Cooper: Good morning, Mr. and Mrs. Buck.

Buck: Good morning.

Campbell Buck: Good morning.

Cooper: I am Rhonda Cooper, here on behalf of the Political Science Department at Jackson State University, particularly with Dr. Byron D’Andra Orey, and we are very much interested in your oral history this morning, Thursday, February 18, 2010, here at the Capitol, which is just filled with excitement this morning. (laughter) So if I could get each of you to state your full names for me, starting with you.

Buck: I’m Kelvin O’Neil (spelling: ____________________________________________) Buck.

Cooper: OK. And Mrs. Buck.

Campbell Buck: I am Kimberly Lisette Campbell Buck.
Cooper: OK. And where were you born?

Buck: I was born in Tupelo, Mississippi, in 1961.

Campbell Buck: I was born in Jackson, Mississippi, 1972.

Cooper: OK. And have you lived in Mississippi your entire lives?

Buck: I am a native Mississippian, lived here all my life, for the most part. I did go to Kansas City and live there for a few weeks, really. (laughter) So it wasn’t a ___________________________ , but I did live there for just a few weeks, but primarily, I’ve lived all my life in Mississippi.

Cooper: And can you give us or share with us your educational background?

Buck: I’m a graduate of Rust College out of Holly Springs, Mississippi, and majored in mass communications, and that’s my educational background.

Cooper: OK. And what year did you complete your studies?


Cooper: OK. Mrs. Buck?

Campbell Buck: I have lived in Jackson, Mississippi, all of my life as well except when I’ve been away for school. I finished my undergraduate from Mississippi State
University in 1994, my graduate degree, my master’s, from Auburn University in 1996, and then my law degree was from The University of Mississippi School of Law in 2001.

Cooper: OK. And so since those times, ’97 I believe you—

Buck: Eighty-seven.

Cooper: Eighty-seven, I’m sorry, and 2001, you’ve been continuously here in Mississippi?

Buck: Yes.

Campbell Buck: Correct.

Cooper: And tell us about your public service, your careers here.

Buck: Well, as it relates to politics, my career in politics actually began when I was in Holly Springs as an alderman. I served two terms as a city alderman for the City of Holly Springs, and of course I guess if I wanted to talk about politics before that, my first experience with politics was working with the first African-American alderman for the City of Tupelo, Mr. Boyce Grayson Sr. (spelling:__________________). I worked with his campaign along with his son, and we were able to work to get him elected, and that was a very important point in my career as it relates to politics because it kind of encouraged me to really look at that as an option of something that I might want to do a little bit later down the road, so.

Cooper: What years was that?
Buck: This was back in—it's hard for me to go back. It had to be in the [19]80s, early [19]80s I would imagine, or no, no. Actually it was in the [19]70s.

Cooper: OK. That’s what I was thinking.

Buck: Yeah. (19)76 maybe, or something along that, in the [19]70s, midseventies. It’s kind of far to go back, but that work with him and that effort to have him be the first African-American alderman for a city like Tupelo, Mississippi, was really a very big deal for that area, and it was a big deal for me personally. And so working with that kind of encouraged me to see that these kinds of opportunities could present themselves, and I could be a part of that. And so I didn’t get involved with it any further than that in Tupelo, but once moved to Holly Springs and I started working at Rust and going to school at Rust, finishing at Rust, then I decided that an opportunity for running for alderman presented itself, and I ran. And I won on the first chance as an alderman and then was reelected.

Cooper: OK.

Buck: Um-hm.

Campbell Buck: My first foray into politics was actually when I was much younger. I come from a family that’s very politically-minded. My mother actually used to have a show on TV; it’s called Faces. She was the first—

Cooper: Who was your mother?
**Campbell Buck:** Ruth Campbell, Ruth ______________________ Campbell is my mother. And on her show she always had up and coming politicians, whether they were white or black, but they were always Democrat. And she always pushed them. In fact one of the newcomers at the time was actually Tyrone Ellis (spelling:___________________) who was in fact ____________________________________.

**Cooper:** ____________________________________________________.

**Campbell Buck:** But she really, really pushed.

**Cooper:** From Columbus.

**Campbell Buck:** Um-hm. She really pushed Tyrone on the show, so we were very active in campaigns. We were active in always canvassing, you know, whoever she wanted for mayor or governor. We were going to be out there going door-to-door. So growing up, we were always very active. We were active in trying to help with voter registration drives and things along those lines. But my first foray, as far as my own position, is actually the one I hold now. This is the first office I ran for, which was for the Mississippi House of Representatives the summer of 2007. So this is my first position as being a politician, as you say. So when I was elected, August of [20]07 and took office January of 2008.

**Cooper:** __________________________ that you’ve been in private practice?

**Campbell Buck:** I have. I have been in private practice. I was also with the city council, Jackson City Council for a while as their policy analyst. Now, before law
school, I worked with the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau where we did a lot of legislative work, as a matter of fact; in fact, pushing to get the convention center. (laughter) So I guess I can add that to the list as well. But I was very marketing—let me go back. I was public relations and then communications director for the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, so before law school. Then after that, I’ve been with city council, public policy analyst, and then private practice.

**Cooper:** So what actually made you want to engage in public service on this level?

**Campbell Buck:** On this level?

**Cooper:** As a representative.

**Campbell Buck:** You know, I’ll tell you. It’s really interesting. I go back to when I first went off to school, in fact probably senior in high school. One of the things you always heard from everybody was, “Don’t forget about us. Don’t forget about Jackson. Come back.” And everybody hears that. And actually when I think about it, the majority of my friends are not here. I love them. I’m proud of them. But they’re all in New York, California, Atlanta, DC. They’re doing great things, but you know, so often we don’t come back home.

**Cooper:** That’s right.

**Campbell Buck:** And it was one of those things to where I felt as though, “Now, I upheld my promise. I came back,” because the ________________ was always like, “Come back and do something for the community, and we’ll be behind you.” So it’s like, “OK. I’ve gotten my education. I’m back. I think who better to represent the area than
someone that was born and raised?” And I’m a true Jacksonian, (laughter) especially from my father’s lineage and to all of my life. And I felt, “I’m here. I’m concerned about the community. I think I should represent my community. So.” And that was a big, big push and big excitement, so. And it was a lot of fun. It was a lot of fun.

**Cooper:** The actual campaign?

**Campbell Buck:** It was. It had its moments. (laughter) I won’t go too far into that, but it had its moments. But I think what I found to be exciting was just that community connection. I mean, it’s kind of like, you know, when you’re part of the community, it’s like a family.

