I didn't; I usually left that up to the prime to do the initial lobby work, unless you were asked to do it. And often I would ask other members to assist me with lobbying it through, but if it were a really personal bill, or something that people only wanted on as a favor, then I would do it myself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For whatever reason, this one fell through the cracks.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it may have been that the committee had too many bills, and didn't get to it. It may have been introduced late in the session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just one of a whole spate of gun control bills that session. There were also – on a very different subject – a whole bunch of bills addressing discrimination on golf courses against women.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. Women had to play at certain times of the day, or couldn't play at others. Or couldn't even play on some golf courses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting how a subject comes up. Throughout your long history, I don't think we've ever come across the subject of golf courses.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We approached them through the Liquor Control Board and that's the only way we could get a handle on it. Deny them a liquor license if they didn't permit women, and then they could negotiate and still establish certain times that women could play and would not permit them to play during the choice times.

When the women legislators and lobbyists went to eastern Washington for the Double Cup, which was a fun golf game – it was always held during the summer and was done by women lobbyists and women legislators – we always had to be on the golf course at quarter to seven or seven o'clock in the morning and be out of there by nine o'clock so that the men could play. We usually went to either Spokane or Yakima. I still remember that. The last time I was there, we still had to be on the golf course at the crack of dawn and out of there at a certain time in order to leave the golf course clear for the men.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you only got two hours, and they got the rest of the day?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is absolutely right. Because a large group was playing. I don't know whether that golf course had a liquor permit or not, so if they didn't have a liquor permit, we couldn't control it. If they didn't have beer or wine or liquor, we had no control over it. But if they had that, we could control it through their sales.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was an interesting strategy. It recalls bills in the 1960s which challenged private clubs for racial discrimination through the Liquor Control Board rules. Did you know about those cases? Did you model your measure after that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I think they were just beginning to appear. I don't remember being involved with any of them because during that time I was concentrating more on consumer legislation and women's legislation was just coming to the fore. There was always someone else to do some of these chores.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if in your subconscious, you remembered that strategy and when the time came, there it was.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You pounced!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You dug it up and used it for the golf case. It just struck me that way.

**Sen. Wojahn:** You had to find a keyhole in order to force an issue and there's always one. There's always something you can use to force and it could be any one of a number of issues, but it had to be something which could cause problems for the person who had this put on the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why they should care?

**Sen. Wojahn:** You bet. It had to be something that personally touched them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were at least three different bills; you joined with various combinations of women members to push all of them. Were you successful? Did any of these bills make an impact on the golfing industry?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think that they got the message. The evolution of the change may not have occurred immediately, but eventually it did. So it could have taken six months; it could have taken a couple of years, but eventually they would get the message.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of women golf.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know that. But they put up with it. Women put up with it; they didn't have to. They never got so upset or angry that they ever did anything about it until they figured out what to do. I think that was part of it. You can't get mad; you've got to play smart and do it.

Have you heard that joke; it's a fun joke. I'm going to tell you right now. About the two men who were playing golf and there were a couple women playing ahead of them and they were so slow that one of the fellows said to the other, "Would you mind going up and asking those women if we can play through because we're never going to finish our golf game." And so the guy went running up the hill and took one look and came running back and he said, "I can't do it because one is my wife and the other

is a gal I've playing around with, so I don't dare." So the other fellow, he said, "You stay behind that tree and I'll go up and do it." And he goes rushing up and takes a good look and he comes rushing back and says, "Small world, isn't it." I think that's a wonderful joke, "Small world, isn't it!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, my! Well, what happens when women play with men? Can women play in mixed groups at any hour of the day?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I have no idea. I doubt it. The men work under a buddy system and I don't think that ever entered their heads to join up with women to try to change the perception on the golf course. Because men like to be with men when they are playing golf. And women like to be with women. Mainly because men don't think women play golf very well. And women probably don't think they play golf very well either; a lot of women don't. And so rather than force the issue, I don't think it ever occurs much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though it certainly hit the news in Georgia, at the Augusta Club.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They still don't permit women to play golf. And I'm not so sure at Pebble Beach what they do or don't do. And like some of the tournaments, they won't let women enter either. They finally did play this year, a couple of weeks ago, but they didn't like it. It puts such a strain on the women golfers that often they don't do very well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's quite a load to carry. Well, you never know what the next frontier's going to be.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That is a new frontier: the golf course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Along those lines, you were involved with several Senate resolutions that year, some of which honored women. I think these are fairly customary, but they're worth noting.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I personally do not like Senate resolutions because they take up so much time and often time is rare in a session. So generally, I rarely sponsored a resolution unless I was

really enthused about it. I probably sponsored less than a dozen resolutions in my thirty-two years in the Legislature. I used to resent them coming in all the time because a lot of them were done just to politically embroider a particular legislator's career. She was going to have a group of people there and she wanted them to observe or she needed some help with a group and invited them down to witness the resolution when it was presented, or got the resolution passed and presented it to a group that had never been supportive of her position. So I don't like them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are curious things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I didn't sponsor women's legislation when Jeanne Kohl-Welles did. I was the one who passed most of the early legislation to help women, but she always picked up on it and sponsored resolutions later on to call attention to it, which is fine. They are a letter to Santa Claus!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are just for the record? Just something written up in the Senate Journal?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, in the Journal and for public attention and to generate funding sometimes. You know, like a developmentally disabled resolution could be to help with funding. Sometimes it's for a good cause.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's a little bit of window dressing and a ceremony, in sense?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. Ceremonial and often you invite the person who is chairing the committee to be there to receive the resolution and you can speak to the gallery at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is a way to honor certain groups.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's fine to honor people, but to honor a basketball team for winning a city championship? You know. Or a football team, and then you have a lot of teams and they would come down; they used to honor them and have them up on the podium. Well, as time runs out in the legislative session, sometimes you don't have time to do that. So sometimes the presiding officer would just have them stay in the gallery and introduce them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let them rise and wave?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Let them rise and be introduced. That is correct, depending upon the time element. So during the closing days of a session, it's fine to have resolutions because you are sitting around doing nothing anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of waiting for the budget?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And waiting for the bills to come through. That's okay, but other than that, to do it for just window-dressing, it bothers me. A lot of us didn't like them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are there trends in this sort of thing? Some years have quite a few. There were a couple dozen this session; it seemed like quite a big number.

