

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
BIPARTISAN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH:

**The Honorable Nicholas A. Micozzie (R)**

163<sup>rd</sup> District

Delaware County

1979 – 2014

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY: Raymond J. Whittaker, III  
October 14, 2014

Transcribed by: Rachael Losiewicz

© Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Office of the Chief Clerk

**Raymond J. Whittaker, III (RW):** Today we have the opportunity and the pleasure to speak with Representative Nicholas A. Micozzie, who has served the 163<sup>rd</sup> District, which includes Delaware County from 1979 through 2014.

**The Honorable Nicholas Micozzie (NM):** 1978.

**RW:** 1978 through 2014. Sir, thank you for speaking with us today.

**NM:** Thank you.

**RW:** I would like for you to start off and talk briefly about your childhood growing up and some of the influences you had that led you to a career in public service.

**NM:** I was born in Philadelphia, west Philadelphia. I went to the local Catholic school; St. Donato and to St. Thomas More High School. I'm a graduate of St. Joseph's University doing my education eight years of night school and have a degree in business, okay? After high school, I worked different jobs. One job was General Electric as a young laborer for a year and a half, couple of years, and then I joined the service. I am a Korean vet. I joined in 1950 to 1954. I was in the Air Force where I learned all my electronics. I taught electronics and, by the way, my wife June is also a Korean veteran and that is where I met her; I met her in Waco, Texas. She was from Massachusetts.

**RW:** Oh, wow.

**NM:** So, we were married in 1954. In fact, last Friday we are going to be married sixty years.

**RW:** Congratulations.

**NM:** So, after the service, when I came out, I worked as a barber. I had learned how to be a barber because all my family at that time was a barber. I did not like to be a barber but I did not have money; I had to put food on the table and we lived with my mom and dad. And then I made application to General Electric missile place and I worked at General Electric from 1955, around 1955, 1956 to 1979 – 1978, 1979. Then, I went into the real estate business; I got my license and had a thriving real estate business, which I eventually sold to my daughter. I had that business until about 1993 when I sold it to her. The way I got involved with politics, I was never involved in any government, never involved in government politics. I had been the head of the Knights of Columbus. In those days, I was the Grand Knight of the organization. We had fifteen hundred member organizations; it's down to about eight hundred, nine hundred. My son Tom was playing CYO football – by the way he is now the mayor of Upper Darby Township – and the good fathers of Upper Darby decided to sell some recreation area where he was playing. So, the coach had asked the parents by letter to go to the meeting. I went to the meeting, went to two meetings, told them what I thought – now, this is 1971 we are talking about – told them what I thought, and I'm in the back of the Knight's having a beer and coach and a couple of guys came up to me and said, "You should run for commissioner of Upper Darby." And I said, "What is that?" And they explained it to me, and I said, "Well, that is not for me," I said, "I am too busy." I said, "I just got finished night school, eight years of night school, my wife would shoot me." So

anyway, they kept after me and finally I said, "Okay, what do I have to do?" And, they asked me if I was Republican and I said, "No, I am a Democrat," and they asked me how are you a Democrat? The guy next door to me was a committee person, a Democratic committee person and if he was a Republican I probably would have been a Republican, because I had no real philosophy; I have always been a moderate type guy. I changed registrations, knocked on every door and I became one of the first Democrats ever to be elected into Upper Darby's history. I did the same thing in 1975, as I explained before. In [19]78, I changed my registration and, as I was saying, I had forty-four years of public service from 1971 to 2014 and when you have those two positions there is a lot of primary elections, a lot of general elections. And if you count from 1971 to 2014 it is forty-four years; if you count the primary election and the general election, I have been on the ballot forty-two times in forty-four years with a score of forty-two wins and no losses and I am very proud of that.

