



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials

Thomas Rollins Interview, 03/10/2009, 04/22/2009, 05/12/2009, 05/14/2009

Robert A. Martin, Research Director

Miller Center Documents¹

- Thomas Rollins Timeline.
- Thomas Rollins Fact Sheet.

Secondary Source Materials

- Thomas Rollins bio, <http://lexisnexis.com>.
- Adam Clymer, *Edward Kennedy: A Biography* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1999) pp. 408-409.
- Adam Clymer interview with Tom Rollins, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 04/21/1998.
- Burton Hersh, *The Shadow President: Ted Kennedy in Opposition* (South Royalton, VT: Steerforth Press, 1997) pp. 59.
- Terence Moran, "Kennedy Aide Undercuts Own Plan to Cash In," *Legal Times*, 11/28/1988.

Oral History Interviews

- Terry Hartle interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/11/2008.
- Mona Sofarty interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 07/16/2008.
- Nick Littlefield interview, Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 05/03/2008.

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THOMAS ROLLINS TIMELINE

Prepared by Bryan Craig

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 02/18/2009

- 1977-1978** Thomas Rollins ranks as one of the top debaters in the country for Georgetown University. He befriends Bob Shrum, EMK's future speech writer and press secretary, while at Georgetown. (Robert Shrum, *No Excuses: Concessions of a Serial Campaigner*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007, pp. 58-59)
- 1978-1979** Rollins serves as a research assistant for the Senate Judiciary Committee. Tom Susman is EMK's general counsel on the committee staff. Important issues that the committee works on include criminal code reform, D.C. representation in Congress, judicial nomination for women and minorities, Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, Illinois Brick Antitrust reform, conglomerate and oil company mergers, and court improvement/reform.
- January* EMK becomes chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.
- November* EMK announces he will challenge Carter for the Democratic presidential nomination.
- 1982** Rollins graduates from Harvard Law School. While there he works with Larry Tribe and meets EMK staffers such as Carey Parker. He is invited to talk about working for EMK on the Armed Services Committee, but he turns the invitation down. He goes on to be a law clerk and then practices law in Houston, Texas, at Susman, Godfrey & McGowen with Tom Susman's brother, Steven Susman. (Clymer interview with Tom Rollins, 04/21/1998)
- December* EMK announces he will not run for president in 1984.
- 1985**
- November* Rollins begins work as Democratic chief of staff and general counsel for the Labor Committee. (Clymer interview with Tom Rollins, 04/21/1998)
- On the 19th, the Labor Committee reports on a drug export ban (S 1848) co-sponsored by EMK. The bill lifts a ban on the export by pharmaceutical companies of drugs that have not been certified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (*1985 CQ Almanac*, pp. 302)
- December* Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and EMK propose the Employee Polygraph Protection Act prohibiting the use of polygraphs in the private sector. (*The New York Times*, 12/08/1985)

Over the protests of business groups and the health insurance industry, EMK's health insurance provision for laid-off workers survives the House-Senate conference for the budget bill. The so-called COBRA health insurance measure requires private employers with 20 or more workers to continue health insurance coverage for 18 months for laid-offs employees and for three years for the families of workers who die. The laid-off worker or the surviving family would have to pay the combined personal and employer premiums, but could do so at a low group rate. EMK coordinates with Rep. Fortney Stark (D-CA) and Rep. Henry Waxman (R-CA) to help his legislation to be passed. (Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy*, New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1999, pp. 383; *1986 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Washington Quarterly, Inc, pp. 229)

EMK announces in a televised statement that he will not run for president in 1988. He acknowledges the following day at a news conference that his decision may mean that he will never again run for president.

1986 Important issues that EMK works on in 1986 include trips to Latin America, Israel, and the Soviet Union, INF, Apartheid, Rehnquist and Manion nominations, immigration reform, economic aid to N. Ireland, Bradley-Gephardt tax reform, Superfund, Medicare deductible, Omnibus Health Act, infant mortality, catastrophic health insurance, and AIDS research.