**Sen. Wojahn:** They are trends among legislators. Some legislators love resolutions. Some legislators assiduously do them, others don't bother. I don't think that Irving Newhouse ever sponsored a resolution. He and I were of the same opinion on resolutions. They are a waste of time, generally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, to get you to sign on, it would have to be something you cared about deeply?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I rarely got asked to be a prime sponsor of one, hardly ever. Or to be one of the top three. If I wanted to go on it, I could go on it. And sometimes Jeanne Kohl-Welles would come and ask me. She remembered I had passed the sex education bill which opened the door for women's sports in the state of Washington. I did that before she was ever a member. And so she asked me to go on them. But I rarely sponsored them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was the prime sponsor, it's true, for this Senate resolution which celebrates "Washington Girls and Women in Sports Day." And it does list some of the people with whom you have been involved with over time.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, in 1974 I'd sponsored the legislation that opened the door for women's athletics and we tied into the federal Title IX

money, out of Congress that first year. And then we brought money in; we put \$50,000 in the budget through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to introduce it and it evolved into women's sports. And that was me doing it. But after you do something, you don't go back and redo it. In other words, you move on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a couple of resolutions that do, inadvertently in a sense, touch on some of the things you've been interested in over the years and this was one of them.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's true. The women's sports, that was a knock-down, drag-out issue in the Legislature. We lost that bill three times and we finally got it back in the dying days of the session. It was a bitterly fought bill. But you see, these people who sponsor resolutions don't know that. These are 'goodie' things that are done and they have no meaning, really. Their meaningfulness came when they were first passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there was another one celebrating International Women's Day. And then one which does touch a little more personally on some of the work that you've done, honoring the Boys and Girls Club.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was involved with Boys and Girls Clubs from the time before I was in the Legislature. And I served with them until I got out, till about 1999 when I removed myself. I was partially responsible for raising money for Boys and Girls Club buildings in Tacoma; we built three new clubs. I helped raise the money for that. I was the president of the Eastside Boys and Girls Clubs, I was on the overall board for years and I worked through it for twenty-five years with Boys and Girls Clubs, before it was ever thought of to be brought up in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is not just a gesture; this is a culmination of years of involvement?

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right. I don't know who was responsible for the Boys and Girls Club Resolution, I have no idea. I don't think I even spoke to it on the floor.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Snyder, Spanel, Goings, yourself, Oke, Hale, Kohl-Welles and Winsley were the sponsors.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well then, if Snyder sponsored it, it was a good resolution, because he didn't sponsor a lot of resolutions either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It goes to the heart of what that program's about.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Keeping kids off the street, giving them something to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It gives some information about how many kids are involved, that it's a national program in every community – just the purpose of it. An opportunity for a bit of public education.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was involved with Boys and Girls Club, way back in the 1970s, when money for school lunches was provided through Congress; we started that in the state of Washington at the Eastside Boys Club. I was on the board at that time with Bill Callahan. So I was very aware of what we had done through the years, but it was not through legislative assistance, or anything; it was done through the efforts of the community and the communities throughout the state of Washington. And then it evolved into more and more. But now that's a standard program and the Boys and Girls Clubs in Tacoma all have the lunch program during the summer and then during the school year they can go for dinner. The clubs give a third of the food each meal, so the child gets total nutrition during the day and from that evolved the breakfast programs in schools. So they get a good breakfast and the free lunch program and in the evening they would get the food at the Boys and Girls Clubs if they belonged. And so they would get their full nutrition. It evolved over time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Noticing where the holes are and then filling the need?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely, and filling them as we went along. If you remember, there was a Presidential commission on Food, Nutrition, and Health held in D.C. to which I was invited as a freshman legislator. And that's where we

evolved the programs for free food and from that came the Department of Agriculture expansion from food stamps into lunches, and then to free food. And from that came Meals on Wheels for senior citizens and breakfasts for kids. It all started with that. There was a book called *Let Them Eat Promises* written by Nick Kotz, who was the nutritionist with the Nixon administration and now is with the School of Public Health, I think, at Harvard University. He chaired the committee and it was invitational for every state in the Union, I think. I attended and I was one of a few going from the state of Washington to that conference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like that was a very important experience for you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was very important because I was a freshman. That's when they were attempting to merge all the things in the Social and Health Services and I was fighting it because I didn't think it would work. But I did have a nutrition program which I introduced into that bill, I remember that. And the conference was very well done. Everything was paid for: they sent me my airline ticket; I stayed at the Sheraton Park Hotel, I think, and we were given meal tickets. They had Navajo Indians there talking about how they were starving to death. There was a movement then to remove them from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and give the money directly to the Indian Tribes, because the Bureau was taking so much of the money for administrative purposes, which evolved and is now being done. And so what goes around, comes around. I think now, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been subordinated and the money being given directly back to the Indian Tribes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's nice to have watched that evolution of events.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I watched it. I don't know where it is now, but I think there's a very small group of national Indian Affairs. I think it has been eliminated. But at that time it was one of the big debate issues which came on the floor of the plenary sessions about how the Navaho Indians were starving because they were not getting money from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, not

what they needed. They were making Kachina dolls and Navaho rugs and things to survive. But they weren't surviving very well. And so this all started at that time. That was during the Nixon administration. You know, you can say anything you want bad about presidents, but there is good in every president; there is some good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes. He certainly accomplished many things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He accomplished a lot. I don't feel at all badly about him. I'm sorry he lied. I don't like this president we have now, Bush, because I think he misrepresents the facts all the time; I can't stand him. But I never hated Nixon, because he, in effect, was a good man, I believe. And I believe that generally, that's true. But some of them never learn. Nixon was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, is what I'm saying. He was a Quaker; I respect the Quaker movement deeply. But he couldn't lie, and that's the reason he got trapped. I didn't mean to get onto to that nutrition thing, but it was a big one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, that's important to understand, how these things all weave together.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's how it all evolved, beginning with that and that book *Let Them Eat*

*Promises*. I've loaned that out to a lot of people. And I remember when I was doing the bill to pick up the money from the administration, I had Doctor Sergienko help me, the deputy superintendent of schools in Tacoma, and he did all the statistics for me to see how we could do it. We thought at first we would do it through the elementary schools, because there's an elementary school in every area of the state of Washington so a senior could walk there for meals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's really local.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He did the stats for me and we presented them. We didn't get the bill that year and the next year I dropped it and Senator Bauer picked it up and he got it. So what doesn't happen one year, happens another year with another legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've got to plant those seeds. You did the leg work.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I planted seeds, you bet. And I did the leg work, but he used it to benefit everybody. So it happens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, without pounding these Senate resolutions too much, there was one other one which was curious. It alludes to the role of legislators who have served there a long time and who have planted those seeds and done things. It was sponsored by Senator Betti Sheldon, honoring a group of senators; she calls them "The Seventy-something Senators." She was fairly eloquent about the wisdom of age and experience, and how valuable you all were to the group, and your leadership and chiefly your experience – your long-time life experience and legislative experience and how bringing that into the Legislature was a gift to the entire state.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And Betti Sheldon rarely, rarely introduced resolutions. She and



*Sharing a moment of conversation with Senator Betti Sheldon of Kitsap County, 23<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District*