**RW:** That's very impressive.

**NM:** Yeah.

**RW:** How did you make the transition from the commissioner counsel to deciding to run for the House in 1978?

**NM:** Well, I have always been an active community activist. Not big on any one organization but boys clubs, girls clubs, those types of things. And, if you are in the Knights of Columbus, which we had, we had sold a place that had a swimming pool; we did a lot of good work as far as

delivering baskets on Thanksgiving and Christmas. But, I always have been an activist, especially when I was a counsel person; I always made sure that I listened to my constituents and did whatever I could to assist them with projects and solving their problems. So I was really ready to be a State Rep[resentative]. Of course, you learn as you go along about the issues.

**RW:** Right.

**NM:** For instance, at St. Joseph's I only had one course in insurance. Of course, I had a real estate background, but when I became the chairman of the Insurance committee, I learned an awful lot, studied, and was chairman for twenty years. Transportation committee, I had some idea about transportation, my dad being an operation engineer. In the summertime I used to go with him. I had some idea, you know, about the issues so the transition was not too difficult.

**RW:** What do you remember about that first campaign and some of the techniques you used thereafter to keep your name on ballot because you, like you said, you were undefeated in your elections but you had someone run against you every single term?

**NM:** What I, what I had learned, when you are dealing with people in the Knights of Columbus and they call up about a question – to your telephone – I made sure that every telephone call I received I would respond. I learned that when you respond right off the bat, you have a friend. You might not solve their problem, but they remember that Nick Micozzie called me back. Or, Nick Micozzie tried to do all he could in his power to help me out. And I carried that through

the forty-four years, the whole forty-four years that I was an elected official, and it has paid off, it has paid off.

**RW:** Could you describe the 163<sup>rd</sup> District and how it has maybe changed?

**NM:** Yeah, the 163<sup>rd</sup> is Italian, Irish, some Ukrainian, mostly, predominantly Italian and Irish. Now, for my background living in west Philadelphia, the Irish and Italians did not get along. In fact, when I took my lovely wife home, being an Irish person in 1954, I am sure there were some drawing sighs, in my aunts and uncles; my mom and dad had no problem because my mom and dad were not that type of people. So, being about the Knights of Columbus most of the constituents were in the general area. Over the years, of course it was like ninety percent are Republican; a very dominant party. And I used to win, when I first got elected – well, the last time when I won, let's say, I was winning by seventy percent, seventy-five percent. When I first changed it was low. I mean, I didn't win by a big margin. But as it went on, it was seventy, seventy-two, seventy-three, seventy-four percent. What has happened now is that the Democrats have moved in, not Irish and Italian, but more of a diverse people have moved in and they are Democrats. Now, what I kept, because of the activities of knocking on doors and answering and responding to calls, I continued to get Democratic votes. The last election I won by sixty-two percent, sixty-three percent. One of the towns defeated me in that town, by a big, big margin but I still came through because of my activities knocking on doors and whatever. Right now where Upper Darby Township, which is the biggest portion of the District, we used to be dominant, like I said, dominant, ninety percent, eighty percent registration Republican; now, we are in the

minority party in that town. And so, the whole area is changing. Democrat, Republican, back-and-forth.

**RW:** What types of issues did the constituents most often come to you with? What types of issues did they have trouble with and they needed your assistance?

**NM:** When it comes to the pocketbook, property tax is the biggest issue. During my tenure, I have had a bill, which I call Successful School Budget bill. I put that bill in at least five terms, six terms and I just couldn't get the votes to pass it, which would increase personal income tax and sales tax. What happened is, also if you recall, Governor Rendell and the legislature passed what they call the Costing-Out Study. And in that Costing-Out Study, what came back my successful school budget many of the provisions were in the recommendation and we put together a formula that would do just that. And it called for an increase in personal income and sales tax. Of course, that has changed now with the new governor. But the property tax, I have seniors coming in my office whether to decide whether to put food on the table or pay the property tax; that's how bad it is in the southeast. The General Assembly and the governor just have the courage; just have the courage to do something about this because it's killing our towns and our boroughs and our counties. So hopefully, if I had my druthers, I would have had that passed. But I am one guy crying out in the desert, so to speak.