**Cooper:** It is.

**Campbell Buck:** And you’re like that baby. And so when you’ve grown up, and they’ve taken care of you, whether it’s from your church—I’ve been a member of Pearl Street African Methodist Episcopal Church my entire life. My church has been very politically active.

**Cooper:** ____________________________.

**Campbell Buck:** And so when you come home, your church is with you; your sorority is with you, you know, your family. I have a huge family. So it’s kind of like a big family movement. And so when you have all those people with you, and they’re behind you, you feel good about it, but you also don’t want to disappoint them.

**Cooper:** That’s true.
Campbell Buck: And so you want to be the voice for the people that have raised you because I tell people all the time, “I sit here because of people that raised me, from family to my teachers.” I represent all of them, so. And I’m very, very excited about, to have that opportunity and responsibility.

Cooper: OK. And share with us now your father’s name.

Campbell Buck: My father is Leon Campbell, Leon Campbell.

Cooper: Now, Representative, do you have a particular governing style? Or I guess, what do you colleagues, when they see you coming, (laughter) what are they anticipating?

Buck: Well, I think what I would like for them to anticipate, and I think they do get this from me, that I’m open-minded. I think I can approach any issue and approach it with the kind of open-mind that would allow both sides to be presented, and then from that, I can make an informed decision. I think, while we serve as Democrats in this process, I’ve often said that a good idea can come from a Democrat or a Republican, and a bad idea can come from either, as well. And so my philosophy and the way that I try to govern is to try to find common ground if there is some common ground. I don’t believe in compromising principle. I think there are some things that are principle, and it just doesn’t matter to me who brings an idea that’s contrary or contradicts that principle, I simply can’t be a part of that, if it does contradict that principle. So I try to stay in that regard.

Cooper: we were just talking about ideas
and what your colleagues think and feel when they see you coming. And you’ve shared with me that you’re open-minded.

**Buck:** Right.

**Cooper:** And I’m curious now. Do you serve your constituents based on things that they put before you, their particular requests, or is it kind of—as I’ve shared with my class—what you think, based on your judgment and experience, would better serve your constituents?

**Buck:** Well, I think you have to adopt a balance between the concerns that they share and express to you and the reality of being here at the capitol each day and knowing what the issues are that we’re faced with and what the realities are when it comes to the funding that we have to achieve our goals and stuff. And so I primarily have to rely on very solid information that I receive from the various agencies or from the various hearings, a number of ways we gain information about the issues that we face. I can tell you this, that each year the issues are pretty much the same. We know we’re dealing with education. We know we’re going to be dealing with higher education. We know that we’re going to be dealing with Medicaid, and we’re going to be dealing with corrections. The issues are pretty much the same, and there are some variances as relates to how we address them, and what will be a priority one year may not be the high priority the next year. We do know that for the most part, education is always going to be a top priority, and it should be. And so with that in mind, I come here each year, knowing that these are the issues that are primarily going to be within our responsibility to address. And so I use that information. And then I also like to try to, you know, talk back to my constituents back at home to find out what they are really concerned about, but I have a good idea what they’re concerned about because I live right there with them. Their concerns are
pretty much my concerns.

Cooper: Certainly.

Buck: And so we identify in that regard. I know who sent me here, and I know why they sent me here, and so I don’t ever forget that. And so I govern, and I try to conduct myself with that always in the back of my mind.

Cooper: And how many years have you been here, Representative?

Buck: Well, this is my seventh year. I’m on my second term and my second year. I’ve had the great opportunity at this time to be the chairman of the Universities and Colleges Committee, and that opportunity has presented some very, very interesting kinds of situations here, (laughter) especially this year.

Campbell Buck: Especially this year. (laughter)

Buck: Especially this year with some of the proposals that have been out there, but we think we’ve handled those issues very well. We think that with the consultation of other members of the legislature, working with the leadership and of course working with our institutions, you know, we think that we have taken the right approach, that they need to continue to be viable parts of our educational system, and we support that, and we rejected any idea that they have no place or that they should be diminished. And so with that in mind—

Cooper: And by “they,” we’re talking about the three historically-black colleges.
Buck: Absolutely, HBCUs [historically-black colleges and universities] that have been under, I think, attack this year, to some degree, from the standpoint that someone has suggested they be merged. Someone has suggested that they be called other things, and so all of these approaches have been, I think, counterproductive to where this state needs to go when it comes to education. Access, affordability, all of these kinds of things, flexibility are very important to residents in this state, being that we are perhaps the most uneducated state in the nation, according to every bit of research that is out there. And our per capita income is the lowest in the nation, according to that same research. And so quality of life, to me, is tied closely to educational attainment, and so we feel that having the opportunity to serve as chairman of the Universities and Colleges, we’re going to continue to push that agenda and reject any agenda that would diminish that in any kind of way.

Cooper: Thank you. _____________________________ to your constituents. And certainly since you—would you be considered—what do they call juniors or babies or (laughter) neophytes, what would be the appropriate term?

Campbell Buck: I think they would call you—it depends on if the speaker is speaking, and there are two of us, like for instance, they would normally say, “The gentlelady from Hinds.” Well, there are several of us, so if they want to distinguish between us, they probably would say, you know, “The junior lady from Hinds.” But typically they’re pretty kind to the women. They usually like to make that differentiation between the men more so than the women. I don’t know if it’s a ego thing (laughter) or what.

Cooper: What that’s about.

Campbell Buck: But usually they just give us our respect there.
Cooper: And so when governing, do you have a particular style as it relates to your constituents?

Campbell Buck: Well, I think I’m actually very, very similar to my husband. I’m known for being really open-minded. I have an open-door policy. I don’t mind speaking to anyone about anything. I’m not one that’s only going to talk to someone that looks like me. I’m not one that’s only going to talk to someone that’s in the same political party as me. I mean, I’m willing to come to the table with anyone and try to come up with ideas that are going to help everyone in my district and also for the entire state.

Cooper: And for the record—I’m sorry—your district?

Campbell Buck: My district is District Seventy-two. I represent Hinds and Madison Counties. And I think most of the work in the legislature is done by those of us that can kind of work across the aisle, as they say. I think those that may kind of sit on the extreme on one end or another, kind of cancel each other out. And so most of the work is done by those that can kind of say, “OK. I’m going to come to the table. I’ll meet with you. These are my issues. These are my concerns. What are yours? And let’s see if there’s some way that we can kind of meet in the middle and try to flesh out some type of legislation that can kind of help both of us.” I don’t think you’ll find any member of the legislature that would ever say that any bill is 100 percent perfect. It just does not exist. There won’t ever be a bill that’s totally what Democrats want, nor totally what Republicans want. But I do think working together we can try to get things in place that can kind of make everybody give you a little bit of something from both sides. And I think that’s really important. I choose, in the way I handle myself, not to just kind of cancel you out if you’re not someone from my party.
Cooper: ____________________________ on your side.