April Ronald Reagan signs the Comprehensive Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) into law, which includes an EMK provision allowing employees who have left their jobs or been laid off to extend their health insurance benefits for 18 months. (*The Washington Post*, 03/29/1986)

Senator Lowell Weicker (R-CT) introduces a version of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Clymer, pp. 449)

May The Labor Committee approves legislation requiring health warning labels on alcoholic beverages. EMK votes for the bill after voting against a similar bill in 1979. The bill goes no further. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 266)

The Labor Committee rejects the nomination of Jeffrey Zuckerman to be general counsel of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. EMK leads the fight against the nomination, reportedly on the grounds that Zuckerman lacks the experience and commitment to civil rights. (Burton Hersh, *The Shadow President*, South Royalton VT: Steerforth Press, 1997, pp. 59; *1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 581)

June EMK and Hatch face a filibuster by Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC) over the Employee Polygraph Protection Act proposed last year. Thurmond argues that states should be left to permit or outlaw the procedure as they see fit. (*The New York Times*, 06/19/1986)

The Labor Committee approves EMK-sponsored legislation (S 2345) to improve services for AIDS victims. The bill, which calls AIDS the nation's "No. 1 public health priority," authorizes \$40 million in grants to public and private organizations for the development and expansion of support systems for AIDS victims. EMK says the measure would help "develop alternatives to long-term hospital inpatient services, which are proving inefficient and cost ineffective." The measure goes no further. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 261)

August On the 6th, the Labor Committee approves Clarence Thomas for another four year term as chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. EMK votes for Thomas. Rollins states, "There were no substantive grounds on which to oppose the nomination." (*The New York Times*, 08/07/1986)

On the 8th, the Senate passes an EMK sponsored amendment as he fights for local prevailing wages dictated by the Davis-Bacon Act. The amendment deletes the provision to increase the Davis-Bacon exemption threshold for Pentagon housekeeping jobs from \$2,500 to \$1 million. The Senate fails to pass EMK's second amendment deleting the threshold increase from \$2,000 to \$250,000 for Defense contracts. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 476-477, 35-S)

September After a coal mine fire in Wilber, Utah, Hatch calls for an oversight hearing into the record of the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). During the hearing, EMK criticizes the MSHA for not conferring with safety experts when changing labor policies. (Clymer, pp. 405)

On the 30th, Congress passes a human services bill (HR 4421) to extend programs such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) through fiscal 1990. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 244-245)

October On the 8th, Congress reauthorizes major volunteer programs through fiscal 1989. These programs include the Older American Volunteer Program and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), which helps low income people. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 245-247)

Congress passes omnibus health care legislation (S 1744). Rep. Edward Madigan (R-IL), Waxman, Hatch, and EMK put together the final package of health care bills. The legislation, among other things, creates a no-fault compensation system for the families of children injured by vaccines, takes steps to limit medical malpractice, allows for the export of drugs not yet approved in the U.S., requires states to create plans to meet the needs of the mentally ill, expands funding for Alzheimer's research, and creates a national commission on infant mortality. The bill also repeals national health planning legislation EMK sponsored in 1974. Despite "serious reservations" about the vaccine provisions, Reagan signs the bill into law. (*1986 CQ Almanac*, pp. 238, 241)

November The Democrats regain control of the Senate in the mid-term elections. Rollins works with Parker to set Labor Committee legislative priorities. (Clymer, pp. 408)

The Iran-Contra scandal breaks in the media.

On the 20th, Secretary of Health and Human Services Otis Bowen releases a report on catastrophic illness. Bowen makes recommendations including expanding Medicare to cover long term hospital stays. EMK remarks the report is a step in the right direction. (1986 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 260-261)

1987 Important issues that EMK works on in 1987 include fair housing, literacy corps, Irish immigration, Chernobyl, coal mine safety, minimum wage increase, minimum health benefits for workers, savings bonds for college education, satellite education, welfare-to-jobs incentives, G.I. bill of rights, nuclear aircraft carriers, Panama, Poland, and the Bork nomination.

In part as a result of the 1983 *Nation at Risk* report, which was a clarion call to dramatically increase attention to education, Rollins plays a role in hiring Terry Hartle, who is charged to develop an education agenda for EMK.

January EMK becomes chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, as well as the Judiciary's Immigration and Refugee Affairs Subcommittee. Rollins becomes the Labor Committee's Chief Counsel.