**RW:** You have been fairly successful in bringing a lot of projects and money back to your District. What are some of the ones that stand out to you?

**NM:** Yes, in the era of legislative initiatives, of course, newspapers like to call it WAMs and RCAPs, I have done well. I think, and I still think, that we, the General Assembly and the governor, is missing the boat in doing away with those programs because the boroughs and the townships and the counties do not have the whereabouts overall to fund drainages, to help boys clubs, help girls clubs and all the things that you could do with that money and I have done a lot with that money. Did it need reform? Oh yeah, because we had some leaders in the past who thought it was their own bank account. But the rank-and-file members, they took it serious and you can go back and see some of the great projects that were done. For instance, I got RCAP money to revitalize an old theater, which they are doing right now. I have got money to revitalize the small borough of Clifton Heights and unless we do something with these small boroughs and these small townships, it's going to continue, continue to deteriorate. So, to do away with it was a mistake; they should have reformed it to make sure that the openness, transparency and, I think, it would have not only helped the state, but it would have definitely helped the residents of those little towns.

**RW:** What do you remember of your first Swearing-In Day? And what kind of impression did the House of Representatives have on you?

**NM:** Well, I think that my dad was alive, my mom and dad was alive and knowing my dad was born in Italy and moved here when he was four years old, and know how hard he had worked to put food on the table. In those days they used to work seven days a week. And of course, like every other – when my dad came over my grand-mom and my grand-pop, they were discriminated on, severely. But through it all, the Italians and the Irish, and every one of those

nationalities, all they ever known was to work. So, for him sitting in the audience – and I was the first of the generation to get a degree, so I was very proud. Of course, I had tears in my eyes.

**RW:** Did you have any mentors early on to help you along with the process?

**NM:** In Upper Darby, in Upper Darby itself, when I was a councilman, of course when you first go to the council meeting there is a little friction. But I have never, even today, I have no animosity or anything because you are a Democrat and I am a Republican, because I have a lot of friends on the other side of the aisle here. So with that, I became very friendly with a fellow named Joe Salvucci. He was the president of the council and very intelligent, very smart and I assisted him whenever there was a controversy or whatever. I made sure I understood what the issue was. And, had nothing to do with principle; when you are down in the boroughs and the townships, you want to make sure the streets are being paved and watch the taxes and everything else falls in place. But when you get into animosity back-and-forth, that doesn't help anyone. So, Joe Salvucci, I would say, taught me a lot at council. In the State House, of course, there's Matt Ryan, I have – well, I would say three of them: Matt Ryan [Matthew J.; State Representative, Chester and Delaware Counties, 1963-2003; Speaker, 1981-1982, 1995-2003], Irvis [K. Leroy; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1959-1988; Speaker, 1983-1988] and Manderino [James J.; State Representative, Westmoreland County, 1967-1989; Speaker, 1989]. They showed you how to debate. They showed you how to – if you got to know how they did their leadership; for instance, when there was a controversy issue the three of them, and I know this for a fact, used to go in the back room and argue back-and-forth in the room. But when they came out there they had a compromise and they knew exactly what the votes would be. Even

though when they were on the floor debating back-and-forth you thought they were going to kill one another, but they already know how the vote is going to be. That type of leadership I learned an awful lot about that and I learned an awful lot on how to compromise, which has been shown in my Insurance committees and my Transportation committees.

**RW:** I am glad you brought that up; that's where we're going to go next. Talk a little about your time as a chairman. You chaired a few committees in all your time here, most notably Insurance, like you said, for twenty years.

**NM:** Yeah.

**RW:** Most recently, Transportation. What were some of the big issues and just talk in terms of chairing a committee and what that involves?