Campbell Buck: Right. I just won’t do that because you never know. And good ideas can come from anyone. And if it’s going to help the people that I want to help, then I don’t care who gets the credit. I’ll be with you. As far as constituents and voting some way, one thing I wanted to add to something that you-all were just speaking about, sometimes constituents will send you e-mails, and they’ll say, “I’m a constituent, and I want you to vote one way.” And I often have to e-mail them back and say, “You have to understand. For every constituent that sends me to vote yea on this, I have the same number of constituents that say, ‘Vote nay on this,’ so my vote can’t go that way.” What I try to do is I say, “I respect and appreciate the opportunity to serve, but that is also why you put me here, is for me to kind of go through all the information that’s before me,” because we’ll have more information than what the people get, than what the sound bites people get from the media. And so once I do that, I do my very best in trying to make the best decision that I think I can possibly make for everybody. Each decision I take, I really think it’s for the best. You won’t always please everybody in your district on every vote.

Cooper: That’s right.

Campbell Buck: That just won’t happen. And so I’m not one that’s just going to kind of be moved by, “Well, this group says this,” because sometimes the group that’s the loudest may not be the group that’s the largest number.

Cooper: Right. Or the rightest.
Campbell Buck: Or the rightest. (laughter) So for me, I don’t just go by that. I really look at all the facts. I look at everything I can get in front of me. I do my own research. And I do talk to you. Don’t get me wrong. I want to hear what every constituent has to say, but it’s not enough for you to just say, “I’m your constituent. I want you to vote this way,” because I have the same number on the other side. And at the end of the day, I really do; I say my prayer; I vote my conscience, and I let it be at that. I say, “It’s one thing if I leave this office doing the right thing, I can accept that, than leaving it, trying to please everybody else and not really doing what I think God has told me to do or what’s on my conscience, so.” And I’m fine with that. As long as I do what I think is right, it doesn’t bother me what happens in any election cycle thereafter.

Cooper: Well, as Representative Buck has shared, the privilege and pleasure of serving as the chairperson for the University and Colleges Committee, do you have any particular passions in serving your particular district, things that you’re hearing resonating among your constituents?

Campbell Buck: I do. Well, I am vice chair of Local and Private Legislation. I think this session, I think for just about all of us, especially those of us that are [Mississippi Black] Caucus members, has been university and colleges. I mean, you just could not get away from it. I don’t care where your district is. I mean, when you start talking about the _____________________________ we use here in the state being merged and losing funding, any district, any Caucus members, that’s going to affect you.

Cooper: Everybody’s got to respond.

Campbell Buck: Everybody’s got to respond, and everybody, I mean, in your district you have people that went to those institutions—
Cooper: Exactly.

Campbell Buck: —and had some investment towards them, so I think for this session, that’s been a lot of it, is dealing with the HBCUs, but also, from my district in particular, they’re always concerned about economics. Economic development is really, really big for my district. They always want to know, “What’s coming into the state?” But also, “What’s coming into our area? Will there be more job creations?” And locally speaking for the City of Jackson, how can we increase our tax base, because as you know, the City of Jackson is probably—oh, my gosh, don’t get me started. (laughter) Just do not get me started because we really have no tax base, absolutely none, and so on the local level, that’s usually what I get all the time. They say, “What are you-all going to do? What can we do to get more taxes off of some of the businesses? Too many people are getting a free ride of passage here.” And so those are more the things issuewise. Now, some of the things I’m concerned with personally will always be public education. This year I dealt with some bills dealing with domestic violence, which has always been an area of concern of mine, trying to stiffen some of those penalties. So you have your personal passions, and then you have things that you know that are specific to your district because every district is different, and that’s why I think you have to kind of govern yourself differently. My district is not his district. We look at things—some things will be universal for us, but some things are going to be different.

Cooper: And that’s just geographic?

Campbell Buck: And that’s just geographical, but not just geographical, but it’s also just how your district is made up, the people in your district because sometimes the interests will differ. And I also have to be concerned about others in my district, as well, that
everybody doesn’t look like me in my district.

Cooper: That’s correct.

Campbell Buck: And I’m not one, even though majority looks like me; I really do try to also hear their issues and their stance and things that are concerning to them, and so I think that’s really important, too. I mean, you try to represent your entire area.

Cooper: Well, would you say the interests may compete in terms of those that are in the Jackson area or Hinds County area versus those in the Madison County area?

Campbell Buck: I’ll say, ironically, so far, for everything that, I have not had much competition. Now, it may be something that may be more important to one side than the other, and you just won’t hear from them, like maybe for this HBCU issue. But issues like, it’s kind of like, “I don’t have a dog in that hunt.” (laughter) So whatever you need to do there, but usually everything else is pretty much because if you’re fighting for something for Jackson, Madison’s going to be happy because that means Jackson gets, too, and vice versa. So you really don’t have, so far, too many conflicting, for me, in my district, too many conflicting points of view, I guess, or where they want you to stand on certain things.

Cooper: Representative Buck, as we discussed a moment ago, you said there’s always going to be the issue of education, and of course it was front and center this session because of the proposals with regard to the 2011 budget. Now, have you met with any resistance with your colleagues? I mean, has there been any, I guess, noted divisive—well, I don’t want to use the term divisive; I don’t even like that term—noted differences
Buck: Well, you know, quite frankly, I would say that there has been some differences of opinion as to the value that some place in some of the HBCUs versus what I place in the HBCUs. I think that many of the colleagues here have their own interests because they have affiliations, or they have associations with some of the other universities. I happen to think that all of them are important, and I take the approach that none are any less important than the others. And I think we owe that. As I walk around these halls, and I think about the people that have served here, the ones that kind of were the pioneers before those of us who are here now, the African Americans in particular, some of the sacrifices they made, I just think that in the time when we have more African-American chairman, more African-American vice chairmen and members, we owe it to their legacy to hold up the banner and work for the kind of things that we know that they would be proud of, and education happens to be the top of that list because it is the catalyst by which all of us will be able to proceed and succeed in life. So what am I saying to you? That yes, they will have a different view, and I’m fine with them having a different view. My job is to fight for what I believe in and what I believe is important. And I will continue to do that, and I will try to do that within the process as everybody else here has to do, but of course, we know that as we move into this century that we’re in now, and in this new decade, that there are going to be some major challenges facing all of our universities and all of the state government in general. There’s a philosophy difference here. There are those that feel that government really has no place. And I think that’s a bad mistake because not only does government have a place when it comes to the social needs and welfare of their citizenry; they have a place to play and a role to play when it comes to the economics of this state, with the education. I mean, the government should be a partner to business. The government should be a partner to individual success. And those who think that the only answer is cut, cut, cut, cut, they think they’re hurting
particular segments of the population, and I think they’re wrong. I think when a large segment of your population is in poverty, underserved, unprepared, then it affects everybody. You’ll pay for it one way or the other. And if we can get some people to understand that philosophy: it’s better to invest early with education and other things that would be beneficial to make people more independent so they can contribute to the process, you’re better off. But we have different philosophies when it comes to that, and so we have to work within that. We don’t have the majority here, so we have to work within the system that says, “It takes a majority vote on most issues and a three-fifths majority in other issues.” And so knowing that, you have to be able to compromise; you have to be able to work with others, but again, you have to be able to maintain some things that are principle to your own person.