On the 6th, EMK and Senator John Melcher (D-MT) introduce S 210, a bill that establishes a federal insurance program to cover the elderly and disabled against catastrophic medical bills. The insurance plan would not be under Medicare, but under the Public Health Service, so the Senate Labor Committee would have jurisdiction. However, the Senate pushes for the plan to be under Medicare, and S 210 never leaves the Labor Committee. (1987 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 493-505)

March On the 11th, EMK holds hearings on mine safety. The hearings expose mining company influence over MSHA. Inspectors testify that MSHA are ignoring some safety recommendations. The hearings help bring new agents on board who are more objective and issue new safety regulations. (Clymer, pp. 409-410)

On the 20th, the Labor Committee reports on EMK's bill to amend the Job Training Partnership Act (S 514). It authorizes the payment of bonuses to states that develop programs to move long time welfare recipients into private sector jobs. The bonuses are estimated to be \$3,700 per person. The bill also allows states to redirect funds for summer jobs to disadvantaged youths. EMK states, "It is better for families to have income from work rather than welfare." The bill passes Congress in April. (THOMAS on S 514; 1987 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 557, 13-S)

On the 25th, EMK introduces S 837 to increase the minimum wage from \$3.35/hr. to \$4.65/hr. by 1990. After 1990, the wage would be indexed at 50 percent of the

average private hourly wage. In a press conference the next day, EMK states, “Through welfare and other safety-net programs, the government is subsidizing the payrolls of firms with low-wage employees.” (*The Washington Post*, 03/26/1987) Rep. Augustus F. Hawkins (D-CA) introduces a House bill to raise the wage to \$3.85/hr. by 1990. Hearings are done both in the Senate and House, but neither bill comes to the floor. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 682)

May During a Labor Committee hearing on AIDS, EMK prods administration witnesses on the need to publicize how AIDS is spread. EMK holds several hearings on AIDS in 1987. (Clymer, pp. 415)

On the 19th, the Labor Committee reports on S 538 that relates to plant closings. The bill requires plants with more than 100 employees to give at least 60 days notice before closing or a layoff of more than a third of its workforce. EMK and Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) work together to soften the initial bill to gain its passage. Originally, the required notice was for 180 days and it exempted companies with 50 employees or less. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 678-679)

June The Labor Committee unanimously approves an EMK-sponsored bill for AIDS treatment, research, and education (S 1220). The bill authorizes \$635 million for treatment and education and unlimited funding for research. Although Hatch backs the bill, it never reaches the floor. Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) vows to introduce a number of amendments, including proposals for mandatory AIDS testing of certain populations, if the bill reaches the floor. Helms’ own AIDS bill goes nowhere. Congress does increase funding for AIDS research and prevention to about \$1 billion under a continuing appropriations bill. (Clymer, pp. 416; *1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 516)

On the 5th, the Labor Committee reports on EMK’s Civil Rights Restoration Act (CRRA), which would overturn the Supreme Court’s ruling on *Grove City College v. Bell*. The bill holds that the discrimination ban for recipients of federal aid holds in all workplace departments, not just the one directly receiving aid, but it fails to reach the Senate floor. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 281-282)

On the 24th, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) introduces the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act Amendments of 1987 (S 1417). Along with 15 of his Senate colleagues, EMK co-sponsors the legislation, which becomes public law (PL 100-146) on October 29th. (THOMAS on S 1417)

July The Senate passes the plant closing notice with a 60-40 vote, but no further action is taken until next year. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 678-679, 33-S)

On the 22nd, the Labor Committee reports on S 887 which would reauthorize most Older Americans Act programs at 5 percent above present 1987 levels. It passes the Senate in August. (*1987 CQ Almanac*, pp. 514-515)

On the 28th, The Labor Committee reports on a bill to attract more students into the nursing field. It passes the Senate in August but goes not further. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 515)

September The Labor Committee debates S 492 banning construction companies from setting up subsidiaries to do the same work as the parent firm, or “double-breasting,” to avoid union contracts. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 677) The Reagan administration and Senate Republicans oppose this ban. Hatch argues that, from 1984 to 1986, a small minority of NLRB complaints dealt with illegal dual-shop operations. Hatch worries that many minority construction firms are subcontractors and use non-union workers to lower costs. The bill would pressure them to use a union, a level they could not reportedly afford. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 677)

On the 2nd, EMK produces a letter signed by major House Labor Committee leaders stating the “double-breasting” ban bill would not have a disparate impact on minority firms. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 677)

Fall EMK leads the fight in the Senate to defeat the Bork nomination.