*Listening to remarks by Governor Gary Locke honoring her for many years of service at retirement celebration*

Sid, Bauer and I – we didn't introduce resolutions very often.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be especially heart-felt? She had some interesting phrases: "Whereas the Washington State Senate is honored to have among its members eight septuagenarians, Senators Al Bauer, Alex Deccio, Rosa Franklin, Jeanine Long, Bob McCaslin, George Sellar, Sid Snyder and Lorraine Wojahn." Then she says something about, "In the Legislature, as in life, it is well established that a good measure of maturity and a modicum of treachery will always beat youth and skill." A little humor! And then she says, "Despite their cumulative wisdom, maturity and depth of experience, former Governor Albert Rosellini still considers the above-named senators to be just a bunch of kids." Because, of course, he's always going to be older than everyone there.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he's about ninety-five. Still living! Still working!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's got a bit of a jump on you. It's kind of sweet. There was more, but how did this come about? Did she just suddenly look around and feel moved?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't know. Was that the resolution that was presented when we were honored? Or is that just preceding that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's preceding that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator Deccio has been there forever. But not as long as I! I was the oldest one and then Bauer. And Sid Snyder, of course, longer than any of us because of his work as Secretary of the Senate for many years. But Rosa Franklin wasn't there as long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a remarkable group when you look at those names.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Senator Deccio, you know, I can respect. He always fought for right. I have great respect for Alex Deccio because he always seemed to be on the right side, mostly. You know, a few times he was off, but he always stood for good. And another one that always stood for good was the Senator from Wenatchee who died, George Sellar. He was a beautiful man. Sellar was beautiful, and Bauer was good, and Sid Snyder was great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many of these people are still there? Alex Deccio is still there. Rosa Franklin. Is Jeanine Long still there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, Jeannine is gone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bob McCaslin. But George Sellar, of course, we lost.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Died.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Sid Snyder's retired, you've retired, and Senator Bauer. So some of this wisdom is no longer there. There's a definite loss. That was quite moving to read this and to reflect upon it. Then, of course, there was



*Enjoying speeches from colleagues during the retirement celebration from the seat of honor on the Senate rostrum*



*Examining montage of photographs collected over many years of service*

the resolution which touched you most closely that was offered upon the occasion of your retirement. There was a long one for Al Bauer at the same time. It's quite a portrait: "Served faithfully and well for thirty-two years, by providing a strong voice in the Legislature for her constituents." It's nice they list that first.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Often spoke the loudest for those least able to speak for themselves, especially the poor, the troubled and the disabled. Her vigorous advocacy in behalf of these groups before her colleagues in the Legislature was a hallmark of her long career in public service." You've done so many things; what they chose to pull out and what made the mark is interesting. You were: "relentless in her support of issues affecting the lives of women, instrumental in the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, as well as bills that allow women to obtain credit on their own and give displaced homemakers and their children a chance to start a new life." That "the tragedy of domestic violence was a continuing and abiding concern for you," that you "championed efforts to curb domestic violence." They mention your membership on the Pierce County Commission against Domestic Violence and that you were honored by that Commission in 1999. That you

were a pioneer in many ways during your distinguished career, being among other things, the first woman and non-attorney appointed to the Washington State Judicial Council. And they talk about your acute attention to budget matters, beneficial to the City of Tacoma and the residents of your district. They remembered your support for the Pantages Center for



*With long time friend and colleague Senator Shirley Winsley*

Performing Arts, the Washington State Historical Museum, and the University of Washington branch campus in Tacoma. Then they moved on to your work for public health. Your sponsorship of the bill that created the Department of Health, and your “unflagging determination to raise public awareness to the preventable health threats posed by osteoporosis and fetal alcohol syndrome.” Your efforts to “highlight the need for childhood immunization and mental health parity.” They talk about you being the first woman President Pro Tem to preside during Sine Die. Then your “catlike reflexes while presiding on the rostrum” earning you the title, “the fastest gavel in the West.” Is that true?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I always banged it hard, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re an emphatic gaveler? You were just up there thrashing away?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Crash – if you go like this! I have the gavel I thrashed around. Bob McDaniel had it done in a velvet-like case and presented it to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re not going to bash that one. They talk about Ray Moore calling you the “Norse Goddess of Terror,” and for saying that

“there could never be too many Wojahns in any legislative body,” which is kind of nice. Then they congratulate you and offer you “best wishes” for your retirement and remarks like that.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was fun. That hit everything. I think they hit everything. They didn’t hit my trauma – I got money for trauma!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they’d be there all day, if they really mentioned everything!

**Sen. Wojahn:** I know, but that was a big one! God, that was a big one!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they escorted you to the rostrum and you just have to stand there while they heap all this praise on you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was shocked. I didn’t know it was coming. I wasn’t even prepared for it. I didn’t even have my hair combed very well. I didn’t dress up. I just...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Take you as you are. Too late to create a new impression!

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. I didn’t know. It was incredible! Yes. I don’t think Al Bauer knew, either.



*Receiving congratulations from Senators Jim West and Sid Snyder; former Representative Denny Heck in background. to left*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, the best kept secret.

**Sen. Wojahn:** He may have known; he wore a dark suit that day. I just wore what I was wearing. It was shocking. I'd have combed my hair and put some lipstick on. Well, whatever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And all kinds of senators spoke: Senators Snyder, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Hargrove, Long, McDonald, McAuliffe, Winsley, Kohl-Welles, Prentice, Hochstatter, Franklin.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Hochstatter!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senators Jacobsen, Hale, Oke, Rasmussen, Heavey, and Bauer all rose to speak. Were you blushing to your roots by this time?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I was... It was too much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty overwhelming. So were they cracking jokes about you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they were. And funny ones and people were laughing and when Hochstatter got up – it was just a riot. No one knew what he was going to say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did he say something nice?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, he did. Because I had defended him when the Lieutenant Governor had gaveled him out of order one time. And I thought it was wrong. I went back and apologized and said, "He shouldn't have done that to you." I just did that because it offended me. But I really thought some of the things he said were weird, and sometimes they had little significance to the question before us. I never really got mad at him because I thought he was way off-base. He was an original, you know. He never knew what he was talking about. I always wondered why he was made chair of Education when the Republicans were in power because he appeared to be anti-education. But he deserved to be treated with respect nonetheless.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reputedly very well-read, though.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh yes, I know. He had funny things to say. And it was kind of funny. Well,



*Replying to the many accolades from colleagues*

another one, Senator Woodall became a very good friend of mine and he was a real rabid conservative, but he couldn't stand people being taken by door-to-door salesmen. He got interested in consumer issues and he sponsored a lot of consumer bills. And when I was lobbying I finally got him to co-sponsor an industrial insurance bill for retail clerks because I said to him, "If you don't sponsor this bill, if they get hurt on the job and they don't get industrial insurance, they're going to go on welfare." So he sponsored the bill and got it! Got it through the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just have to know how to reach people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It didn't pass the House, but he got it through the Senate. No one could believe it! No, you knew what to do. I just hit a responsive chord with him on something that was very dear to his heart, but I was lobbying everybody at that time. I had to lobby Democrats and Republicans because we needed

the bill. And the State Labor Council was supposed to be non-partisan, although we were more Democrat than Republican, of course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you just don't know where you're going to find support.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Sure, so I lobbied everybody. And Representative Helmut Jueling who was a very, very conservative Republican in the House from Fircrest became a very good friend of mine because I hit a chord with him. He and I sponsored the bill when I couldn't get a constituent into Washington State Medical School and I sponsored a bill to make University of Washington a school of Chiropractic Medicine. Oh! The chiropractors were mad at us and everybody was furious with us. Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was very even-handed if everyone was mad at you!