**Cooper:** So do you have greater challenges, Representative Buck, as the chairperson than you had before you assumed that position?

**Buck:** No question about it, it’s a lot more work involved. (laughter) It is more challenging because as a chairman, while I was sitting as one of the regular colleagues, so to speak, I could have my own view, but now I have to listen to views on both sides, try to analyze what is the best approach to take, try to maintain my own principles in that, and of course then you have the responsibility of looking at all these bills and deciding which bills should be brought forward and which bills would do more harm than good. And so as chairman, you go through that process, but I rely a lot on colleagues to kind of work together, to talk to and get advice from. I think that is the best approach. I don’t think any one person, whether it be the governor or whoever, should have the monopoly on the ideas. And so with that said, that’s why I can reject a governor who says that his ideas are the only way that we should go or anybody else that would have that approach because we are in a democracy, whether some want to realize it or not, and this
democracy is made up of diverse people, whether people want to accept that or not. I’m not going to be concerned a lot about that, but I would say to you that at the end of the day, when it’s all said and done, my conscience is clear if I know that I’ve done the best that I can do for the state of Mississippi, and for me the residents of District Five, who I represent.

Cooper: And how do we deal with this, just as you said, Representative Buck, the proposals to cut, cut, cut. Now, the citizens of Mississippi would think, “We just don’t have the funding to support all of these schools.” So how do you respond to that when that may be something that you hear from your constituents, “Well, we don’t have the money, so why do we need those?”

Buck: That sounds good politically. People can stand up and talk about what they are not going to do, and, “We’re not going to raise anybody’s taxes.” But if you have a situation where you don’t raise anybody’s taxes, but students at every college in the state of Mississippi are going to face, and their families are going to face higher tuition rates, you’ve just raised the family’s costs. That’s the same thing. You’ve just simply transferred the responsibility from yourself over to individuals.

Cooper: Who can’t necessarily bear it.

Buck: Who can’t really—

Campbell Buck: Exactly.

Buck: Yeah, meet those demands. And so you’ve boasted, but you’ve also put people in a position where they now cannot go to college. What happens when a person can’t go to
college? They begin to have to deal with living a life of dependency many times. They can’t get the kind of jobs, the employment. They can’t do the kinds of things that would make them more productive because they’ve been denied the access to education because you’ve stood up and talked about you’re cutting and you’re not raising anybody’s taxes. So what am I saying? We have to cut. We understand that, but there ought to be a balanced approach to raising some revenue so that we don’t cut to the point where we undermine the very economic viability that this state will need to move and progress with other states and other nations in the future. So that approach is just really nothing but politics, grandstanding, gimmick, as far as I’m concerned. We know what the realities are. We know what is important, and there are some things that you can cut to the point where you’ll do more harm than good. And so that to me is not an option that we should be looking at. We should take a balanced approach of revenue, looking for ways to raise more revenue using some of the rainy-day fund, the trust fund, all of these different standby funds. We are in this downturn, and then move forth from there.

Cooper: How do we balance our educational considerations with those of our seniors? Because we’ve got just a lot of people that are moving into senior status, and they have to be cared for as well. So what do you say to that Representative Buck?

Campbell Buck: OK. Now, tell me that one more time. Exactly what were you saying?

Cooper: Well, we’ve talked about we have to have our economic foundation.

Campbell Buck: Right.

Cooper: But then we have a large number of citizens who are seniors now.
Campbell Buck: Right.

Cooper: And they have to be cared for. So how do we balance those budgetary or fiscal concerns?

Campbell Buck: OK. Those are going to be more concerns out of Medicaid, then, and our nursing homes. In fact we had some appropriation debates yesterday. Well, again, there was some debate yesterday that were saying we wanted to kind of take some funding away from our in-home care and from our care of if an individual wants to stay home and the money that we give that person versus them being in a nursing home. Well, it’s pretty simple to understand that. You save money when you have a family member that’s going to stay home. The money that the state gives through Medicaid funding for that does not near about compare to what you’re giving to a nursing home. So some of that debate was interesting because ___________________________. Some people wanted to kind of sell it to us like, “Well, no. You’re actually going to save more if you send them to the nursing home.” Of course you have to realize what the underlying issue there may be. It’s business. __________________ some of these businesses wanted to cut down some of their bottom line, which is just not true. I think we’ve got to, again, be concerned about people. People are not products. We can’t just be concerned about just putting them away somewhere for some foundation or for some entity or some corporate entity to make money. And that’s basically in some situations what a nursing home is. Beds mean money. If the beds are filled, that’s money for somebody. It’s a business. So again, you’ve got to be concerned about the social need of those individuals. You’ve got to be concerned about the social need of those families. Something’s got to be done about trying to help people that do want to work and stay home. Something’s got to be done about the funding to take care of those individuals because if you get to a situation to where you have someone that has to stop working,
again, now you’re dealing with someone else who’s going to be impoverished.

**Cooper:** That’s right.

**Campbell Buck:** So that’s going to go to our welfare rolls, again. And so it’s like a cyclical effect. I mean, it’s just like if you stop people from being able to be educated, what’s going to happen there? If you stop people from being able to work because they’ve got to take care of loved ones, what’s going to happen there? You’re not helping anybody. In fact, you’re going to make the situation far worse in the long run.