**NM:** Well, the biggest issue was the CAT Fund. The CAT Fund is catastrophic and medical liability insurance; that is what they call it. And what that fund was doing, it was a pay as you go fund, assists physicians and hospitals paying their liability insurance. At one time, it went through the roof. We finally, we finally reformed it after a couple years of debate back-and-forth and don't forget, you have the hospital lobbyists, you have the insurance lobbyists, you have all the different, different lobbyists that are affected by it, the nurses and everyone. And we formed it into the Mcare, they call it Mcare, and Mcare reformed a lot of the things, a lot of the issues that were keeping the premiums high. That is one of the big milestones that we did. As far as all the other insurance, my towing bill passed; how towers and tow trucks, the towing industry treats

the motorist. I don't know if you have ever been in an accident and all of a sudden you see a tow truck coming out, like it flew out of heaven. We resolved that, making sure there is transparency, making sure the telephone number was on the truck, making sure that there was no, I call, ambulance chasing at that time. We also reformed the appraisers, the appraisers for fires, you know, when you would have a fire and the appraiser would come in and while you are worrying about your house burning down he is trying to make you sign a contract. We solved all that kind of stuff. My forty-eight hour stay for newborn babies; the hospitals were leaving them go early on and we solved that problem. The diabetes supplies; you can get your diabetes supplies for nothing. There's an awful lot of bills. But I can say sincerely, if it wasn't for the other side for being – Nick Colafella [Nicholas; State Representative, Beaver County, 1981-2002] who was a, the Insurance chairman, and now Tony DeLuca [Anthony; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1983-present], who have become not only friends but they understand insurance and they understand what a mandate means and without their cooperation a lot of these controversial bills they would have never got through. So, that's that bipartisanship that I was talking to you about when I was an Upper Darby council person. I learned how to be nice and negotiate and try to understand the other guy's position.

**RW:** Like you said before, insurance was not necessarily your background but you learned on the job.

**NM:** I learned on the job.

**RW:** What other tactics or what other things have you learned throughout the process of being a chairman? Working across the aisle, working with members from all across Pennsylvania; what types of things did you learn to make sure there was consensus, that there was compromise on some of these issues?

**NM:** Well, first we got to keep them informed. What you are doing as a majority chairman, when you are majority chairman, you do not have to tell the other side anything if you do not want to. You can go around and try to get their members to vote for you. A minority chairman, and I was minority chairman a couple of times, a minority chairman appreciates you keeping them informed whatever you are going to – if you are going to call a meeting make sure they have enough time in advance that they can study, that his executive staff can study the issue and no blindsiding. Give them an opportunity to speak his peace on the floor and make sure before you go on the floor of the House you have an agreement, or if you have a disagreement then you can work it out. Have an agreement that you are on the same boat to get this important piece of legislation through. And that has come in handy not only in Insurance, but in Transportation.

**RW:** That was going to be my next follow-up; just this last term you were named the Transportation chairman in the midst of the death of Representative Hess [Dick L.; State Representative, Bedford, Fulton and Huntingdon Counties, 1987-2013].<sup>1</sup>

**NM:** Yes

---

<sup>1</sup> Representative Dick L. Hess served as the Republican chair of the Transportation Committee in 2013, prior to his death on September 6, 2013.

**RW:** But during that time, there was a big Transportation bill that the governor was trying to initiate.

**NM:** Yeah.

**RW:** Talk about how difficult that was and passing that major piece of legislation.

**NM:** Well, first of all, being the most senior in tenure in our caucus I had the opportunity, when Geist [Richard A.; State Representative, Blair County, 1979-2012] got defeated, I got the opportunity to take that<sup>2</sup>. And, by the way, I am also the most senior in age. So, Dick Hess, who was a very good friend of mine, he kept after me because he was on the Transportation Committee for a long time; I was never on the Transportation Committee – well, I got on a couple months before that – he would take me out to dinner, said, “I need this Transportation committee,” and after hearing so much I said, "Take it," so he did take it, okay? So, at his untimely death, then I start thinking about it; I have always believed that the Transportation chairman should come from the southeast, because in the southeast we have SEPTA, the biggest transit complex in the state, and there is a lot of transportation in the southeast and you needed more or less a moderate. Of course, if you have central Pennsylvania, the other parts of Pennsylvania, anything in Philadelphia, they do not like. It does not have to be anything; they just do not like Philadelphia. I think there is a bias, built in bias, when it comes to SEPTA and that transportation system which was really in bad shape. So, on October the 3<sup>rd</sup>, somewhere around there, well, just before October, I decided to inform the Speaker and the Majority Leader, Mike Turzai [State Representative, Allegheny County, 2001-present; Speaker, 2015-present],

---

<sup>2</sup> Representative Richard A. Geist served as the Republican chair of the Transportation Committee from 1995-2012.

that I would like to be the chairman. Being the most senior member they really could not deny me. So I became, October, early October, the chairman of the Transportation committee. By December 1<sup>st</sup>, we passed that Transportation thing. Of course, I had a lot of help; we have a very, very intelligent, personable Secretary of Transportation, Barry Schoch. When the Speaker got on board, I had the Speaker – I had him – I had John Rafferty, Senator John Rafferty [State Senator, Berks, Chester and Montgomery Counties, 2003-present]<sup>3</sup>, I had Mike McGeehan, who was the Democratic chairperson on my side, and then, between him and I, we cultivated the other side. I knew the problem I had on my side because the conservatives really didn't want a tax; they only wanted to take care of the bridges, if I remember. Mike Turzai is my friend, of course, his philosophy is different than mine, but we have been friends ever since he had been up here, and he understood where I was coming from and we finally passed it. We had it difficult the first vote – four votes – I almost went under the table, but we passed it and it was signed into law. And we really needed it because my first vote, just about my first vote when I first came up here, was the gas tax, as a freshman. And we have been trying to do that, to get a dedicated funding for transportation all these years, and finally we have two point three billion dollars a year for five years. The bridges – and with the leadership of the Secretary, we are going to do some great things.

**RW:** You talked a little bit about representing Philadelphia and the Philly delegation, which you are a part of, is one of the largest delegations in the House.

**NM:** Yeah.

---

<sup>3</sup> Senator John C. Rafferty is the Republican chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, 2009-present.

**RW:** Talk about the role the Philly delegation plays with all the members from that area, in terms of a voting bloc, but just in terms of being a unit.

**NM:** Well first of all, I think all of us in the southeast our basic unity is property taxes. I think after that it goes downhill. I am talking about with Philadelphia versus the southeast. Not so much the Democratic side, I am talking about the Republican side. The social issues are issues that split even those of us in the county. Now, it is not as much as it used to be abortion, those types of things which the southeast tends to be, the further west you go, the more liberal you get. Where we are, like Miccarelli [Nicholas A., III; State Representative, Delaware County, 2009-present], myself, Hackett [Joseph T., Sr.; State Representative, Delaware County, 2011-2015], we are more moderate; we are on the social side to an extent, but there are issues that just split it up philosophically. And on the other side there is moderate Democrats that feel the same way as the moderate Republicans feel.

**RW:** Being a member in the House of Representatives for thirty-five years you have seen a lot of changes to the institution, being from the institution of District Offices to being a member here probably sharing a secretary with another member.

**NM:** Oh yeah.

**RW:** Not having computers on the House floor; what are some of the big changes you have seen in the way work is done here?

**NM:** When I came up we were down in the basement. There was me, Civera, and another fellow – Mario Civera [State Representative, Delaware County, 1980-2010] – and we shared one secretary. We had one phone, I think, we shared. On the House floor you had to go in the back of the House to answer phone calls. They used to have people back there and they would come and get you and you would answer the phone. We had no computers on our desk. But again, the three gentlemen, three Rep[resentative]s who did a lot to make this institution what it is today is Manderino, Matt Ryan, and Irvis. Gradually, gradually we start getting more – the desks. In fact Sheila, my secretary, when they started hiring another secretary she came in and, said – you know Sheila? You know her? Sheila cried her eyes out. She said, “I am so nervous.” I said, “You are hired.” I did not know if she could type or not, but she has been with me thirty-five years. Early on she said to me, before I had decided, I was in the process of deciding whether to retire, she said, “There is a rumor around you’re going to retire?” I said, “Well, I don’t know.” She said, “Well, when you retire I am retiring,” and she is retiring also. She is just a wonderful person. So, as time developed, in fact, I was on the first committee to go out and look at the computers on the desk; it was me and a few other Rep[resentative]s. We got them and that is how it started.

**RW:** Has that made the job any easier?

**NM:** Well, I will tell you, the emails that I receive, I just can’t keep up. Of course, of course I have staff. I answer every one of them though. If it comes across my desk I answer. Now, sometimes you give them an answer they do not want to hear, but it goes back to what I said before; at least if you answer the emails, say at least the guy, at least you know what they think

of us as politicians, but at least the guy answered my question. When I worked at General Electric – my God, oh, I didn't tell you this – when I got out of the service – I think I did – I got a job at General Electric, the missile place, okay? And I was the head of a computer lab, bigger, twice as big as this, because what you have on your desk now is more powerful than that whole thing. And I used to fix them, so I knew something about computers, yeah.

**RW:** Talk about your relationship with the media and how that has maybe changed from the advent of just doing a press conference somewhere to now where it is a twenty-four/seven news cycle; there's news constantly out there.

**NM:** Well, back home, the media has been fair with me I would say. A couple times you get upset of a line or whatever. I found that if you treat the media with respect, sometimes it's hard to do that when they come after you about an issue that they don't know what they are talking about, but I have a good relationship with Phil Heron, who is the editor of the – in fact, he put some beautiful words about me today in the *[Delaware County] Daily Times*. Here, I did not interface with them much. I had a lot of press conferences, and emails; we have email blasts. My input comes from my constituents, okay? There is one – I'm not going to mention his name, in the Philadelphia radio – twice he has done this; one issue with my successful school budget, he hammered me for weeks about raising the taxes, personally. He is a conservative in a talk show. Lately, for some reason, he got the idea, me being the Transportation chairman, that I was going to bring to the committee then to the floor of the House, to allow immigrants to have driver's license, which I would never do that because I am against that. Well, he is hammering me for two to three weeks about that I am going to do this and that. So, that's the only bad

relationship I had. But the rest of them, as long as they are professionals and as long as they get their facts straight I have no problem with them; everybody makes a mistake.

**RW:** You have also been witness to a lot of reforms that have occurred over the years, especially post-2005. There've been a lot of reforms to the House rules, the way business is conducted.

**NM:** Yeah.

**RW:** What are your thoughts about those provisions and have they gone far enough, in terms of transparency and the way the process works?

**NM:** Well, I think the eleven o'clock thing is – I don't think you should put a cap on eleven o'clock. Sometimes we have some important legislation. I think it should be left up to the leaders, if they have any common sense, not to go to two o'clock like we used to go. I mean, schedule it a certain way because a couple of times it just put handcuffs on us, because we are in the middle of a discussion and you had to break the rule, ask for relief of the rule on the floor of the House. I do not know if this waiting a certain amount of time to pass the second consideration, because most of us know, already know, how we are going to vote. We get so much mail. Philosophically, we all know where we stand and we all know where the leaders stand, okay? So, that's another delay in the process. Of course, the reforms, I mentioned before with the legislative initiatives, I still think was a bad idea to get rid of it. I think there should be reforms of our scheduling. I think the leaders don't take enough consideration of our personal

scheduling. When I say personal scheduling, to sit around for hours and wait for the Senate to decide on a thing or they're out or whatever; I think a lot of that is a waste of time and you can ask my wife back home when she sees it on television, "What are you doing?" that type of thing. So, I think those kind of reforms would make the process – speed it up.

**RW:** You brought up the Senate and what was your relationship like working with the other chamber and also with the Executive branch and the different governors that you have served under?

**NM:** Well first of all, in the Senate I worked closely with my senator, Senator Erickson [Edwin B.; State Senator, Chester and Delaware Counties, 2001-2014] and Senator Loeper [F. Joseph; State Senator, Delaware County, 1979-2000] who were two of my senators. I worked very closely with every governor. When I say closely, when they needed my vote, they would – I had Rendell [Edward G.; Governor of Pennsylvania, 2003-2011] call me personally. If I could help – give you an idea; in 1991, we were one point two billion dollars in the hole, okay? We were in the minority. Matt Ryan needed twelve votes; you know they made their arrangement, "Matt you need twelve votes." Here is a story, my wife and my daughter reminds me; my daughter, Kelly, was getting married on a Saturday and they had sent – this is in August – they had sent us home around July sometime, June or whatever, because they couldn't get an agreement. So all the way up to the day of the wedding I am a 'no' vote, because the air has started changing. Matt Ryan was supposed to be at the wedding, Civera, they were all up here; they were leaders. So anyway, as time approached I said, "Matt, I'm not coming up." So what happened is, a legislator was caught over in Germany and that put the pin, the Democrat had no pin in there and the press

caught him. So, it was all over the newspapers, so Matt Ryan said, “You have to come up.”

Well, to make a long story short, during the wedding time, outside – that’s when you had to go to the car to get the phone; we had no cell phone – so what happened is, that I’m home, the wedding was over, I went back to my house. I lived in a row house at the time – I played clarinet and sax with the Knights of Columbus and a string band, whatever, and I had a couple guys and we had the whole neighborhood because it was row homes in Westward Park – the phone rings, I answer, Matt says, “You have to come up I got the votes.” “Matt,” now that is about seven, eight o’clock at night, I said, “first of all, my wife would come up there and shoot you and then she would shoot me.” Make a long story short, my son and I go up and he is trying to get the votes. Make a long story short, I was able to get Mario Civera and the two votes he needed; we gave him two votes and voted for the one point two billion dollar tax vote. This is the story; when I went in there and I was a ‘no’ vote in his office. “Nick you have to vote for this thing.” I said, “I can’t vote for this.” He says, “What do you need?” I said, “I don’t need anything.” He said, “I’ll give you a bridge.” I said, “I have no water.” He said, “I will give you the water.” So, we finally passed it. I got some calls, but I did not get many calls, because if you do your job right, you knock on doors, you keep – of course, there’s always those when you make a tax vote they are going to kill you. But, the idea is to always keep in touch with your residents because they know you personally.

**RW:** There are a number of large issues still in the legislature currently being debated: Pension reform, property tax reform, Marcellus Shale issues. We just passed the big transportation. Are you regretting that you are leaving now with so many big issues on the table, I guess is my question?

**NM:** Well, that is the part I will miss. The part I won't miss is being away from home and coming up here. And, just imagine, back home what the television would be – chairman of the Transportation committee passed twenty-eight cents tax. I mean, they would be killing me and I really don't have the stomach for that no more; I went through all that. But if I could be just a legislator and don't have to run, man, that would be wonderful.

**RW:** Have you ever had thoughts about running for a leadership office?

**NM:** At one time, but no. Being away from home too much; I'm a home person. They're up here seven days a week, eight days a week, seven days a week. Take my good friend, my personal friend, Bill Adolph [William F., Jr.; State Representative, Delaware County, 1989-present]. Three weeks, every day, coming up and having hearings. That is not me; I could never do that, I could never do that. They make more money, but they deserve more money.

**RW:** Talk about the camaraderie that has been in the House historically and now maybe why has changed a little bit to being such a more partisan – ?

**NM:** Well, what has happened is that – I'm just going to talk about my caucus, okay? The pay raise changed everything; it changed the camaraderie, it changed how we do business really. The conservative think, those – now, I am surmising this interaction – the conservatives in central Pennsylvania, whatever, think that we are what they call RINOs, Republicans in Name

Only, because we don't vote real conservative; we vote moderate. We vote for things that are a little more liberal. So, from that and what the pay raise had caused – I mean they were cold to me anyway, the way I felt; some did not even say hello, that type of thing – so, that went all out the window. We never had that before the pay raise. I mean, both sides got along, whatever. First of all, I get along with everybody; I mean, I have no problem with them. I don't care if they are ultra-liberal or whatever. I don't care if they are gay, I don't care. I don't care what they are; they're Representatives. You honor the seat; you do not honor the person, type thing. So, it has changed; to answer your question, it has changed drastically, yeah. Even the conservatives, they're not, they're not conservative enough; the ultra-conservatives are coming and knocking them off in the primary. I mean - and that causes animosity.

**RW:** Right; absolutely. Why was now the right time to retire from the House of Representatives?

**NM:** Well, first of all, I lost the fire in the belly up here because things have changed so much. That is number one – from what it used to be – Number two, I'm old; I'm eighty-four years old. My wife's eighty-two and it is not that we're going to enjoy life more, we do that; we go out, we travel, you know, travel down to the shore, we have a place down at the shore. It's just the ride, it is a killer, and sleeping in a motel, I don't sleep; I mean, I twist and I turn, whatever. That is the part. And my children, and now my grandchildren, afraid of that ride back and forth. And by the way, I have three children, seven grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren. So, they all worry about me so. Which they should, right?

**RW:** What are some of the fond memories that you'll take with you from this Institution?

**NM:** With camaraderie from Matt Ryan, Mario Civera, who was up here thirty-two years I think, Bill Adolph, and now the young guys, Miccarelli and I mean, they are babies as far as we're concerned. Tony DeLuca is a good friend of mine; Nick Colafella was a good friend of mine. The Italian caucus are all, they're all friendly, just naturally friendly, the Italian caucus. I can tell you a story about the Italians; when I first come up here and I started meeting Italian guys, I don't care if they are from Pittsburgh, I don't care if they are from Greene County, whatever, we'd go out to eat, we start talking about our childhood. It looks like we have known each other for years because we were all raised the same way; we ate macaroni on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. Same fathers; when the fathers looked at you, you made sure you straightened out. Yeah, yeah.

**RW:** Would you have any disappointments or regrets that you are leaving behind?

**NM:** Disappointment not passing a dedicated funding source for education. Because I have been involved in education with the, we have the Education Foundation in Upper Darby Township. When the money that they were going to lay off fifty teachers because – this is about four years ago – fifty teachers, they were going to shut down the arts, the music and whatever and I was able to get two point seven million dollars up here from the governor, whatever. So, education to me is a great thing.

**RW:** What advice would you have for young people or members just coming in and serving?  
What would your advice be to them on how to serve?

**NM:** Well, I think you have to serve with dignity; you have to serve with honor. There's a lot of temptations up here, especially when you become a chairman, a powerful chairman in the Insurance Committee or the Transportation Committee. And make sure you do your duties. There is a tendency of not being on the floor of the House, because nobody is really checking. There is a tendency to not to go to different functions and all that. So, if you do those little things right you will have a successful career. And of course, above all, keep integrity and honesty.

**RW:** What lessons have you learned that you will take with you from this place?

**NM:** Well, I have always done well with people, but as far as it taught me lessons in how to interact with people when you have complex issues that a lot of them do not agree with. The Insurance Committee and Transportation, especially the Transportation, that two months or whatever, was an education itself, because we had people, "I'm not voting for that thing," blah, blah, blah and you had to convince them about the bridge falling down, and we had to go out and visit their areas and pinpoint that this bridge is going to be shut down, you know, that type of thing. So, you learn that when you interact, as I did.

**RW:** My last question; how would you like your term as a state official, public official, to be remembered?

**NM:** A guy, a Representative who kept his honesty, kept his integrity, and did everything he could in his power to serve his constituents.

**RW:** Very good.

**NM:** All right?

**RW:** We appreciate your time with this and this project. And we wish you all the luck.

**NM:** Well, thank you.