**Sen. Wojahn:** Darnn right. But anyway that really happened and I know the bill. And also the bill Jerry Kopet and I sponsored after the Department of Social and Health Services was established, requiring that the members of the Department speak to one another. Because they were fighting each other for budget preference. So, you know where your friends are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, and they are in surprising places.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, all these people made speeches about you, and then Governor Locke came and made a speech about you and thanked you for your public service. And then you finally had a chance to talk.

**Sen. Wojahn:** What do you say? You know, it was tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you begin with a joke. As many of your speeches do. And you collect your wits pretty quickly. You talked about the bacon bill, and you talked about lobbying and about the Equal Rights Amendment. And your Title IX work and credit for women and several things and then you sort of say, "Well, that's enough." And you thank them. And then you get

in one more little dig; you say, "As Pat suggested, I may be down lobbying for my One-Percent for Health." It was like you were saying, "Okay, I've done all these things, but I'm not really gone."

**Sen. Wojahn:** "I'm not through yet."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "I still want this." So you are not going quietly! Anyway, you leave them with that thought and then they move on and do a similar ceremony with Senator Bauer. What happened next?

**Sen. Wojahn:** We each had a cake. We cut the cake. And I know that the fellow who lobbied for the State Labor Council came and drug me away, because there was a huge lobby down there of labor people on some issue. And he drug me clear to the other side of the Third Floor to introduce me, which made some of my colleagues angry. But you do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They wanted to capture you, too?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And finally the session wound down and it was over. What was that like for you? To leave, to say, "This is my Sine Die here?"

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I guess it was sort of anti-climatic after that. And then when it was over, it was over. And at Sine Die night, the only people who are left down there were the hangers-on who want to see the gavels go down. Most all the legislators are gone by that time. And so I don't even know whether I stayed for the bitter end.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you preside over the last day?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, I presided over the time before the last Sine Die. Where we went into special session. The Lieutenant Governor was gone and so I gaveled with the Speaker of the House. But that was in 1999, I think. And then we went into a special session after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those Sine Die ceremonies are fairly orchestrated, aren't they? I mean,

don't you have to do the final gavel more or less simultaneously?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, you open both the doors and you time it so that the gavel in the House and Senate hit at the same time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you have some kind of signal?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, and so we did it. And when I did it – and that was because there wasn't anybody left there – but all the people who wanted to be up on the podium, some of the lobbyists, like DD people and some of the janitors who had never been up there, I brought them all up there – the workers who cleaned up the place, after we all left. So I had a whole group of people up there with me; it was just a riot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's a thoughtful thing.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And it was real fun. Real fun! And I got them all close up so they could see.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is there some kind of signal? Would somebody wave a hand or something for you to gavel?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think when we could see each other and we would go down at the same time. And so I had the little ones right up close to me and the taller ones behind me so they could all see. And a picture was taken – it's not a very flattering picture of any of us – but it was okay. We did it! I think I invited anybody in the audience who wanted to come up, too. Most people wanted to stay and peek so they could see the gavels and they couldn't see from the podium.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, retirement. How did you feel at the end of your last session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I got the Patients' Bill of Rights and the funding for trauma. I did two huge bills after I had initially decided not to run again. At that time I was seventy-six-years-old and I was old enough to retire and to give a young person a chance, or a new person to come in. And then, when I read that rotten editorial by the Tribune I thought, "No, I'm not going to retire. They shouldn't do this to me." The Tribune made me

so angry; they were just as rotten as hell. They hadn't bothered to research the facts and used hearsay to editorialize against me – my own hometown newspaper. But at the end I didn't have the energy. The atmosphere in the Legislature was changing. There was so much acrimony. When I started it wasn't that way. We liked each other. We trusted each other. We didn't always agree with each other, but there was no acrimony. I didn't want to be a part of it any more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you also feel that you had accomplished a great deal and that you had a pretty good record?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never thought of that. I always thought, "There's so much more to do! I've got so much more to do. And I kept doing it until I decided I couldn't do it anymore. But I never really acknowledged what I had done. I didn't think about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about wanting to take a break? Were there some positive things you wanted to do outside the Legislature that you would now have more time for?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, there wasn't. There really wasn't anything I wanted to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Have you had to learn how to be retired?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was tough the first year. It was awful. And it gets lonesome now. You know, most of my friends are gone; my close friends are all gone. And I have about two left and I have no family here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I know that you've been active in some ways since you retired. You keep up on issues and I know you watch TVW. You are still involved.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I watch it all the time. I think it's good and I watch it. And I'm on the steering committee on trauma; I think was able to help them this last time because they lost the money and they shouldn't have. It was taken over and used for something else. And I found out what we had to do; we have to watch that budget and they have to watch the ceiling on the budget. There should not be a loophole there, so they



can't get at that money. And I think that's been done now. I'll probably go off the committee when the Governor finishes the term; anyway I'm on for three years. And I volunteer with a study club for women since I retired. The club has been going since 1908 and meets once a month and we study different issues. We're doing humor this year, which will be fun. I'm doing political humor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's very appropriate.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Oh, yes. And I will probably do a little traveling, but I've have to be careful what I do that I can handle it. And I'm enjoying my grandsons. One lives in Bellingham and one is in Seattle now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little bit closer. You are now, as we work on this project in 2003, involved in a political group, The Rainier Institute.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, I am. I'm involved in that. It's a group which is really altruistic in its approach. They believe they can establish non-partisan policies in the state of Washington which the public will accept. It's going to be really tough because the big issue now is taxation. And that's got to be done. We've got to reconsider and do something and get the people to choke it down. And we've got to take into consideration how to pay for health care and how to take care of education. If education is our number-one priority, we're not doing a very good job of prioritizing. It's a group made up of Republicans and Democrats; Sid Morrison is on the committee, the vice-chair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have people with wide experience, a huge spectrum there. Phil Talmadge is a member, I understand.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Phil Talmadge organized it. Booth Gardner was the original chair, but he's not anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that help you keep your hand in?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it does. But I don't have a computer and there's very little I can do to assist them, except in helping them maybe generate