October EMK secures a \$20 million federal grant for Massachusetts schools to promote satellite education. In general, the Senate Labor Committee approves more than \$1 billion increase in educational spending. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 527, 531)

On the 14th, EMK votes to re-instate \$600 million that is in the House bill to fund LIHEAP. The vote falls short of the required 60 votes. In a joint conference, LIHEAP is ultimately cut by \$300 million. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 454, 57-S)

The Senate passes a bill to provide the elderly with insurance against catastrophic illness. The measure entitles Medicare beneficiaries to increased nursing home coverage and an outpatient drug benefit and places limits on out of pocket expenses. The bill includes an amendment offered by EMK and Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) that guarantees that if one spouse enters a nursing home, the other would not need to become impoverished to be eligible for Medicaid. The amendment enables the at-home spouse to keep up to \$12,000 in assets and \$750 a month without those assets being counted in determining Medicaid eligibility. EMK argues that if the amendment is not passed: “150,000 spouses will be bankrupt, lose all their life savings.” (*The Washington Post*, 10/28/1987, 11/08/1987)

November Congress passes legislation to extend the Older Americans Act programs including the Meals on Wheels with increases every year through 1991. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 512)

December The Senate approves two EMK sponsored education programs - - an early intervention child-development program and the “Star Schools” program - - as part of a large \$8.3 billion education omnibus education bill (HR 5) to extend

until 1993 nearly every federal government program for elementary, secondary, and adult education. The measure authorizes \$25 million a year for an early intervention child-development program based on the “Beethoven” project in the Robert Taylor Homes, a Chicago low-income housing project. The legislation also creates the Star Schools program to provide grants to local and state education agencies, institutes of higher education, and school consortia to support education by satellite. The program authorizes \$100 million over five years for equipment purchasing and instructional programming. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 530-531)

EMK and Hatch introduce S 1904 that would ban lie detectors by employers in the private sector. It exempts government workers and allows polygraphs to be used during an investigation of a specific crime. There is no further action on the bill. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 22; *The Washington Post*, 12/03/1987)

The Labor Committee continues to debate S 492 on “double-breasting.” Committee Democrats along with Republican Senators Lowell Weicker Jr. (R-CT) and Robert Stafford (R-VT) defeat five Hatch amendments and table a sixth to pass S 492. The House had similar debates as Republicans argued their bill was forcing unions on workers who may not want it, but they lost when HR 281 passed earlier in June. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 677-678)

On the 2nd, EMK schedules a Committee meeting on “double-breasting,” but Republicans boycott the meeting to block action on the bill, thus only two senators (Metzenbaum and Weicker) show up leaving EMK short of a quorum. EMK agrees to hold the bill in committee this year if the Committee would come next week to finalize it. The bill is approved on the 9th. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 677)

On the 11th, Ann Dore McLaughlin is unanimously confirmed as the Secretary of Labor. During the Labor Committee hearing, EMK expresses concern about her lack of experience but nevertheless votes for confirmation. (1987 CQ Almanac, pp. 682, 72-S)

1988 Important issues that EMK works on in 1988 include *Grove City*/civil rights, Fair Housing, education issues including ESEA and minority medical education, the Older Americans Act, the Developmental Disabilities Act, infant mortality, Comprehensive Child Development Centers, child abuse, polygraph tests in the workplace, hunger, and health manpower.

January EMK manages the CRRA on the Senate floor and opens debate on it by saying that the Supreme Court decision “placed at risk” gains made by women and other disadvantaged groups. The only real fight over the bill deals with abortion. Abortion opponents oppose the effort to overturn *Grove City* because it might force recipients of federal aid to pay for abortions for their employees. The *Grove City* decision overturned federal rules that had required recipients of federal aid to

provide insurance to their employees that covered abortion if they provided insurance that covered pregnancy. The Senate passes the bill 73 to 14 (with only Republicans opposing it) but only after the insertion of a highly controversial provision, sponsored by Senator John C. Danforth (R-MO), that allows recipients of federal aid to refuse to pay for abortions. EMK says the bill “closes a major loophole in our civil rights law.” After the House passes the bill, Reagan vetoes it, but Congress overrides the veto 73 to 24. (Clymer, pp. 432-33; *1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 63)