**Cooper:** Representative Buck, I know you’ve got to leave us, but I cannot have this complete without you-all sharing with (laughter) me—and I’m going to start with you, Representative Buck—how you-all came to be husband and wife and serving the state of Mississippi. (laughter)

**Buck:** It was all such a blur, a whirlwind, and I’m still trying to figure out how that all happened. (laughter) But I tell you this much; I’m very delighted that it happened, and I have the great opportunity to meet my lovely wife Kimberly. She is absolutely a gorgeous, intelligent, just vibrant lady that I love very much. We met here on the grounds of this capitol. I had been here of course for one term, and of course she joined me in her first term and my second term. And as a result of that, we had a couple of lunches with some friends, some mutual friends, and began to communicate. Then we ended up having a dinner on our own (laughter) at a local restaurant with a little candlelight and all of these kinds of things.

**Cooper:** Some romance!
Buck: Yeah. And I guess the rest is pretty much history. I saw something in her that really caused me to think about life all over again, so to speak. And it’s been wonderful. We have been married now a little more than a year, about a year and a half, actually.

Campbell Buck: Um-hm.

Buck: And we have two little daughters. Of course I had been married before, and I had three children then with my first wife. And now we have a blended family, and it’s working well, and so that’s pretty much the story. And everything has been a whirlwind since. Everybody always asks us, how do we manage, me living in Holly Springs, and she living here? And so we’ve been able to do that well with our commuter marriage. And I’m just as in love as the first day, (laughter) and I said on October the eighteenth, (laughter) I’m __________________________. (laughter)

Cooper: Thank you so much. Now, I know you’ve got to leave.

Buck: I’ve got to run.

Cooper: And Representative Campbell Buck, can you continue just for a little while?

Campbell Buck: I can continue a little bit. I was trying to get to this press conference, but I’ll continue a little bit longer with you.

Cooper: OK. Is there anything you care to add to what your husband said?

Campbell Buck: I’ll tell you something funny because we women have more funny stories to tell (laughter) when it comes to romance. The first meeting that we had, in fact,
when we were getting sworn in in January, there was a meeting. We had just taken a
speaker’s vote, but there was a meeting discussing who we were going to select for
speaker pro tem. And in that meeting—and I’m the type of person that I like independent
people. (laughter) I don’t like people that are like sheep, that just do what they’re told.
And so it was interesting because in this meeting, some comments were made, and
everybody was kind of like, “Yes. We’ll do that. We’ll do that. We’ll do that,” coming
straight down the line. Then I hear this voice in the back that loudly said, “Don’t count
my vote like that. I’ll vote the way I want to vote.” And I turned and looked. (laughter)
In my head, I was thinking, “Well, this isn’t going to work for me, either, because I like to
think for myself. I mean, I’ll hear what you have to say, but don’t just tell me what to
do.” And so I turned, and I looked, and I saw him, and I’m thinking, “Now, that was
pretty interesting. He’s standing up for himself.” And literally the entire room just kind
of looked like, “What?” He said, “No. Don’t count on my vote. I vote the way I want to
vote.” (laughter) And so that really stood out to me, and from that we did develop a
friendship, and we do find ourselves pretty much down the line on the same side with
most issues. I mean, we think a lot alike, and so of course there was some common
ground there, and there was some comfort there in just being colleagues. But I tell them
that story all the time because that was my first impression of him, and I thought, “Now,
he’s a strong individual.”

Cooper: I like that.

Campbell Buck: “And he’s going to stand on his own two feet and say for himself. I
like that. I like that.” (laughter) And I think that’s why he’s also so good as chair of the
University and Colleges, now. I mean, he’s not going to be pushed over by anyone, from
any side. I mean, he’s really going to do what he thinks is best for the institutions and for
the people of the state. And I think that goes a long, long way because he’s a very
principled man, and he stands by his principles, and he will never lessen on his integrity for anything or anyone, so. And those are the things that really, really made me fall in love with him, so. And like he said, and from there, it really was a whirlwind. I’ll be honest. If someone had told me that I would have met someone the way that I did and dated as short as I did and got married—because that’s so not my personality. I mean, I was from a very—you know how we attorneys are.

Cooper: Um-hm.

Campbell Buck: Stuff supposed to happen to us supposed to take so much time, and then you start talking. That’s how I just thought. And that’s my life. And so that was like a total ripple in the . But I think that’s the way God works sometimes. He shakes you up. He shakes you up.

Cooper: He has to make it loud to get your attention.

Campbell Buck: Yeah. Yeah, he does.

Cooper: That voice.

Campbell Buck: He does that voice, that voice. It did it. And I hadn’t looked back since, so it’s been a blessing. It has.

Cooper: And have you faced any particular challenges as a black female in the House?
Campbell Buck: Well, I think you do. As we all say, we have a double whammy. One, we’re black, and then we’re female. And that’s always an issue. I mean, this is still a very much so, an old, boys’ club. Not only is it an old, boys’ club; it is an old, white boys’ club. (laughter) Let’s just keep it real.

Cooper: __________________________________________________________

Campbell Buck: So. And when the changes came, as we so often see, and not knocking our strong black brothers, but the change typically goes from men. Then when we do start allowing some of them __________________________, they’re going to be men, and we’re kind of like the last to kind of get on that totem pole. And so it is a difficulty, but at the same time there’s a lot of strength within those of us African-American, female legislators. We do stand really strong together, and I think not only just African-American, but just women, period, in the legislature have a unique voice. And I think we need to be here because I’ve heard some say that they don’t like it when some, legislative women in power say, “Well, our concerns are about children or domestic violence.” I don’t take that as making us weak. I mean, I understand. I’m concerned about other issues as well, about the economy and jobs, and I get that, but I’m also not one that has to make certain stances just like and look strong and not weak because I am concerned about our children. I am a woman. I don’t have a problem with that. I embrace that. And I’m a mother, so I am concerned about our children. I’m concerned about our elders. I’m concerned about the quality of life that individuals have in the state and how what we put in law affects that. So that’s __________________________ to me, and especially now with domestic violence. That is just really, really huge, and I just don’t think you would have the movement that you’ve got even nationally if women were not at the table.
**Cooper:** I understand.

**Campbell Buck:** And not saying that every man is still in the Dark Ages and doesn’t get it, but it just would not be something that I think would just be full front ________________ and that they would move on. And so I think it’s important for there to always be diversity whether it’s in politics or higher ed or ________________ or business. You need not only of course white and African American and everything else, but you need women. I mean, we have a very unique perspective. There are things that, especially black women, that we’ve gone through that no one else has gone through.