funding. And paying my share. I really believe in it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that group just work on policy? Or do they get involved in campaigns?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, not campaigns, not politicking at all; we can't do that. And if it becomes that, it's too fragile. Sid Morrison and Dr. John Moyer are really active in the group, both former senators and there are several attorneys. It's quite a wide spectrum of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like quite a lively group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It's a good group. Don Sloma is involved and is probably the most knowledgeable person in the state on health care and Bill Hagens, who used to be staff for Health Care for the House. He just joined. We've got to keep it balanced with both parties involved. And the old-fashioned Republicans like Joel Pritchard would have been a member, I'm sure, if he were living. Dan Evans hasn't joined, but I know he approves. Sid Morrison is probably the outstanding legislator there. And Dr. Moyer who always went along on health care. And I think, were he living, George Sellar from Wenatchee would probably belong. None of the right-wingers belong.

I gave my big speech on trying to raise money through requesting major industries to come in on an altruistic spirit, not for what they can get out of it, but what they can do to help the state. The WEA paid for a conference on education and there's been a report done on that. There's one coming up on health care that will create a report.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a fairly new group, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it was started two years ago by Phil Talmadge and Bernie Friedman, who is his law partner. And Phil, as a Supreme Court Justice, could see both sides of the issues and he was a very active legislator. I don't know whether it's going to work or not. But we need the Boeing Company; we need large major industries to come in and help. I'm thinking of Nintendo for instance; it's never done much to

help anybody. The Gates Foundation is thinking about helping us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you still have your fingers in there. You're still working; you're still thinking about the issues. You're still active.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Still thinking and trying. We're also working on the problem with initiatives. That's an issue that we're going to be doing. So, health care would be an issue, and taxation is our major issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's kind of the root of everything, isn't it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about this last session?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I thought it was a disaster.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The budget, the Boeing issue?

**Sen. Wojahn:** When you stop to think about the Boeing Company, that it had its start in the state of Washington and they had the support of the citizens of the state of Washington. And we all came together and developed it into a major, major industry. And I thought that they were less than – what am I trying to say – what's the only thing that you have to give anybody else? Besides hope? That they were less than loyal. They only thought of their bottom line. And I realize that industries have to do that, but they were not doing too badly in the state of Washington. And I excused them because I figured that they were concerned about China and North Korea and that we're too close to them and that maybe they moved inland because of the dangers of that. And that was my first thought. And that's me thinking – that's nobody telling me to think that – but I thought, well, maybe they did it because of that. Because if their whole program is in the state of Washington and we're so close to China as far as geographic distance is concerned, maybe that's the reason they moved. Well, I don't think that's the reason at all; I think it's the bottom line. There's no loyalty. And I happen to think that loyalty has to contribute to something – to people. I'm very loyal to the state of Washington and I think that everybody should

be that way. But I see that about forty percent of the people living in the state of Washington were not born here. So why should they be loyal to the state of Washington?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a pretty transient place.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, it is transient, but our roots were established here for the Boeing Company. Our roots are in agriculture – big agriculture. Our second largest product. And we're losing it. Fife is being paved over and that bothers me. Who's going to feed the world when we decide we won't do it anymore? We want to make more money. I guess I never believed that money was everything. I think if you have enough to live on and live comfortably and enjoy some privileges and a reasonably good life that you should accept it. Why do you have to have more money? Why does greed enter into this? If we could remove greed from our language, we'd be a lot better off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a real re-visioning.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I don't think that greed ever was a keynote of anybody ever developing anything. It was a curiosity that caused inventions to occur. It wasn't greed, because most of the people who invented things, who did great things for the country, did it because they were pushed to do it because of their curiosity. And their intelligence. They did it because they never had any money. The cotton gin was developed by a guy who had no money; he had to have support from his landlady, who really should be given part of the credit for developing the cotton gin. And so we've got to forget the word greed and let people pursue things. That's the reason I'm glad that we're helping kids with scholarships and opening the door for bright kids to be able to enjoy and to get a good education. Because I don't want to lose them. And I keep thinking if we could ever harness the idiot savants of this world, we could harness the world, kids who can do computing in their heads – human computers. We are way back in the dark ages with some of these things out there that we've never been able to harness yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's always more to do, isn't there?

**Sen. Wojahn:** And there's a simple answer to pay for health care, if we could just find it. There's a simple answer which the people would accept, and I believed it was me, with my "One-Percent," but it wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what happened to that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** The bill died in Ways and Means; it got out of Health Care and died in Ways and Means.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go down to Olympia and lobby for it?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I went down and testified and they finally voted it out of the Senate Health Committee the last day and sent it over to Senate Ways and Means where it died an abrupt death. I suspect Deccio said, "Some day we'll come to this, this is what we're coming to. But not yet."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you just don't know. You've planted various seeds in the past and you didn't know when it was going to happen and suddenly something starts to grow.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Something starts to percolate. Maybe there's an angle here that hasn't been thought of yet that we can sell it, an angle that could be used to sell the idea. Because it isn't self-serving. Because if it were self-serving people would buy it. Because if people would believe that every man, woman and child would have their own card and could have health care...but then there are all those who are greedy and selfish and say, "Why should he have it, when he doesn't work for a living; he is getting it free." As long as those people are out there, we may never be able to get it. And we can't shoot them all. We can't string them all up. And if we can't reach them through argument and debate, how we going to reach them? When enough of them are hurting? And that may never be in my lifetime. I'm sure in my lifetime, in the foreseeable future it will not be responded to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't it curious though, that sometimes it feels like everything's stuck, and then suddenly it goes through?

**Sen. Wojahn:** It breaks through!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you can't really say exactly why that happens; there's just some kind of movement.

**Sen. Wojahn:** We broke through on domestic violence. We broke through in the City of Tacoma. And yet the county auditor did put that little statement on the marriage license that I wanted to go statewide. But we needed statewide publicity on it. We needed people to know it was there on the application form. Not just people applying for a marriage license. It took something dramatic, the killing of the wife of the chief of police. So, I don't know. But greed and self-aggrandizement, selfishness...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you may still get that, you don't know. Do you stay active in your district? Do people still call you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** No. Once in awhile I get a call from somebody saying, "I know you're not still in the Legislature, but can you help me?" Or I get a call and they start in telling me their problem, and I say, "I'm no longer a member of the State Legislature, the State Senate. I retired." And they say, "Oh."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you tell them whom to call?

**Sen. Wojahn:** If I can help them, I do. I tell them to call Senator Regala or Representatives Jeannie Darneille or Dennis Flannigan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any say or influence in who took your spot?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I wanted Bob Edie, but Bob decided he wasn't going to run. There were two people and Bob had always said, "If you ever decide not to run, I want to know." Well, then he got a job as vice-president of Western Washington University. See, he was the staff for Ways and Means Committee under Jim McDermott, and then he went with the University of Washington as the lobbyist for them, and then he was let out and he went to work for OFM for awhile – the Governor, then he was offered a job as vice-president of Western Washington University. And he wasn't quite ready to retire. If he were ready to retire, I think he would have run. He's lived in the

district – always. But then he moved to Bellingham.

And then the other one was Bill Baarsma who had said that he was interested. But when I called him he was no longer interested. And those two people understood the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your district is “yours,” but it doesn’t belong to you.

**Sen. Wojahn:** No, it doesn’t belong to me; it’s anybody’s. And I never discouraged anyone from running. You know, even Doug Sutherland, who was the mayor of Tacoma, he was always a good friend of mine. We always got along.

I remember it was a bitter battle when I ran for mayor and I didn’t like the other person running against me very much and he made some mistakes, but when I was asked afterwards by the writer from the Tribune, I said, “I’m never going to be responsible for publicly injuring anybody, including my opponent. Because I don’t do that.” That was Jerry Pugnetti who was working for the Tribune. He couldn’t believe I was saying it. But I did. I’m not a fan of the press; I think they distort the truth. They publish things to sell papers, no matter who it hurts. The one thing we did stop them from ever doing was mentioning people’s names until they had been charged. And they’ve been careful about that, but they were bitterly angry over that, I’ll never forget that. And I fought that. I remember I had a bill before the Legislature and I couldn’t get it out of committee that suggested newspapers should do their own collecting, rather than asking the newsboys to do it. Kids were being injured when they were collecting money, they were being hit. So I had this bill that the newspapers arrange to do their own collecting and I couldn’t even get it out of committee. They came in and personally pounced on the bill and pounced on me. Not very nice. Now the Tribune, the new editor, has a story in the paper every Sunday, applauding – patting the paper on the back – all the good things they do for people and how they don’t mislead people; if they do, they retract it. There was a column...they miss a lot of things.

And I called them the other day because they said the Sprague Building had been torn down; the Sprague Building was remodeled for a United Way Building. And I called them and they said the picture in the paper was the Sprague Building, which had been torn down. And I called them and said, “The Sprague Building, to my knowledge, is a United Way building now; it was not torn down.” They didn’t correct it in the paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least that’s something you can drive by and see for yourself.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. I know the Sprague Building is still there, because I got them the money for the building and I got my name in the foyer. When I die they can take it down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, the building’s there. Actually, your legacy is all over downtown Tacoma.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The Sprague Building, a lot of my campaign money and money that was given to me when I didn’t run – one lobbyist wanted to do something and I said, “Give the money to the Arts Commission.” So they did that. I did get the Sprague Building some money through the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The great State History Museum, the whole development of that area.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The University of Washington development.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Foss Waterway.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That waterway, yes, we got them to be able to not charge state tax for the landscaping and around the buildings. They can’t charge a state tax on that anymore. And also the building on the tax abatement for ten years for new and remodeled construction for housing; that was a huge bill. And also the Pantages – my first \$1.5 million, I got that. I did that alone. I had to carry it all by myself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is an impossible question for such a long career, but those are bricks and boards and real places. What are your other top legacies, would you say? Where you look and say, “I did that, I got that to happen.” Or, “I

prevented something else from happening.” What would you say would be the things for which you most want to be remembered?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, I think the most important thing I’ve done was to establish the Department of Health, number one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s almost like bricks and boards.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That’s right. The money for the trauma care, finding a new source for money for trauma care. I would like to be remembered for paying for health care through a one-percent income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe some day.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Maybe some day. The Displaced Homemaker Bill is a big bill which is still helping women to find jobs. It was a big bill. Supplying women with funding for athletics, called sexism education; we changed the textbooks also. That was another big bill. That was a huge bill. That ripple effect changed the textbooks in the state of Washington; we eventually did all new textbooks and it provided for athletic quarters for women. The University of Washington has its own baseball diamond now and there’s supposed to be an equal amount of money for women’s athletics. I doubt that that ever occurred.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it’s a start.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. Another one was the state Equal Rights Amendment which we thought we’d lost and the Fort Lawton area of Seattle – which is a military installation – passed it on their absentee ballots. It barely passed. And it was their absentee votes that brought it over the top.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was kind of a surprise.

**Sen. Wojahn:** With the Equal Rights Amendment, one of the big items that was never talked about with equal rights, wasn’t financial, it was human rights, that a man was always considered the head of the household. The woman was subordinate to the man, the man could sue for lack of consortium with his wife; if she were injured and could not consort with

him, he could sue and get money. But she could not sue if anything happened to him and he could not provide. That was a big item, but it wasn’t talked about. It was considered a “no-no” but it was true. And also with that change, because the man was considered the head of the house, if he was committing incest, a woman could not win against her husband even though he was in an incestuous relationship with one of their children. She wasn’t listened to. These are big items that nobody talks about. That was the Equal Rights Amendment which changed that. And yet we couldn’t change it nationally, because of the Deep South, where this is probably still occurring. Incest, domestic violence, you name it, sexual assaults on women and children.

Another one was the community property laws, where a woman – anything that she owned before her marriage, everything after the marriage, he owned, even her personal clothing. Also, he could indebt the estate without her signature. He could go out and buy a house without her having to sign or have any knowledge of it. He could buy a boat or a car and indebt the community property without her knowledge of it. And she couldn’t do anything about it. Now they have to co-sign for large-ticket items.

The same thing was a woman could not start a business. If she were on her own – if she could find the funding, she could do it. But if she were married, she couldn’t. And I remember when I did that bill – I was the chair of the committee but I didn’t sponsor the bill – I got women to do it. It was done by the alert women attorneys in the state of Washington and they did a magnificent job with that bill. I was aware of it, because my hairdresser, who had three beauty salons, wanted the name changed on her door of her Puyallup salon. She called a guy who printed on glass to come out and write the name of the salon on the door, and he brought the contract for her husband to sign and she said, “My husband has nothing to do with this. This is my own business. He has his own business; he does transmission work as his own business.” And the guy wouldn’t do it without her

husband's signature. And she told me and it just pissed me off. That got changed!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's those real life stories.

**Sen. Wojahn:** A woman could not apply for credit on her own. She couldn't get a credit card. If she was working and was single, she could get one, if she could get accepted by the credit company, but if she were married, she had to have her husband's signature. Crazy! I remember Darlene Bottiger, whose husband was the Majority Leader in the Senate, wanted to buy a horse. After the Equal Rights Amendment and also the credit bill was passed, she called me up said, "Guess what, Lorraine! I just bought a horse; I can buy it on my own." She didn't even know if she could do it. "I bought it myself." She did it with her own money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard now for people to realize that that's not so long ago.

**Sen. Wojahn:** That's twenty years ago.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's easily in many people's lifetimes that this revolution has occurred.

**Sen. Wojahn:** The one bill I regret not getting was the marriage bill. We got the divorce bill separated from the marriage bill, but the original bill that was done by the Judicial Council; they appointed a committee of attorneys and judges. Judge Walterskirchen and Judge Windsor were on the committee. And I was appointed from the Judicial Council. There were five of us. I don't remember who the other members were; it was a woman attorney and another attorney, I think. But I was the only non-attorney on the Judicial Council and I remember we worked on that bill for about a year. We would meet monthly and go over it. And I remember Judge Walterskirchen saying, "We have to provide for a woman's retirement; if she's married, she has a right to a portion of that Social Security. And a portion of her husband's retirement. I remember him zeroing in on that issue. I remember the bill; we took it and got it passed and it was a "marriage and divorce" bill. Then it was the Washington State Bar, the Family Law Committee that sponsored the study. The

Washington State Bar Association appointed a committee to do the bill. We did the bill and presented it to the Judicial Council, who accepted it. It was on a voice vote, and we just barely made it, from the members of the committee. And that committee was made up of the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, the president of the Bar Association, a judge from every level: superior, district, municipal, appellate and Supreme. And then the deans of the various law schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wow, pretty stellar group.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Very stellar. And I was the first woman and non-lawyer appointed to that committee when I was a freshman legislator. Because I'd worked on the garnishment bill for the State Labor Council and also consumer counseling services, so I was appointed to that and then I was appointed to the subcommittee of the Washington State Bar. We presented the bill to the Judicial Council; it passed on almost a tie vote – by one vote. There was a huge meeting of the Bar Association; it was held at Providence Heights, a two-day meeting presenting the bill. It was generally accepted by the attorneys of the state who were members of the Family Law committee. There was a huge gathering. Oh, there must have been a thousand people there, it was huge. It was presented to them in a plenary session and then it was adopted and went to the Judicial Council, who accepted it. And then it went to the Legislature and the Legislature tore out the marriage part. And the marriage part is probably the best of all because it required a disclosure. When you went to get a marriage license, you were given a disclosure slip to sign. If you'd been married before, you had to give your date of divorce and where it occurred and how many children – what your commitments were – the pertinent information on your debts, so that your new wife or husband would know to what you were indebted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No big surprises.

**Sen. Wojahn:** It was a total disclosure. And then three days later, after you'd had your blood test and went back for your marriage license, you were considered married. And then you

could have a civil wedding. If you wanted, you could be married by a Justice of the Peace or a minister in a church, but you didn't have to go through it again. You were already married, but you could have a religious ceremony. I remember the florists wrote this terrible letter to all the legislators and threatened any legislator who voted for it and killed the bill. The Senate Judiciary ripped the marriage part out of it and just left the no-fault divorce.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure that people would still want weddings.

**Sen. Wojahn:** And I'd still like to get that bill. It's a European method; all the Catholic countries in Europe use it. It's really a Roman Catholic bill. And we couldn't get it passed in the state of Washington. It's a civil contract; marriage is a civil contract. And that's what we tried to tell them. We had good lobbying. The Bar Association lobbied that bill. I remember the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee ripping the marriage portion out. He was a senator from Lake Goodwin, out of Everett, Bill Gissberg. He was an attorney. He's the one who killed that part of it as chairman of Senate Judiciary. He later stole my method of funding for the Displaced Homemaker, and took it for the Judicial Information System. I had it on the divorce settlement, that a portion of the divorce application of the fee for the divorce had to go for the Displaced Homemaker program because that's where it was occurring. They were divorcing their wives and marrying their girlfriends, you know. Of course, there were some deaths also. But he took it, he stole it. I'll never forget that. So I had to go to the marriage license to get it. They got it on the marriage license, which wasn't as good. And then we had the right-wing fighting that, because they thought we'd keep people from getting married with that little fee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When people want to get married, they'll get married.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes. But it should have been on the divorce act. The Judicial Information system has plenty of money from that, I believe. See, I was able to figure out ways to get money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you know an act without money behind it isn't very helpful.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Some of my bills had the money stripped out in the House. I know that now. I wasn't always aware of it saying, "Subject null and void if without money." They didn't do that when I first started there. The House started doing it after I went to the Senate. I couldn't believe it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It kind of takes the heart out of things.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Yes, they got a lot of bills which I thought were effective. I'm still finding out bills that has happened to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there's still more to do. Would you have advice if someone came to you and said, "I'm thinking of running for the Legislature." What would you tell them?

**Sen. Wojahn:** I would tell them to review their background and see how many groups they belong to which work with people. Like PTA or pre-school groups, or church groups, and to itemize what they've ever done for the city. Were they registered voters? Did they register when they were first able to register? Have they voted in every election? Do they read the newspapers and absorb what's going on? Do they make judgment calls on issues? Do they even think about judgment calls on issues? Do they belong to a group like the Elks or Rotary, or any civic group which serves and is there for the good of the people? And do they take chairmanships in these areas? Do they listen to other people? Do they hold conversations with friends and debate issues? Do they read books and newspapers a lot? Have they ever been on the board of their church? Or have they been a Sunday school teacher? I've done all these things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In other words, where are they in their community? What's their track record?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Where are you coming from? What's your track record in working with people?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And where do they get their information, how do they learn about the world?

**Sen. Wojahn:** How do they form opinions? Is it based upon listening to both sides or is it just listening to one and making an instant decision? I don't think education is critical; it's not that important. It's important, but it's not that important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess it would depend on what a person did with their education.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, that's true. If they go through school and immediately get married and stop thinking at that point, what good does it do?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where are you in your community? Are you already involved? Some people skip that phase and go for the top, but yours is a very rooted vision.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I think women are more rooted than men. For men, their key is to be successful in their chosen occupation, in order to provide for their family. And they have blinders on, often. With good reason. But now, with women sharing the responsibility of the household and working with them, I think there's more of a partnership out there, and I think that's good. And it isn't all on the man's shoulders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It frees men as well as women?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely. And I think there were always good partnerships before if the woman, who was a stay-at-home wife, took care of the family finances and worked at it and relieved her husband of that responsibility. Since he was out making the money, she was supposed to "fry the bacon" and take care of the household and take care of the finances to see that they made it and to know where to cut and what was important. I did that before I ever became a legislator. After I didn't work anymore. I took over the family finances and we knew where we had to tighten our belts and what we couldn't do. I remember when Gil first started practicing, we really weren't sure where our next meal...because we didn't have any bank account or anything.