February The Labor Committee (10-6) passes an EMK-bill (S 1265) that would require virtually all employers to provide health insurance to their workers. This is the first NHI bill to ever pass out of any congressional committee. According to *CQ*, this bill marks a change in tactics for EMK in his pursuit of national health insurance from a government-financed approach to a mandated-benefits approach. EMK explains the bill’s rationale this way: “For more than half a century, we have required employers to pay a minimum wage, to participate in Social Security, to contribute to unemployment compensation, and to purchase workman’s compensation insurance. In 1988, it is time to require basic health-insurance coverage as well.” EMK’s proposal, which serves as a model for a Massachusetts law supported by Governor Michael Dukakis, generates heated debate between Dukakis and George Bush during the presidential campaign. The bill does not reach the floor. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 313-314)

April The Senate (87 to 4) passes EMK’s AIDS research and treatment bill (S 1220). The measure authorizes almost \$600 million for AIDS education and treatment and unspecified amounts for research. EMK and Hatch try but fail to reach an agreement with Helms before bringing the legislation to the floor. Helms succeeds in attaching several amendments to the bill. One amendment, adopted after “furious exchanges” between EMK and Helms, prohibits federal funds from going to organizations that “promote or encourage” homosexual relations. Another requires mandatory AIDS blood testing for those convicted of drug- or sex-related crimes. Hatch supports an EMK-amendment that would encourage education programs to stress the value of a “single, monogamous relationship” but not prohibit education programs for homosexuals. Helms attempts to kill it but fails 29 to 61. After the vote, EMK says: “Finally we have declared war on the virus and not on the victims in our battle against AIDS.” Congress subsequently passes an omnibus health bill (S 2889) that authorizes \$270 million for AIDS education and \$400 million for testing, counseling, and health services for AIDS patients. After urging by Hatch, Reagan signs the bill in November. (Clymer, pp. 437- 439; *1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 296, 302-303)

EMK introduces a bill called “Smart Start” to extend early-childhood education programs to all preschool children. “If 1988 is truly the year of the child,” EMK says, “it is time to begin a comprehensive program of national investment in early childhood education equivalent to the Marshall Plan of the 1940s or the Mission to the Moon in the 1960s.” The \$2.25 billion bill does not make it out of the

Labor Committee. EMK's proposal is just one of a number of plans Congress considers in 1988 to provide education and day-care to the very young. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 348)

May On the 13th, EMK introduces a bill (S 2385) to revise and extend programs for primary health services for the homeless and immigrants including funding for community and migrant health centers and infant mortality. The bill becomes law in August. (THOMAS on S 2385; *1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 323)

Summer Reagan signs the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act, which includes EMK's and Mikulski's spousal impoverishment amendment guaranteeing that when one spouse goes to a nursing home the other does not need to become impoverished before Medicaid coverage will begin. The law is repealed in 1989, but the spousal impoverishment amendment is retained.

June The Labor Committee approves an EMK bill (S 2231) authorizing almost \$300 million for nurse-education programs. EMK argues that the bill is needed because "hospitals around the country have been forced to close beds and patient wards due to the nursing shortage." Congress passes a compromise nurse-education bill but Reagan vetoes it saying it duplicates provisions in the omnibus health bill. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 308-309)

Reagan and Democratic congressional leaders create the Bipartisan Commission on Comprehensive Health Care Reform. EMK is named as one of the 15 members of the commission, which is chaired by Senator John Rockefeller (D-WV). It is later renamed the Pepper Commission for Senator Claude Pepper (D-FL), who dies in 1989. The commission issues its report in March, 1990. (*The New York Times*, 03/03/1990)

On the 9th, Congress passes the Employee Polygraph Protection Act to limit use of polygraphs by private sector employers. The Senate version of this bill stems from S 1904 sponsored by EMK and Hatch. EMK's position throughout is that the polygraph tests are unreliable and should be limited. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 269, 8-S; *Wall Street Journal*, 03/04/1988, 06/10/1988)