**Cooper:** That’s exactly right.

**Campbell Buck:** Sometimes our black brothers don’t even understand what we’ve gone through.

**Cooper:** Have yet to experience.

**Campbell Buck:** Have yet to experience.

**Cooper:** Or if they ever will.

**Campbell Buck:** Or if they ever will. They don’t even always get what we go through, and so it’s important for us to be there and for us to be strong in our voice and to not just assimilate. I think sometimes that happens, too. When we get to certain positions, we want to act like the men. (laughter)
Cooper: That’s right.

Campbell Buck: Or we just want to agree with what their policies are. Well, no. That’s not why I’m here. God created me this way for a certain reason, and so I’m going to be concerned about the things that I should bring to the table and that people need to take notice of.

Cooper: So as an individual or as a couple, have the Bucks been able to build coalitions among your colleagues?

Campbell Buck: I _________________. I think both of us, again, because we’re really good about really willing to work with anyone, like I said, as long as you’re genuine and you’re honest—I can speak for my husband and myself—we don’t have a problem with that. Now, we can disagree, and I don’t have a problem with disagreeing as long as you come in a respectful manner. Now, I don’t do well with (laughter)—there’s just a way you’re supposed to come to me now. But as long as it’s respectful, we can agree to disagree. I don’t have a problem with that. But if you’re willing to even try, then neither one of us has a problem, meeting with you and sitting at the table. And I think because both of us are like that, and we’re really respectful to everybody, and we do understand that people are different. I mean, they just are. We have our perspectives; we’re black women. Well, I also understand, then, that a white man that may be in his sixties that grew up in the Delta—

Cooper: Exactly.

Campbell Buck: I have to even give him some credit for understanding why he doesn’t get it. (laughter) You know what I’m saying?
Cooper: I do.

Campbell Buck: I have to accept that I can’t just get mad and want to scream, “Why don’t you get it?” Because guess what? You’re coming from a certain era; you’re coming from some things that were even taught to you, that you thought were normal, so I know this is difficult. Now, let’s try to accept that it’s difficult for you, but let’s try to make some movement. And so—

Cooper: For the people that we have to actually serve.

Campbell Buck: For the people that we have to actually serve and for both, for ourselves, as well. We can’t just be in our own, little, glass house and just only want to deal with what we see and what we are used to. You have to step outside yourself and understand other individuals, so because I think both of us are really good about doing that, I think we do work well with other members across the lines. We really do. And I think we respect others, and because of that, I think we’re well-respected as well.

Cooper: OK. So right now, today, in your service, what would you tout as one of your greatest successes?

Campbell Buck: Ooh, that’s interesting. I actually would go two things. Children First Act, which my husband was really the more lead on that, while I was a big supporter of it. And I’ll be honest, some especially Caucus members that supported Children’s First took a lot of flak. Children’s First was an act that really was a strong piece of legislation that basically said under no uncertain terms, “Something’s got to be done. If our children are failing, if you can’t do the job, somebody else wants to do the job.”
Cooper: That’s in laymen’s terms.

Campbell Buck: Um-hm. Basically, not to just break down the bill because it’s a huge piece of legislation, but it means after so many years, if you’re the superintendent of a district, and you have failing schools in your district, then we’re going to authorize the state board to come in and remove you from that district. For principals, if you continue to have a failing school, we’re going to come in. Something’s got to be done. And the reason we got flak is because the debate was, “Well, this may unfairly impact African Americans that may have these jobs.” And don’t get me wrong. I’m very concerned about that as well, and I will be watching to see if that happens, but now, even if you are my African-American brother or my African-American sister, if you are dropping the ball, you have got to go. And I just strongly believe that. I am fine with supporting us if you are doing the job because me trying to save you because it’s not like you’re over Madison, not like you’re over ______________________________ children. So my thing is, “You’re over my child. And so if you are dropping the ball, it does not really matter to me what you look like because I’m concerned about those children.”

Cooper: Well, and you’re not manifesting the proper interest.

Campbell Buck: Exactly, exactly. So I mean, and that’s basically what Children First is, basically really making everybody accountable because we’ve always made teachers accountable. We’ve always had parameters in place so we can kind of remove you ______________________________, but this piece of ______________________________ really says, “Everybody’s got to be accountable.” Superintendents ______________________________.

Cooper: Administration.
**Campbell Buck:** Because it’s something wrong if you’re a superintendent and the majority of your district is consistently failing, you’re the one that hires the principals. You’re the one that oversees the teachers. I mean, so you’re responsible. I mean, this is like if you’re working for Butler Snow (spelling:______________________________), if you kept losing every case and kept dropping the ball, and all your clients kept calling the shareholders and the partners that you’re dropping the ball, guess what they’re going to do with you. (laughter) __________________________________________________________________________

**Cooper:** Got to go.

**Campbell Buck:** You’ve got to go. Something’s got to change. And so Children First, I still stand by it. It’s not perfect. It doesn’t have everything in there that I think I would like to see, but there’s no such entity as a perfect bill, but I’m very proud of that. I’m very proud of some domestic violence legislation that I fought really, really hard for this year to get out and also a stalking bill, which was really, really big. And those are just areas to where I still—other states are moving forward, but again we still have certain ways that we look at stuff in the South. There’s certain things in the state that we still kind of think should be hush-hush, or it’s a family situation; let others deal with. I mean, you’ve got to understand; we had someone on the floor this year that wanted to remove every ground of divorce. So this is the state we’re still living in. We literally had a member that stood up and said, “I want to make an amendment to the divorce code basically saying, ‘Remove all grounds,’ because it’s not biblical. The only reason you should be able to get a divorce is if ____________________ with adultery because that’s the only thing that the Bible speaks to.” Now, just think about that. (laughter) Just think about that. ______________________________ attorney
If that had gone forward, think about what that would have done. So that’s still the mind-set here. Again, just to give you an example of the mind-set, I tried to get some bills introduced, not this session but last session, dealing with gaming. I mean, again, we’ve allowed gaming to come into the state, so my bills were dealing with that we should be offering gaming courses at some of our junior colleges, especially the ones on the Coast and at USM that are close by the gaming because think about this: each casino that comes in, most of the time their top management, they go across state line to get them because they say we don’t have the individuals that have these skills. I mean, there’s a whole course ___________, and you would think, “This is a big deal.” Right? We would want to educate our own people so they can be over our own industries that we brought here.

Cooper: That’s right.

Campbell Buck: That was, you would have thought it was an abortion bill. I mean, it looked like a bloodbath. (laughter) I was at the ______________ of the House. It was like a bloodbath.

Cooper: What is Kimberly trying to do?

