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Congressman William Springer
Collection, 1940-1992

Collection 158

Champaign County Historical Archives

Compiled by: Marie Liang, September 2025

Creator/Corporate Name: Springer, William L.

Inclusive Dates: 1940-1992

Physical Description: 5 boxes, (4.16 linear ft.)

Language: English

Provenance:

The Congressman William Springer collection was donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Access:

These records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

Harmful Language in Archives:

The Champaign County Historical Archives at The Urbana Free Library is committed to developing inclusive collections that capture the diverse history of our communities. However, some language used in our collections and collection descriptions may be outdated or harmful. Please refer to our statement on [Harmful Language in Archives](#) to learn how we are addressing language concerns in our collections.

Biographical Note:

William Lee Springer (1909-1992) was a U.S. Representative from Illinois who served in Congress for over two decades. Born in Sullivan, Indiana, he attended public schools and graduated from Culver Military Academy. He earned a B.A. from DePauw University in 1931 and a law degree from the University of Illinois in 1935. Admitted to the bar the same year, he began practicing law in Champaign, Illinois, in 1936. Springer served as State's Attorney of Champaign County from 1940 to 1942. During World War II, he served as a Navy officer, with nineteen months of foreign duty, and was discharged as a lieutenant in 1945. He then served as a county judge from 1946 to 1950. In 1950, Springer was elected as a Republican to the U.S. House of Representatives. He served eleven consecutive terms in Congress, from January 3, 1951, to January 3, 1973, representing Illinois in the 82nd through the 92nd Congresses. He chose not to seek reelection in 1972. Following his congressional service, Springer was appointed to the Federal Power Commission, serving from May 1973 to December 1975. He later served as a member of the Federal Election Commission from May 1976 to March 1979. Springer supported several significant pieces of civil rights legislation throughout his legislative career. He voted in favor of the Civil Rights Acts of 1957, 1960, 1964, and 1968, as well as the 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. William L. Springer remained a Champaign, Illinois resident until his death on September 20, 1992.

Scope and Content Note:

The Congressman William Springer collection includes personal records, newspaper clippings, campaign materials, photographs, legislative documents, and memorabilia that document the life and political



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career of U.S. Representative William L. Springer of Illinois. Personal files include appreciation dinner programs, honorary degree certificates, and campaign materials spanning his early political bids through his final congressional campaigns in the 1970s. Newspaper clippings trace his public profile and political impact from the 1940s to the 1980s. Photographs capture key moments from Springer's public life and retirement. Legislative materials highlight significant bills Springer supported or helped pass. Documents from his service on the Federal Power Commission and the Federal Election Commission further illustrate his role in national governance beyond his congressional tenure. The collection also includes campaign posters, commendations, commemorative pens from bill signings, and political event badges. These materials offer a detailed portrait of Springer's career over two decades of public service and his broader contributions to Illinois and national politics.

Arrangement:

Series 1: Personal Records

Series 2: Photographs

Series 3: Federal Government Records and Ephemera

Subject Terms:

Legislators -- United States.

Politicians

Name Terms:

Mattis, Elsie Cora

Springer, William L.

Springer, Elsie Cora

Container List

Box 1

Series 1: Personal Records

Folder 1: Appreciation dinners, 1966-1969

Folder 2: Archival materials, undated

Folder 3: Ballot, Circuit Court, Champaign Co., 1940

Folder 4: Campaigns, 1948

Folder 5: Campaigns, 1966

Folder 6: Campaigns, 1968

Folder 7: Campaigns, 1970

Folder 8: Event programs, 1972

Folder 9: Honorary degrees, 1966-1972

Folder 10: Clippings, 1940-1960

Folder 11: Clippings, 1960-1970

Box 2

Series 1: Personal Records (continued)

Folder 1: Clippings, 1970-1982



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Folder 2: Obituaries, 1992

Folder 3: Scrapbook, 1951-1952

Series 2: Photographs

Folder 4: Photographs, 1950-1959

Folder 5: Photographs, 1960-1969

Folder 6: Photographs, 1970-1979

Folder 7: Photographs, undated

Folder 8: Public Life and Retirement, 1952-1972

Folder 9: Springer/Elsie Springer with Dwight Eisenhower, 1954-1956

Folder 10: Springer with John F. Kennedy, 1961

Folder 11: Springer with Richard Nixon, 1953-1970

Folder 12: Springer with Gerald Ford, 1955-1976

Folder 13: Springer and George H. W. Bush, March 15, 1987

Series 3: Federal Government Records and Ephemera

Folder 14: Federal Election Commission, 1976

Folder 15: Federal Power Commission, 1955-1975

Folder 16: Laws signed under President Johnson, 1964-1966

Folder 17: Laws signed under President Nixon, 1970-1972

Folder 18: Menu, House of Representatives, 1973

Box 3

Series 3: Federal Government Records and Ephemera (continued)

Folder 1: Public Law 87-255, Federal Airport Act, 1961

Folder 2: Public Law 87-447, Public broadcasting act, 1962

Folder 3: Public Law 87-624, Commercial communications satellite system, 1967

Folder 4: Public Law 88-129, Training of healthcare personnel, 1963

Folder 5: Public Laws, 88-280, 89-220, 89-239, 1964-1965

Folder 6: Public Law 88-467, Securities Act, 1964

Folder 7: Public Law 89-74, Drug Abuse Control Amendments, 1965

Folder 8: Public Law 89-173, National Capital Transportation Act, 1965

Folder 9: Public Law 89-563, Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, 1966

Folder 10: Public Law 89-670, Dept. of Transportation Act, 1966

Folder 11: Public Law 90-174, Partnership for Health, 1968

Folder 12: Public Law 92-600, Oakley Reservoir, Sangamon River, Illinois, 1972

Folder 13: Springer's Reports, 1959-1972

Folder 14: Watchdog of the Treasury Award, clipping and award plaque, 1963-1966

Item 1: Watchdog of the Treasury Award, awarded by the National Associated Businessmen, 1963-1964

Box 4

Series 3: Federal Government Records and Ephemera (continued)

Items 1-9: Pens used by President Johnson to sign into law bills introduced by Congressman William L. Springer, 1965-1968



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- Item 10: Printing block [Text reads: Pen used by President Lyndon B. Johnson to sign into law a bill introduced by Congressman William L. Springer], undated
- Item 11: Captions printed using printing block, undated
- Item 12: Certificate of authentication for the pens, 1977
- Item 13: Republican National Convention, Honored guest badge, 1968
- Item 14: Republican National Convention, Honored guest badge, 1972

Box 5

Series 2: Photographs (continued)

- Folder 1: Congressional scenes, undated
- Folder 2: Oversize photographs, 1942-1971
- Folder 3: Oversize photographs, undated
- Folder 4: Springer with President Dwight Eisenhower, 1956
- Folder 5: Springer and Elsie Springer with President Lyndon Johnson and Judy Agnew, 1965-1967
- Folder 6: State of the Union, 1967, presented to Springer by C.L. Dennis, International President Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, 1967

Series 3: Federal Government Records and Ephemera (continued)

- Folder 7: Certificate of commendation, presented by the Douglas County Republican Central Committee, undated
- Folder 8: Election poster, undated