On the 22nd, the Labor Committee begins revision on S 837 which would raise the minimum wage to \$4.65/hr. in three years. Rep. Pat Williams (D-MT) asks EMK for help, since his own House minimum wage bill (HR 1834) is in trouble. EMK changes the Senate bill to make the wage \$4.55/hr to gain Republican support. EMK also agrees to a wage increase for Puerto Rican workers, except under certain circumstances. Both substitutions are approved by the Committee and the bill comes to the floor without any Republican amendments. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 260-261, 54-S, 55-S)

On the 28th, EMK kills a final compromise effort between Metzenbaum and Senator Dan Quayle (R-IN) to revise the S 2527 plant notification bill. (*The Washington Post*, 06/30/1988)

July

EMK wins \$10 million for the Student Literacy Corps Program, which encourages college students to tutor people with limited reading skills as part of omnibus agency spending bill. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 710)

On the 6th, Congress passes the plant closing notification bill based on last year's modifications by EMK and Metzenbaum with enough votes to over-ride a veto by Reagan. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 213, 37-S)

On the 14th, the Labor Committee approves S 2488 which requires companies with more than 20 workers to provide employees up to 10 weeks of unpaid leave within a two year period for newborns and sick or disabled children. Also, employees can take up to 13 weeks in one year for their own illness. The Reagan Administration, business groups, and conservative senators oppose this leave as too expensive. The bill is pulled due to lack of votes. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 261-263)

On the 27th, the Labor Committee approves the Act for Better Child Care (ABC) bill (S 1885), which would allocate \$2.5 billion to help low and moderate income families for child-care, create health and safety standards for child care providers, and help states administer the programs. On the Senate floor, the bill is attached to an unpaid leave for parents of newborns and sick children. The bill is pulled due to lack of votes. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 365-366, 58-S)

September

The S 837 minimum wage bill dies on the Senate floor as Republicans try to amend the bill to include a training wage equal to 80 percent of the minimum wage for the first 90 days of hire. EMK opposes this amendment, and he offers an amendment to give full-time students 85 percent of the minimum wage. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 260-261, 54-S, 55-S)

On the 9th, the Senate Labor Committee confirms Lauro Cavazos for Secretary of Education. The Senate confirms him. (*1988 CQ Almanac*, pp. 344)

Fall

During EMK's successful re-election campaign his opponent, Joe Malone, attacks EMK for securing computer education funds for the state through pork barrel legislation. EMK responds: "Anytime time that I can get funding to help education, whether it's in Massachusetts, New England or the country, I'm going to fight for it. And you can put any label on it you want." (Clymer, pp. 443) GOP presidential candidate George H. Bush pledges to be the "education president" if elected. (*1990 CQ Almanac*, pp. 610)

October

An omnibus health bill authorizes the creation of a new institute for the study of deafness—the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communications

Disorders--at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on the same day that a separate bill (S 1727) creating the institute clears Congress. Reagan signs S 1727 into law on October 28th. EMK had originally argued that the existing National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke (NINCDS) would best accommodate new centers for the study of deafness. He contends that these centers “will get quickly to the heart of the problem and avoid spending millions of dollars for administrative costs that would be required for the start-up of a new NIH institute, money that might be better spent on research itself.” (1988 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 306-307).

Congress clears an EMK-sponsored plan to create tax-free savings bonds to finance education as part of a miscellaneous tax bill. The plan, which makes the interest on U.S. Savings Bonds tax-exempt if the funds are used to help pay tuition costs, targets low and middle-income families and gradually phases out the tax exemption for wealthier families, with an absolute cut-off at \$80,000. EMK’s original plan would have benefited families earning up to \$125,000 a year. EMK strongly urges increased support for grants, loans, and other direct aid calls savings bonds an “ideal investment” for education, safe, convenient, and simple. (1988 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 18, 280, 345-346)

1989 Important issues EMK works on include national service legislation (which is Littlefield’s first bill), the minimum wage increase, the Employee Pension Protection Act, Drug Free Schools Amendments, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Pepper Commission and NHI legislation. EMK is able to get his NHI bill out of the Labor Committee for a second time since becoming Labor chair in 1987. EMK also tours country/holds hearings on health issues.

January The Labor Committee unanimously approves Elizabeth Dole as Secretary of Labor. The Senate confirms her by a vote of 99-0 on the 25th.