Campbell Buck: Right. (laughter) Because any time you mention gaming, which it still amazes me how they ever _______________ gaming before I got here. And I’m still amazed how that happened because the attitude is still so much that it _______________. It’s not biblical. It’s just wrong. I’m like, “But you allowed them to come.”

Cooper: It’s here.
Campbell Buck: So if they’re here, our people need to be able to have those top jobs and not just be the services or the parking attendant. They need to be the directors. They need to be in a head office. Let’s _______________ this. So that’s just to give you a taste of what we (laughter) deal with sometimes, so because that’s still kind of how we look at ________________, when you start talking about where it may be something that New York would have in a legislative session that no one ________________________ stalking bill. OK. It was ________. But here it was like, “Well, I mean, what if she’s just playing? If she just wants to get him upset, or she’s just mad at him because he stayed out too late, and so she’s going to call and say he’s stalking her?” These were literally some of the questions I got when I was _________________. (end of track one of two; beginning of track two of two) And so it just shows you how, again, it’s important for women to be at the table because we got to disseminate the correct information. It’s not about somebody playing. Most women are not playing. And we’re talking about a course of conduct, and so you really sometimes have to break down ________________ because many times members have not really read all the bills. (laughter) So they’ll just see the title, and they’re like, “Oh, please. This is false.” And like, “No. No. No. We’re talking about true, credible threats. We’re talking about a course of conduct. We’re talking about someone parked outside of their house, parked outside their work. I mean, just a whole host of things. This is an issue, and it’s a growing epidemic.”

Cooper: It is.

Campbell Buck: But luckily we did get it passed, but it does take that because initially you had everybody up on their feet like, “Oh, we don’t need this. This is _________________. This is _________________________. Is this really a problem?”
Again, that’s why it’s important for women to have those seats. And on other issues is why it’s important for black women to have those seats. So just coming back to your question, I think we serve a vital role for all the citizens for the state of Mississippi because we’re concerned about—even those of us that have been fortunate to be educated and been fortunate enough to even assimilate into what they call “corporate America” and to have our cushy jobs, we still know that everybody is not living like that. Most of us are not, especially in the state of Mississippi. And so we’re concerned about our other sisters that for whatever reason, however she was brought up, may be single and is struggling with six children to raise. We’re still that woman, too, and we’re connected to her. And so again, it’s important for our presence to be there because we have to stand for her because she’s not able to.

**Cooper:** She’s not at the table.

**Campbell Buck:** She’s not at the table. So I think it’s important that you continue to have more of us that are there, and those of us that aren’t just going to (laughter) assimilate.

**Cooper:** Right, turn that deaf ear to that young lady.

**Campbell Buck:** Turn that deaf ear to that young lady because I think sometimes people want to put you in a box. I don’t want to say you’re going to be that Angela-Davis-fight-the-power militant, or you’re the sellout. And that gets disturbing to me. Do we have people that may fall into the extreme categories? Well, of course. Yes, we do. But then sometimes people have to understand; just because I may not look like Angela Davis and I’m not going to be fussing and fighting and cussing and yelling and throwing does not mean I’m not effective and does not mean I’m not a sellout because sometimes I can get
more stuff done my way than what this one over here can get done their way. And so we have to understand how to respect each other and give each other some room to try to do what’s right and what’s best because everyone has a unique voice. And then I think sometimes it takes even the two extremes to be at the table. It takes all of us to move forward. I mean, we’re not all the same. We don’t all come from the same background, but it takes everyone to be there, but I think women especially have to be cognizant of when you get in certain roles to hold your ground, to hold your ground.

Cooper: So you find a lot of the work that you do is educating your colleagues?

Campbell Buck: It is. It is. That’s a lot of it. That’s a really, really good way (laughter) of putting it. That’s a really, really good—

Cooper: _____________________________

Campbell Buck: —way to put it. It is. You’re educating the colleagues, too; sometimes issues that they don’t even know exist because again, you have to understand—

Cooper: Where they’re coming from.

Campbell Buck: ___________________________. “I know you don’t get it!”

Cooper: Know nothing about stalking.

Campbell Buck: “You don’t know nothing about this. But let me tell you about it. And even with education you don’t get it. You-all live in the private sector, so you don’t get
this. You don’t get why education is important because your family always had money. Everybody went to Ole Miss. You don’t get why Valley’s important to the Delta.” So you’re right. It does take education, but you also have to be one that wants to educate. You can’t just be so quick to get angered by it and just mad because once you get angry, the other side’s going to shut down. They’re not going to hear anything that you say.

Cooper: Do you see that a lot?

Campbell Buck: And you see that sometimes. You do see that sometimes from all sides, not just one side over the other, from all sides, so you have to be able to engage the conversation and keep it going and keep people’s ears open because if you can keep them focused on you and engaged, you’ll be amazed the room that people will really be willing to make and the change they’ll be willing to make. Now, some, you can count them out. (laughter)

Cooper: You can count them out. (laughter)

Campbell Buck: It doesn’t matter, and they just have a certain spirit in them, and again, you accept that. I say, “That’s the spirit you got! And I’m going to move on down the line.”

Cooper: I got to move on. (laughter)
Campbell Buck: That’s right. As my grandmother used to say, “Don’t waste your time. When the devil already got somebody, you pray for them to keep on going. You get the soul you can save.” Because some of them already gone; you can’t save everybody, and you keep on going. (laughter)

Cooper: OK. I got that. Now, just share with us, this press conference that your husband had to attend.

Campbell Buck: OK. This is actually our junior colleges press conference, and it’s really nothing major. We had our junior college appreciation luncheon day before yesterday, as a matter of fact, the convention center, so this is just their press conference, and they, just for appreciation of them, letting them know that the legislature is in support of them, which we really are. I mean, our junior colleges, we so often speak about the universities, but our junior colleges are a lifesaver. I mean, to some extent—I don’t want to say ______________________________, but to some extent, in some ways, they’re almost even more important than our senior universities because there are individuals that are going to go to junior colleges that if they did not have that, they would have nothing. And I mean, even if they just do those two years, it still—I believe the statistics said a two-year degree still allows them to have like a eighty-five-hundred-dollar-difference increase in what they’ll make at jobs than someone that just had a GED [General Educational Development diploma] or someone that just had a high school diploma. They get Workforce Training. I mean, because everybody’s not college-bound. That’s just not going to happen. And that, too, is some legislation that we brought up this year is trying to streamline and help them understand that everybody’s not college-bound. Everybody’s not going to law school, medical school, or becoming an engineer. I understand that. And sometimes I think almost too much focus is on turning everybody out to be that. That’s not going to happen. And sometimes when you do that, you have
individuals that, they’re going to shut you down because they know that’s where there
may not be their capabilities or may not even be their interests, but I still think everybody
has the right to be able to have a fulfilling life and be able to be self-sustaining. And if
we can get them in Workforce Training and at least get them to the junior college level,
they can still have nice careers to where they can take care of themselves and have things
in life that all of us want to have. So that’s important, too, and I think we have to be
concerned about that because, again, everybody isn’t aiming to be in the White House,
like Michelle Obama, one day. And there’s nothing wrong with that. It’s nothing wrong
with that. I’d still rather them to have some training and be employable than not because
when they’re not, they’re going to be an issue for society, for the rest of them, either
again, Welfare—we have to take care of them—or the criminal justice system is going to
be calling them. And that happens, as well.

Cooper: Which is as costly.

Campbell Buck: Very costly, very costly, so.

Cooper: Well, I know I’ve taken up a good bit of your time, and you wanted to get to
that press conference. Now, I just want for the record: who of your colleagues do we
credit for this power marriage (laughter) between Kelvin Buck and Kimberly Campbell?

Campbell Buck: It’s not even a colleague. It’s actually one of the lobbyists, Camille
Young (spelling: ____________________________). (laughter) Do you know
Camille by any chance?

Cooper: I’m not sure if I do.
**Campbell Buck:** Camille is actually, in my opinion, one of our top—well, I’ll say our top African-American female lobbyists. I’m very, very proud of Camille. Camille and I were actually roommates at Mississippi State together, so we’ve been friends a long, long time. And believe it or not, you’re right. I paid attention to Kelvin that first day when I heard him stand up for himself, but then Camille came to me one day, and she said, “I’m putting together a lunch.” She said, “I want you to come and Kelvin Buck and actually Ruth Estrada (spelling:____________________________).” No! Let me back up. She said, “I want us to go to lunch and talk about some things.” I said, “OK, fine.” So then as we’re getting ready to go, she sends me a text. She goes, “By the way, Kelvin Buck and Ruth Estrada are coming.” I’m like, “I don’t want to go with anybody else.” I’m thinking we—

**Cooper:** Just the two of you.

**Campbell Buck:** Just the two of us to talk. She’s like, “No, no, no! You need to go to this lunch.” And I was like, “Oh, my goodness. I can’t believe I’m going to this lunch.” And it was such a wonderful lunch. That’s was the first time Kelvin and I had really kind of got out of just being colleagues and really, really started talking. And then from there, every time I __________________________ Camille was like, “Oh, I talked to Kelvin today, and he said this about you. And you handled this bill, and he was proud of you.” And she was really working it, and then next thing I knew she had arranged a date for us to go on. (laughter) She was just determined. She said, “I just thought you two just needed to be together.” She said, “It was just something special about y’all.”

**Cooper:** Now, who does Ms. Young work on behalf of?

**Campbell Buck:** She works for Watkins, Ludlow, Winter, and Stennis
(spelling:__________________________________). She’s in their governmental affairs. Um-hm. And so her clients are ____________________________. I couldn’t begin to tell you all of her clients.

**Cooper:** I can imagine.

**Campbell Buck:** But a good woman. In fact she would be a good person for you to just meet one day, too, and speak to—

**Cooper:** I’d like to do that.

**Campbell Buck:** —because she’s in a unique position. I mean, most of the top lobbyists, of course again, are white, and they’re male, and then when you start talking to the females, they’re white. (laughter) But we do have some black males, and we have some other black females, but Camille, I believe, is really the top African-American, female lobbyist.

**Cooper:** She stands out.

**Campbell Buck:** She does. She stands out, and she has some really big clients and things of that nature.

**Cooper:** ____________________________________________

**Campbell Buck:** I’m very, very proud of Camille because she fights, too, for entities, and then also she’s in charge of putting a lot of money back into some of these most impoverished communities from her job. So yeah. So I’m very, very proud of her, but
yeah, she’s in charge of putting us together. But we have many members now that are working to keep us together. (laughter)

**Cooper:** Well, no doubt. We have to have that

__________________________________.

**Campbell Buck:** That’s right. That’s right. I’ll tell you

__________________________________.

**Unknown Voice:** You’re running late.

**Campbell Buck:** OK.

**Cooper:** So how would you like to end this, Representative Campbell-Buck?

**Campbell Buck:** Well, I guess I would end it simply by saying that it is a joy and a blessing to serve in the state legislature. I think anyone that has any passion and drive and integrity should consider running for office, especially women, and more so than that, African-American women. I think so often we shy away from running for political offices because they are expensive, and we tend to think we can’t raise the money, or it’ll be inflexible with our jobs or with our children and things along those lines. But if you can build a really good coalition and a really good support group, women really, really need to be in those seats, I mean, because sometimes when you look at, “Why do laws go this way? Why aren’t people concerned about our issues?” Well, we’re not there. We don’t have a voice.

**Cooper:** That’s fair.
**Campbell Buck:** So I would really, really like to just leave it by saying, “Be a voice in some fashion, whether, if you don’t want to be in an actual political office or political seat, you are still a voice on that PTA [Parent-Teacher Association]; you’re a voice in that community; you’re a voice with that neighborhood association. I mean, and sometimes we need *you* to come to us and tell us what’s happening.” Black women, to me, “You’re our front line. You’re on the ground to our community. You’re the heartbeat to our community. You know better than anyone what really needs to be done, and sometimes you’ve got some better solutions than I can even think of.” So I think it’s important for women to be politically active whether they want to run themselves, get behind candidates that you believe in. That’s something else we don’t always do. Get behind whether it’s by volunteering or campaigning or even financial. We’ve got to do better about surrounding ourselves with each other and really supporting each other because they’re expensive. You’ve got to get support and money from somebody. So if you want your people there, then you need to stand behind them, and I think that’s really ____________ point about women need to have a more active voice in the political process and in the community, period. Don’t leave it up to the boys to take care of us. (laughter) Look where they’ve gotten us! (laughter) Now, we got to get ourselves out of it.

**Cooper:** I’m going to end on that note. Mrs. Buck, thank you.

**Campbell Buck:** Thank you.

**Cooper:** Thank you. And I just can’t wait to get this in print for you-all.

**Campbell Buck:** Thank you. I’m looking forward to it. We so enjoyed ourselves. We
did.

Cooper: Well, just thank you for being a part of this history.

Campbell Buck: Thank you. Thank you so much, Rhonda.

(end of interview)