We had bought his family home because his sister had had a cerebral hemorrhage. She was a

school teacher and she died at age thirty-five. She was an art teacher at Lincoln High School and had done well and worked her way through college all by herself. Gil worked his way through five years of architecture school all by himself; didn't have any family help because they didn't have any money. And the house wasn't even finished. His dad was building it – he was an architect – when he died of pneumonia in 1927. The outside was finished but not the inside. And so the two boys had taken it upon themselves to finish the inside with what money they could scrape together. And then his sister worked her way through school and Gil did too, but we didn't have any money. We just got married and I quit school and went to work in order to help him to get through. Then the war came along and he had to quit school and he went to work for the government for the Corps of Engineers. So then I went to work for the Corps of Engineers and then he went to school part-time. Then when the war was over, he went back on campus and finished his two years in school. He picked up all the electives you can pick up, but his architecture, he couldn't do; he had to be on campus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The war disrupted a lot of people's lives.

**Sen. Wojahn:** I never went back to school. I could have, but I didn't. I was too busy doing things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it seems like you've become a self-educated person, then. Reading and going to conferences and meeting with people.

**Sen. Wojahn:** Well, yes, I did. And doing things. But eventually we got out of the woods, you know. And I was real careful with our money and the kids were always told, "We can't afford it," if they wanted something. If we could do it, we did. If we couldn't, we would just tell them, "We can't afford it." And so they went through school hearing that. All through high school, or through junior high, yes. But eventually we bought some property in Seattle and sold that. I remember, we bought it for



about \$1,400 and sold it for \$3,500 and we paid every month on it. We finally had it paid for. Then we moved to Tacoma and finished paying for it, and bought the house in Tacoma. We were paying his mother because they had a mortgage on the house to pay for his sister's illness. We sold the property in Seattle and had a little bit of money. And from then on, it was fine.

I remember our car broke down once; Gil had taken the kids into Seattle to the Seafair Parade. The car broke down and they had to leave it. They had it towed to a garage and took the bus home. And we had to go back to Seattle and buy a car because Gil had to have a car. He was living in Tacoma and commuting to Seattle to the architectural firm he was associated with there. We had an income, but not much. So we bought a car on time and we didn't know how we were going to pay for it. We managed to pay for it, and we realized when we got through that we'd paid twice as much for that car by buying it on time and so we made a pact with ourselves, "Never again will we buy a car on time; it is not an investment, it is a luxury." So never again did we ever buy a car without cash. And we made it.

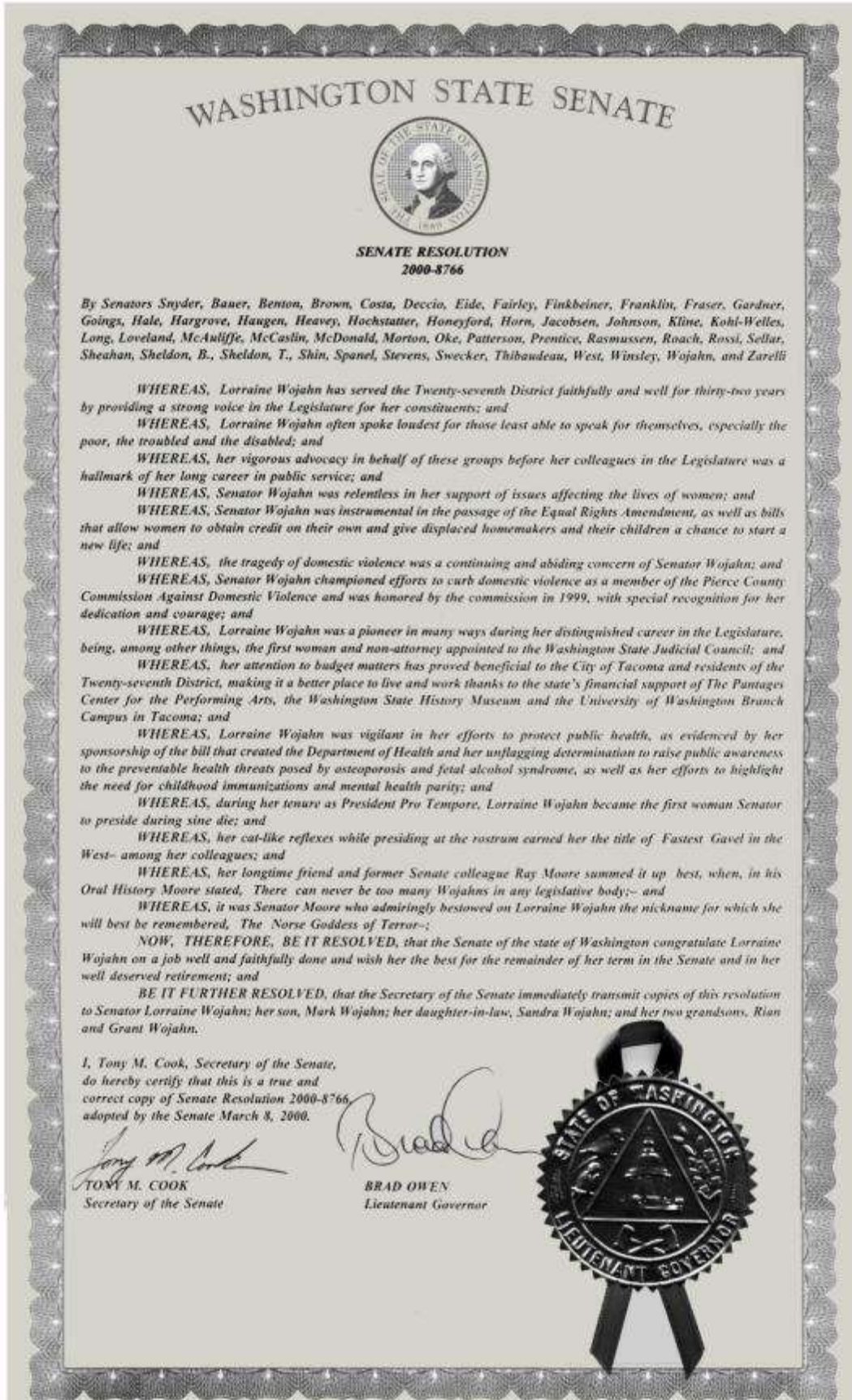
**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you think of that adage people often bring up that, "If you can manage a family's finances, you can manage the government." Is it really like that?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Absolutely right! Absolutely! You know where to cut. That's the reason women are really skilled. And they are not as emotional as men. They really aren't. They know that they have to do these things. My mother was always ill so I watched my family struggle. We always made it. We always had a nice home and we had to pay for the housekeeper and everything, but it was always tough. Every penny counted. You didn't throw away a penny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you carried that with you?

**Sen. Wojahn:** Always. Always.

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