On the 25th, EMK sponsors S 4 to raise the minimum wage to \$4.65/hr. over three years with no subminimum training wage. (1989 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 336)

On the 25th, EMK introduces a bill (S 110) to reauthorize family-planning programs under Title X of the Public Health Service Act for three years. It goes to the Labor Committee. (THOMAS on S 110; 1989 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 180)

On the 25th, the Child Care Quality Improvement Act (S 5), co-sponsored by EMK, is introduced in the Senate. It is another attempt to pass the ABC bill. (1989 *CQ Almanac*, pp. 203-217)

February Rollins leaves EMK staff and goes on to form the Teaching Company, a firm that produces taped lectures by college professors for students and teachers. Although he got the idea at Harvard, Rollins states he developed it while working on the Labor Committee. Rollins is replaced by Nick Littlefield. (Clymer, pp. 456; *The Washington Times*, 07/01/1991; *International Herald Tribune*, 02/16/1994)

- March* The Senate confirms Dr. Louis Sullivan for Secretary of Health and Human Services by a 98-1 vote with EMK voting in favor. (*1989 CQ Almanac*, 5-S)
- April* On the 4th, the Employee Pension Protection Act of 1989 (S 685), co-sponsored by EMK, is introduced. It restricts managers from dipping into pension plans for corporate takeovers and other transactions. The bill passes in 1990. (THOMAS on S 685; *1989 CQ Almanac*, pp. 350-351)
- May* Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is introduced in the Senate. (THOMAS on S 933)
- July* The Labor Committee (9-7) approves EMK's Basic Health Benefits for All Americans Act, which requires virtually all employers to provide health insurance to their workers and their dependents. The bill also creates a new joint-federal program along the lines of Medicaid to provide the unemployed with health care coverage by 2000. The measure costs the government an estimated \$3.3 billion and businesses an estimated \$18 billion a year. The bill never reaches the floor. (*1989 CQ Almanac*, pp. 171)
- Fall* The Berlin Wall comes down, as communism begins to fall in Eastern Europe.

THOMAS ROLLINS FACT SHEET

Prepared by Bryan Craig

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 02/20/2009

Positions w/ EMK:

- 1985-86: Staff director, general counsel to Labor and Human Resources Committee
- 1987-89: Staff director, chief counsel to Labor and Human Resources Committee

Other relevant experience:

- 1978-79: Research assistant to Senate Judiciary Committee
- 1982: Graduates from Harvard Law School
- 1982-85: Associate in Susman, Godfrey and McGowen in Houston, Texas (Steven Susman, a name partner in the law firm, is the brother of Tom Susman, who Rollins had worked with on the Judiciary Committee in 1978-79.)

Issues he worked on with EMK:

- 1985: COBRA Insurance passes.
- 1987-89: EMK's chairmanship of Labor committee; Rollins helps EMK develop a legislative agenda for the committee.
- 1986-87: Reauthorization for LIHEAP subsidizing energy costs for the poor and elderly.
- 1986-87: EMK holds hearings finding inappropriate mine company influence on the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).
- 1986-88: AIDS treatment and research sponsored by EMK.
- 1986-88: Passage of the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act.
- 1987-89: Movement to increase the minimum wage from \$3.35 to \$4.25/hr.
- 1987: Reauthorization for Older Americans Act including Meals on Wheels.
- 1987: Confirmation of Secretary of Labor Ann Dore McLaughlin.
- 1987: Job Training Partnership Act Amendment which gives bonuses to people who move from welfare to jobs.
- 1987-88: Civil Rights Restoration Act, which holds that the discrimination ban for recipients of federal aid holds in all workplace departments, not just the one directly receiving aid.
- 1987-88: Employee Polygraph Protection Act banning lie detectors by employers in the private sector except for use in an investigation of a specific crime.
- 1988: Confirmation of Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos.
- 1988: Act for Better Child Care (ABC) a major attempt to give poor families child care.
- 1988: Plant closing notification act.
- 1988: Family leave (an early failed attempt to gain family leave for workers with sick family and child care needs).
- 1988-89: Basic Health Benefits for All Americans Act (which is the first NHI bill to ever pass out of any congressional committee).
- January 1989: Confirmation of Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole.