A Changing of the Guard

TRADITIONALISTS, FEMINISTS, AND THE NEW FACE OF WOMEN IN CONGRESS, 1955–1976

THE THIRD GENERATION OF WOMEN IN CONGRESS, the 39 individuals who entered the House and the Senate between 1955 and 1976, legislated during an era of upheaval in America. Overlapping social and political movements during this period —the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, the groundswell of protest against American intervention in the Vietnam War in the mid- to late 1960s, the women's liberation movement and the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, and the Watergate Scandal and efforts to reform Congress in the 1970s—provided experience and impetus for a new group of feminist reformers. Within a decade, an older generation of women Members, most of whom believed they could best excel in a man's world by conforming to male expectations, was supplanted by a younger group who challenged narrowly prescribed social roles and long-standing congressional practices.[1]

Several trends persisted, however. As did the pioneer generation and the second generation, the third generation of women accounted for only a small fraction of the total population of Congress. At the peak of the third generation, 20 women served in the 87th Congress (1961–1963)—about 3.7 percent. The latter 1960s were the nadir for new women entering the institution; only 11 were elected or appointed to

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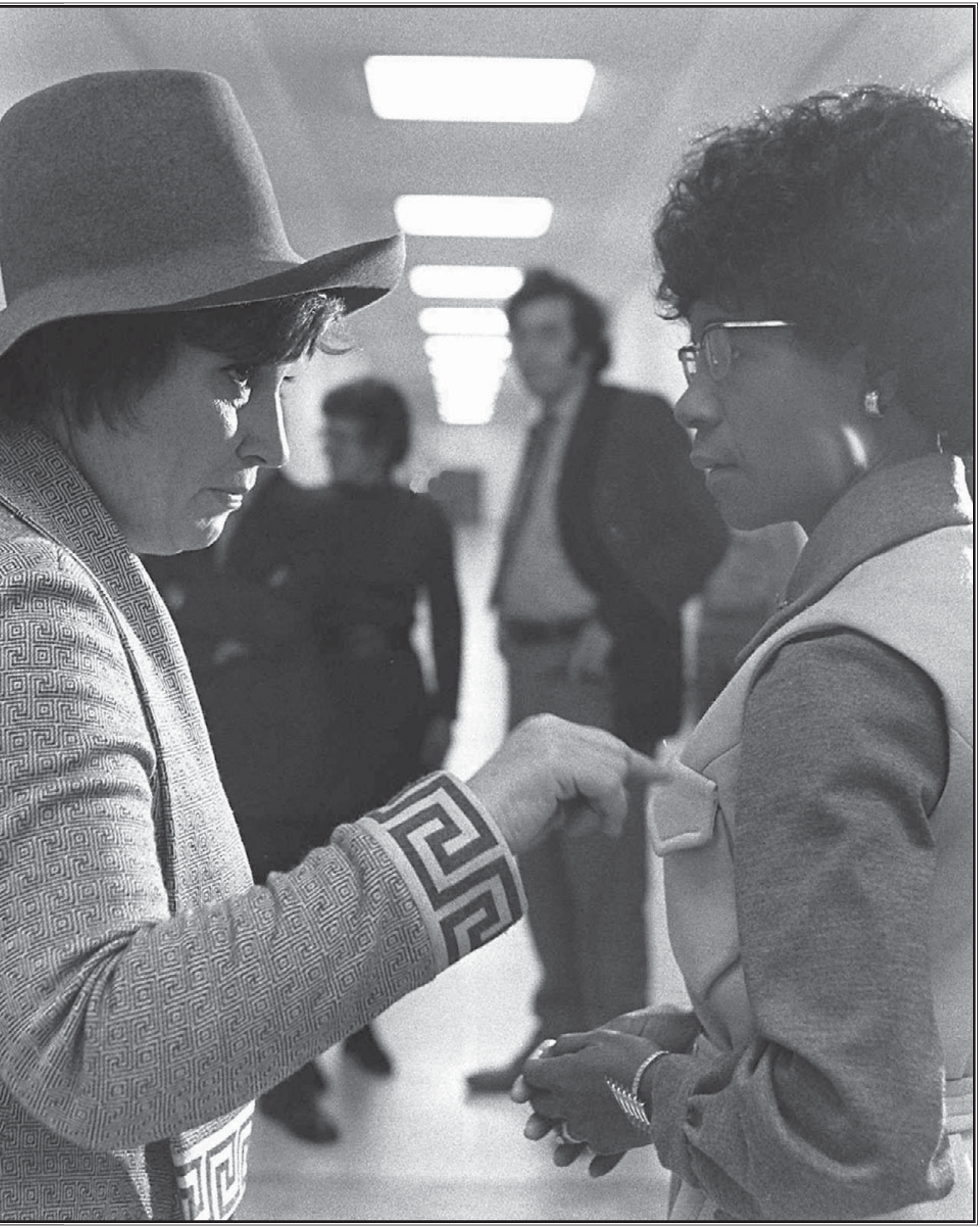
Representatives Bella Abzug (left) and Shirley Chisholm of New York confer outside a committee hearing room in the early 1970s. Abzug and Chisholm represented a new type of feminist Congresswoman who entered Congress during the 1960s and 1970s.

IMAGE COURTESY OF AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



office during the entire decade. Moreover, the widow-familial succession, though less prevalent than in earlier generations, remained a primary route for women to Congress.

Yet, this group of Congresswomen began to embrace a unique legislative identity and an agenda that distinguished them from their predecessors. Representative Martha Griffiths, a central figure in the passage of gender-based civil rights legislation, vocalized this new mindset. First elected in 1954, Griffiths chafed at the deference senior Congresswomen showed to the traditions of the male-dominated institution. "The error of most women was they were trying to make the men who sat in Congress not disapprove of them," Griffiths recalled years later. "I think they wanted to be liked, they didn't want to make enemies. So they didn't try to do things they thought the men would disapprove of. I didn't give a damn whether the men approved or not."[2] More often than not, the women elected to Congress after Griffiths shared her sentiment.

From left, Congresswoman Martha Griffiths of Michigan, journalist May Craig, House Rules Committee Chairman Howard W. Smith of Virginia, and Congresswoman Katharine St. George of New York pose for a photo shortly after the House added a sexual discrimination amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Led by Representative Griffiths, Congresswomen argued that employment laws should include both gender and race protections.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

New Patterns

Political Experience, Committee Assignments, and Familial Connections

Outwardly, the greatest change in women's participation in Congress was in their racial makeup. In 1964 Hawaii Representative Patsy Mink became the first Asian-American woman and the first woman of color in Congress; all 72 Congresswomen who preceded her were white. In 1968 Shirley Chisholm of Brooklyn, New York, became the first African-American woman elected to Congress. An unprecedented 17 African Americans were elected in the 93rd Congress (1973–1975), including three more women: Yvonne Burke of California, Cardiss Collins of Illinois, and Barbara Jordan of Texas. "There is no longer any need for any one to speak for all black women forever," Burke told the *Washington Post* shortly before she and Jordan were elected to Congress. "I expect Shirley Chisholm is feeling relieved."[3] The first Hispanic-American woman in Congress, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida, was elected to the House nearly two decades later in 1989.

However, race and ethnicity were not the only dramatic changes in the characteristics of the women entering Congress; in the decades between 1955 and 1976, a new type of well-educated, professional candidate emerged. Women's precongressional experiences merged reform backgrounds with specialized training, lengthy résumés and, increasingly, elective experience. Before 1955, just seven women in Congress held law degrees (the first was Kathryn O'Loughlin McCarthy of Kansas, elected in 1932). From 1955 through 1976, 10 of the women elected to Congress were lawyers, and several were graduates of the nation's premier law schools. Of the 39 women who were elected or appointed to Congress during this period, 34 (87 percent) had postsecondary education.

Significantly, 14 of these women had served in state legislatures, making the third generation of women in Congress the first in which women elected with legislative experience outnumbered women who were elected as widows. For many women, service in the state legislature was an invaluable introduction to parliamentary procedure and legislative process. "I felt like a fish in just the right temperature of water, learning where the currents were and how to move with them when you wanted to get things done," Millicent Fenwick recalled of her experience in the

New Jersey assembly.[4] Several women were legislative leaders: Ella Grasso of Connecticut was elected Democratic floor leader in the Connecticut house in 1955, Julia Hansen of Washington served as speaker *pro tempore* in the Washington house of representatives from 1955 to 1960, Florence Dwyer of New Jersey was appointed assistant majority leader of the New Jersey assembly in the 1950s, and Barbara Jordan was elected speaker *pro tempore* of the Texas senate in 1972. These achievements were considerable in 1969, when just 4 percent of all state legislators were women. By the end of the 1970s that figure had more than doubled to 10.3 percent.[5] Women's increased participation in state legislatures fueled their growing membership in Congress during the latter decades of the 20th century.

Other women, including Mink, Chisholm, Burke, Bella Abzug of New York, Elizabeth Holtzman of New York, and Patricia Schroeder of Colorado, gained valuable political experience as civil rights advocates or as Vietnam War dissenters. Though each had her own style of advocacy and her own public persona, these women were connected by the thread of modern feminism—assertively pursuing their agendas. Catherine Dean May of Washington, who served from 1959 to 1971 and whose legislative style was that of an earlier generation of women Members, noted the feminists' immediate impact on Congress. "The arrival of personalities like Shirley Chisholm and Bella Abzug on the congressional scene shook our august body to its foundations," May recalled. "Shirley and Bella were not what the male members of Congress had come to expect from a female colleague. They got just as demanding and as noisy and as difficult as men did!"[6]

The widow's mandate, or familial connection, remained for women a significant route to Congress. Of the 39 women who entered Congress between 1955 and 1976, 12 directly succeeded their husbands. Charlotte Reid of Illinois replaced her late husband, GOP candidate Frank Reid, on the ballot when he died just weeks before the 1962 general election. Elaine Edwards of Louisiana was appointed by her husband, Louisiana Governor Edwin Edwards, to briefly fill a Senate vacancy in 1972. In all, 14 women in the third generation (36 percent) reached Congress via a familial connection. While many women served only as temporary placeholders (eight served a term or less), several, including Reid, Cardiss Collins, and Lindy Boggs of Louisiana, had long and distinguished careers. Moreover, as a group, the women in Congress during this era served an average of 4.5 House terms or 1.5 Senate terms (9 years)—longer, on average, than their predecessors from the second generation, who served 3.5 House terms, or slightly more than one Senate term.

The median age of the women elected to Congress between 1955 and 1976 rose one year, on average, to 50.1 years, despite the fact that five women were elected in their 30s (including the youngest woman ever elected to the House, Elizabeth Holtzman, at age 31 years, 7 months). The oldest woman elected to Congress during this period was 68-year-old Corrine Riley of South Carolina, who briefly succeeded her late husband to serve the remainder of his term during the 87th Congress (1961–1963). In the House, where all but two of the women elected during this period served, the average age of all new Members tended to be lower. In the late 1950s, the average age of new Members was 43 years. By the first three elections of the 1970s, the median age of all new House Members was 42.1. But even during the 1970s youth movement in the chamber, the women (at 47.9 years) still lagged behind the men by nearly 6 years. Moreover, 43 percent of the new male Representatives (93 of 216) elected in these elections were in their 20s or 30s.[7]

Irene Baker of Tennessee, widow of Howard Baker, Sr., poses for a ceremonial picture of her swearing-in as a U.S. Representative on March 10, 1964. Speaker John McCormack of Massachusetts (left) administers the oath. Looking on is Majority Leader Carl Albert of Oklahoma.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE HOWARD H. BAKER CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

The practical result was that the men had a considerable advantage in accruing seniority at a younger age.

More explicitly than their predecessors, the women elected between 1955 and 1976 legislated regarding issues that affected women's lives. Their feminism—their belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes–shaped their agendas. Patsy Mink, a Representative from Hawaii and one of the first modern feminists elected to Congress, discovered early in her House career that, concerning women's issues, she was a spokesperson, or a "surrogate representative," for all American women.[8] Mink recalled that "because there were only eight women at the time who were Members of Congress . . . I had a special burden to bear to speak for [all women], because they didn't have people who could express their concerns for them adequately. So, I always felt that we were serving a dual role in Congress, representing our own districts and, at the same time, having to voice the concerns of the total population of women in the country."[9] The Congresswomen of this era tended to perceive themselves, and women in general, as being united by common bonds and life experiences as mothers, primary caregivers, and members of a patriarchal culture.[10] These experiences led to interest in legislation to redress long-standing gender-based inequities in areas like health care and reproductive issues, hiring practices and compensation in the workplace, consumer advocacy, access to education, childcare, and welfare programs for single parents.

A poster from one of Congresswoman Patsy Mink's early election campaigns. In 1964 Mink won her campaign for a U.S. House seat from Hawaii, becoming the first woman of color to serve in Congress.

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Congresswomen thus sought committee assignments, particularly on committees that allocated federal money, that would permit them to effect these changes. An unprecedented four women served on the powerful Appropriations Committee during this period—Julia Hansen of Washington, Edith Green of Oregon, Charlotte Reid, and Yvonne Burke. Lindy Boggs and Virginia Smith of Nebraska joined the committee at the beginning of the 95th Congress (1977–1979), just after the third generation. At the behest of a group of Congresswomen, Speaker Sam Rayburn appointed Martha Griffiths to the Joint Economic Committee in 1960 and to the prestigious Ways and Means Committee in 1961; these assignments had never been held by a woman. Martha Keys of Kansas won appointment to the Ways and Means Committee as a freshman after reforms in the mid-1970s opened prominent panels to junior Members. Marjorie Holt of Maryland, Patsy Mink, and Elizabeth Holtzman served on the newly created Budget Committee in the early 1970s. Women also had a growing voice in defense decisions as Patricia Schroeder and Marjorie Holt gained seats on the influential Armed Services Committee. Holtzman and Jordan served on the Judiciary Committee after their 1972 elections, and at the beginning of the 95th Congress, Shirley Chisholm became the first Democratic woman to sit on the Rules Committee. The most common committee assignments for women were Education and Labor and Government Operations, followed by Interior and Insular Affairs, Banking and Currency, District of Columbia, Public Works, Post Office and Civil Service, and Veterans' Affairs.

Women also made advances in leadership in caucuses and committees. Most notably, a woman was Secretary for the Democratic Caucus—then the party's fifth-ranking position—for most of the period from the mid-1950s to the mid-1980s.[11] Edna Kelly served as Caucus Secretary in the 83rd (1953–1955), 84th (1955–1957), and 88th (1963–1965) Congresses. Leonor Sullivan of Missouri held the post in the 86th and 87th Congresses (1959–1963) and in the 89th through the 93rd Congresses (1965–1975). Patsy Mink succeeded Sullivan in the 94th Congress

Congresswomen of the 89th Congress (1965–1967): (standing, from left) Florence Dwyer of New Jersey, Martha Griffiths of Michigan, Edith Green of Oregon, Patsy Mink of Hawaii, Leonor Sullivan of Missouri, Julia Hansen of Washington, Catherine May of Washington, Edna Kelly of New York, and Charlotte Reid of Illinois (seated, from left) Maurine Neuberger of Oregon, Frances Bolton of Ohio, and Margaret Chase Smith of Maine.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

(1975–1977). In the Senate, Margaret Chase Smith chaired the Republican Conference from the 90th through the 92nd Congresses (1967–1973); she was the highest-ranking woman in the party leadership in that chamber. While Leonor Sullivan was the only woman to chair a full committee during this period (Merchant Marine and Fisheries in the 93rd and 94th Congresses, from 1973 to 1977), a total of 10 women chaired 13 congressional subcommittees from 1955 to 1976. Julia Hansen quickly advanced to chair the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the powerful Appropriations Committee, becoming the first woman to serve in that capacity. Other women who chaired subcommittees included Gracie Pfost of Idaho, who headed the Public Lands Subcommittee of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, and Katherine Granahan of Pennsylvania, who chaired the Postal Operations Subcommittee of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee. Sullivan chaired the Merchant Marine and Fisheries' Panama Canal Subcommittee and the Consumer Affairs Subcommittee of the Banking and Currency Committee. Maude Kee of West Virginia led three panels on the Veterans' Affairs Committee: Education and Training, Administration, and Hospitals.[12]

Legislative Interests

Two key pieces of legislation—Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the debate on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)—forged a unique bond of cooperation between women Members during this period. The emphasis on gender-based equality in these measures was echoed in a number of other legislative efforts, particularly in those aimed at creating opportunities for women in education and the workplace. Women Members continued to play a prominent part in legislation on diverse national concerns, ranging from Cold War defense strategy to internal congressional reforms. Central to this period was a group of federal reform programs known collectively as the Great Society. Initiated by President Lyndon

Johnson in the mid-1960s, these measures were in many ways an extension of the social programs created during the New Deal. Great Society legislation marked the zenith of federal activism—addressing civil rights, urban development, the environment, health care, education, housing, consumer protection, and poverty. This legislation ranged from the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which ended racial segregation in America, to the enactment of a Medicare program for the elderly and a Medicaid program for the poor that provided access to hospitalization, optional medical insurance, and other health care benefits.[13] Women participated in these efforts, decisively shaping some of them, often with a conscious eye toward improving the welfare of all American women.

Representative Martha Griffiths was the prototype for many young activists of the 1970s. One of the first career women elected to Congress, Griffiths had practiced law, served in the state legislature, and presided as a judge in her home state of Michigan. In the U.S. House, she honed in on sexual discrimination in the workplace. While Griffiths believed initially that taking cases to the Supreme Court could result in equality for women, she became so disillusioned with the high court's rulings, she decided only gender-specific legislation could give women access to education, job security, and comparable pay for comparable work.[14]

As the Civil Rights Act of 1964 moved through committee and onto the House Floor for debate, Griffiths, joined by Catherine May, Edna Kelly, Frances Bolton of Ohio, and Katharine St. George of New York, resolved that Title VII, which contained language banning employers from discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin, should also contain language banning discrimination in hiring on the basis of sex. The Congresswomen believed this language was necessary to protect women, reasoning that without it, they would be especially vulnerable to discrimination in hiring on the basis of their gender.[15]

In a parliamentary maneuver designed to derail the entire Civil Rights Act, powerful Rules Committee chairman Howard W. Smith of Virginia freighted the bill with controversial provisions and then proposed to extend protection against discrimination to women. Realizing that Smith could get more than 100 southern votes behind the amendment, Griffiths decided to let him introduce it. When he did, on February 8, 1964, the men on the House Floor erupted into guffaws that grew louder as the women Members rose to speak on behalf of the bill.

Debate on the amendment forged strange alliances; conservatives and segregationists lined up with progressive women. Opposing these unlikely allies were moderate and liberal northern Representatives who were fearful that the entire bill would be defeated. Griffiths stood in the well of the House and scolded the raucous Members, saying, "I suppose that if there had been any necessity to have pointed out that women were a second-class sex, the laughter would have proved it." She touched on the history of enfranchisement for African-American men in the 19th century, noting that women—white and

Lera Thomas of Texas, who succeeded her late husband, Albert Thomas, for the remainder of his term in the 89th Congress (1965–1967), meets with President Lyndon B. Johnson in this White House photo. Albert Thomas was one of President Johnson's close political allies. Lera Thomas continued many of her husband's legislative programs and inspected U.S. efforts in Vietnam during a six-week tour.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LBJ LIBRARY/NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

black—were denied the basic rights of citizenship guaranteed under the 14th and 15th Amendments. "A vote against this amendment" by a male Representative, she warned, "is a vote against his wife, or his widow, or his daughter, or his sister." Other Congresswomen followed her lead. Only Edith Green objected to the amendment, noting that it was more important to first secure African-American civil rights: "For every discrimination I have suffered, I firmly believe that the Negro woman has suffered 10 times that amount of discrimination," Green said. "She has a double discrimination. She was born as a woman and she was born as a Negro."[16]

The debates were followed by a teller vote, in which Members filed down the aisles of the chamber to cast their votes. Smith chose Griffiths to count the "yes" votes. With many Members absenting themselves from the vote, the amendment passed 168 to 133. When this result was announced, a woman in the House Gallery cried out, "We made it! We are human!"[17] Eventually, Smith's tactic backfired, as the House and the Senate voted the full civil rights measure into law later that summer. Griffiths worked feverishly behind the scenes to ensure that the amended version of Title VII was left intact. Years later, after Smith had retired and was visiting the House Chamber, Griffiths greeted him with a hug, saying, "We will always be known for our amendment!" Smith replied, "Well, of course, you know, I offered it as a joke."[18]

Griffiths also played a key role in the passage of another piece of landmark legislation—the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA, drafted by suffragist Alice Paul and supported by the National Woman's Party, was introduced to Congress in 1923 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention.[19] The original language of the ERA stated that "men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and in every place subject to its jurisdiction."

For decades the ERA languished in the House Judiciary Committee and was a deeply divisive issue for many former suffragists and feminists. Advocates believed it would equalize conditions for women. Opponents insisted it would negate an accumulation of laws that protected working women. Earlier Congresswomen, such as Mary Norton of New Jersey and Caroline O'Day of New York, refused to endorse the ERA on the grounds that it would adversely affect labor laws. In 1940 the GOP adopted the ERA as part of its platform, and Winifred Stanley of New York and Margaret Chase Smith sponsored measures to bring it up for a vote on the 20th anniversary of the introduction of the original amendment. But passing the ERA out of committee was especially difficult, since the longtime chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Emanuel Celler of New York (1949–1953 and 1955–1973), opposed the measure on the traditional grounds that it would undermine labor protections. During this period, the language of the ERA was modified, making it less a crusade for change than an affirmation of existing constitutional guarantees. The new wording stipulated that "equal rights under the law shall not be abridged or denied . . . on account of sex."

In 1970, Griffiths changed parliamentary tactics, using a discharge petition that required her to get a majority (218 of the 435 House Members) to support her effort to bring the bill out of committee and onto the floor for general debate and a vote. Griffiths obtained the 218 signatures and on August 10, 1970, opened debate on the bill on the House Floor, where it passed by a wide margin.[20] Later that fall the Senate voted to amend the ERA with a clause exempting women from the draft.

"For every discrimination I have suffered, I firmly believe that the Negro woman has suffered 10 times that amount of discrimination," Representative Edith Green said. "She has a double discrimination. She was born as a woman and she was born as a Negro."

However, the House and the Senate failed to work out their differences in conference committee before Congress adjourned for the year, forcing Griffiths to begin anew. Throughout this legislative battle, Griffiths received the nearly unanimous backing of liberal and conservative women Members. Congresswoman Louise Hicks of Massachusetts dismissed critics who suggested the law would force women into direct combat roles in places like Vietnam.[21] "There is no reason why women should not carry equally the burdens as well as the rights of full citizenship," she responded. "Indeed, most are willing or eager to do so." The ERA was necessary, Hicks argued, because, "discrimination against women—on the job, in education, in civil and criminal law—is a disgrace to a nation which has long proclaimed its belief in equality before the law and individual dignity for all citizens."[22] After Representative Griffiths again successfully maneuvered the ERA onto the House Floor, it won wide approval. The Senate accepted it without revisions in March 1972.

Congresswoman Martha Griffiths of Michigan stands outside the House wing of the Capitol shortly after the House passed the Equal Rights Amendment in August 1970. Griffiths used a long-shot parliamentary maneuver to dislodge ERA from the Judiciary Committee, where it had languished for years. Eventually, ERA passed the Senate and went to the states for ratification in 1972, where it failed to muster the necessary support to become a constitutional amendment.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

However, the battle over the ERA had just begun and would continue into the early 1980s. By law, the constitutional amendment required the approval of three-quarters of the state legislatures within seven years. By the end of 1973, 30 states had ratified it. Five more states approved the amendment between 1974 and 1976, but "Stop ERA," a grass-roots movement led by conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, organized opposition, and several signatory states considered rescinding their support. Schlafly portrayed herself as a defender of women's traditional roles as mothers and homemakers. During the 1970s, Schlafly (who ran for Congress as a Republican, unsuccessfully, in 1952 and 1970) declared that the small number of women in Congress "does not prove discrimination at all." Rather, she said, it "proves only that most women do not want to do the things that must be done to win elections."[23] Schlafly argued that the ERA would destroy protections for women in divorce law and child custody law, weaken laws for sex crimes against women, lead to women being drafted into the military, and undermine the institution of marriage. In a televised debate in 1976, Millicent Fenwick argued with Schlafly and her allies, who wanted the ERA stripped from the Republican Party platform.[24] Fenwick's frustration was palpable: "I think it is sad and a little comic . . . in the Bicentennial year to be wondering about whether we ought to admit that 51 percent [to] 52 percent of the citizens of America are really citizens."[25] By 1977, the ERA was still three states shy of the 38 it needed for ratification. The debate continued and later provided the crucial momentum Congresswomen needed to organize themselves as a formal group.

Economic Equality

The efforts associated with Title VII and the ERA were only the tip of the iceberg; legislation affecting women extended into virtually every facet of American life. A major goal was to achieve economic equality. Since World War II, Congresswomen had been promoting legislation to require equity in pay for men and women in similar jobs. Winifred Stanley introduced such a measure in 1943, but it failed to pass the House. Later, Edna Kelly, Florence Dwyer, Katharine St. George, and Katherine Granahan introduced equal-pay bills, which met with similar outcomes despite support from Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower, largely because of opposition from big business and its congressional allies. Congresswoman Granahan had introduced a measure to end gender-based

wage discrimination in the 85th Congress (1957–1959). "When two workers, side by side, performing the same sort of work are doing it equally well, there is no justification under law or moral justice that they should not be accorded an equal opportunity for equal pay," she said in a floor speech.[26] Women Members persisted. With Edith Green of Oregon shepherding it through Congress, the legislation passed the House in 1962 and eventually became law in 1963 when the House and the Senate agreed on a revised bill. The Equal Pay Act, which built on the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, decreed that no employer could pay a woman "at a rate less than the rate at which he pays wages to employees of the opposite sex . . . on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions." The law allowed wage differences based on factors such as seniority and merit.[27]

Economic opportunity had a racial component as well. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate unlawful employment practices and to report findings to Congress and the President. It also authorized the Attorney General to file a civil suit when employers showed a pattern of discrimination.[28] The EEOC became an important recourse for women and racial minorities. Yvonne Burke, who represented a large constituency of African Americans in the Los Angeles area, insisted that civil rights include economic equality as well as political equality. "True dignity, true freedom, are economic in 1974," she said.[29] Congresswoman Burke championed the cause of minority women, eventually authoring the Displaced Homemakers Act to provide financial assistance and job training for divorced women and single mothers entering the job market.

"...true dignity, true freedom, are economic in 1974."

—YVONNE BURKE

Because they often managed the household budget and did most of the household shopping, women took a special interest in consumer affairs. Representative Leonor Sullivan was the leading advocate for consumer protection in the House. Sullivan's signal piece of legislation was the 1968 Consumer Credit Protection Act, which established truth in lending provisions, requiring financial institutions to fully disclose the conditions and costs of borrowing. In the Senate, Maurine Neuberger advocated honest labeling on consumer items. She challenged the meat packing industry regarding its additives and criticized bedding manufacturers that sold flammable blankets. Neuberger also led the fight to regulate tobacco advertising and to require health warning labels on cigarette packaging.

Education

Education was another area in which women, long considered authorities, wrote and shepherded major measures through Congress. Coya Knutson of Minnesota and Edith Green were instrumental in developing the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, which passed just one year after Russia's successful launch of the *Sputnik* satellite sparked concern that American students lagged behind those in communist countries in critical subject areas. The NDEA provided $1 billion in federal loans and grants to subsidize science, mathematics, and foreign language study in U.S. universities and created the first federal college loans based on student need.

Federal aid for education was expanded dramatically during the Great Society, and two women played prominent legislative roles in the process. Patsy Mink helped shape Head Start legislation, which provided federal money to help

communities meet the needs of disadvantaged preschool-aged children. Administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start provided comprehensive child development programs for children up to age five and their families. Mink's Women's Education Equity Act, which passed as part of a 1974 education bill, mandated the removal of gender stereotypes from school textbooks and provided federal incentives to educational programs that promoted gender equity. Edith Green, a former teacher, became known as the Mother of Higher Education for her leadership on school issues during her two decades in the U.S. House. Among Green's landmark legislative achievements was the Higher Education Act of 1965, which created the first federal program providing financial assistance to undergraduates. In 1972, Congresswoman Green held the first hearings on discrimination against women in college sports programs. Both Green and Mink sponsored Title IX, one of the 1972 federal education amendments, which provided that "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

A number of women who entered Congress during this period won election as antiwar candidates: Mink, Chisholm, Abzug, and Schroeder among them.

Foreign Policy

The Cold War dominated U.S. foreign policy throughout the period from 1955 to 1976. During the Eisenhower administration, the United States stockpiled nuclear weapons and enhanced its missile and aircraft delivery systems to deter Soviet leaders from carrying out aggressive military actions around the globe. The Soviets, too, developed nuclear capabilities and engaged Washington in a game of strategic brinksmanship. This policy nearly resulted in a nuclear exchange in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis, when the John F. Kennedy administration instituted a naval "quarantine" of Cuba after discovering that the Soviet government, under Nikita Khrushchev, had secretly placed intermediate-range nuclear missiles on the communist-controlled island. After backing away from nuclear apocalypse, the two superpowers tacitly agreed to avoid direct confrontations.

However, the Cold War had moved into a new phase in the developing world, as the Soviets and Americans vied for the support of postcolonial governments in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Though careful not to challenge one another directly, Washington and Moscow poured economic and military aid into these regions and underwrote "proxy wars" fought by indigenous peoples. Beginning in 1954, America became the primary benefactor of the Ngo Dinh Diem regime in South Vietnam in a civil war against the communist-controlled government of Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam. A decade later, in July 1965, after it became clear that the South could not win alone, the United States intervened directly against North Vietnamese forces and communist rebels. By late 1967, more than 485,000 U.S. troops were stationed in Vietnam. Eventually, some 2 million Americans served in Vietnam, and more than 58,000 of them died. Vietnamese losses were staggering; during the civil war from 1954 to 1975, more than 1.1 million North Vietnamese soldiers and Viet Cong rebels were killed and nearly 2 million North and South Vietnamese civilians perished. U.S. intervention spurred a massive antiwar protest movement that had spread by the late 1960s from college campuses to large cities, drawing Americans from all walks of life.[30]

The Vietnam War divided women Members. Charlotte Reid and Edna Kelly were ardent supporters of military intervention. Edith Green was one of a handful to oppose her party and the President when the Johnson administration sought funding for the initial American intervention. A number of women who entered Congress during this period, including Mink, Chisholm, Abzug, and Schroeder, won election as antiwar candidates. With much fanfare, Abzug introduced legislation to withdraw U.S. troops from South Vietnam and to impeach President Richard Nixon for his prosecution of the war. Schroeder, who became in 1973 only the third woman ever to sit on the House Armed Services Committee, was in the 1970s and 1980s a particularly vocal advocate of reining in defense spending and securing new arms control accords. She was determined to bring women's perspectives to a debate from which they had been largely excluded. "When men talk about defense, they always claim to be protecting women and children," Schroeder said, "but they never ask the women and children what they think."[31] Other Congresswomen advocated more vigorous U.S. support for international human rights. Two New Jersey Representatives emerged as critics of authoritarian governments allied with America in the Cold War against the Soviets. Helen Meyner criticized human rights abuses by Ferdinand Marcos's government in the Philippines, seeking to cut U.S. aid to the regime. Millicent Fenwick helped craft the Helsinki Accords on Human Rights, which investigated abuses behind the communist iron curtain, and openly challenged American support for dictatorial regimes in the Middle East and Africa.

Reform and Congressional Accountability

Women also participated in several efforts to make congressional operations more transparent and accountable and to circumvent procedural attempts to block legislation. For example, in 1961, Representative Florence Dwyer of New Jersey was one of about two dozen northern Republicans from urban districts who sided with Speaker Sam Rayburn and liberal Democrats as the House pushed through a measure to expand the membership of the Rules Committee, which controlled the flow of legislation to the House Floor. Chairman Howard Smith, a conservative Democrat from Virginia, had used his power to block social legislation. By assigning more liberal Members to the committee, the House paved the way for the consideration in subsequent years of major bills like the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Later in the 1960s, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (commonly known as the Ethics Committee) was formed to provide Members with ethics guidelines and to investigate violations of House practice. Like many other Members, Congresswoman Edna Kelly had financed her campaigns out of her own pocketbook. She recalled that that practice changed in the 1960s as an increasing number of her colleagues relied on fundraising events to pay for the costs of biannual elections. Believing this new system could be abused, Kelly became a founding member of the Ethics Committee in 1967 and helped draft the committee's operating procedures.[32] Representative Millicent Fenwick earned the epithet Conscience of Congress for her repeated appeals to colleagues to reform the campaign finance system. Elected in 1974, Fenwick had a tendency to speak out on the House Floor that prompted Wayne Hays of Ohio, the powerful chairman of the House Administration Committee, to threaten to withhold her staff's paychecks "if that woman doesn't sit down and keep quiet."[33] Undeterred, Fenwick directly challenged Hays, who shortly afterward fell victim to scandal and left the House.

Judiciary Committee member Barbara Jordan of Texas was a freshman when the House began impeachment inquiries against President Richard M. Nixon in 1974, at the height of the Watergate Scandal. Television coverage of committee proceedings—which included her statements about the constitutional gravity of the crisis—instantly made Representative Jordan a national figure. Here, she is shown during Judiciary Committee proceedings.

IMAGE COURTESY OF TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, BARBARA JORDAN COLLECTION

The Watergate Scandal was one of the defining political events of the 20th century and a moment of constitutional crisis. It grew out of the culture of suspicion within the Nixon administration, the obsession with secrecy that characterized Cold War national security imperatives, and the related expansion of presidential power.[34] Clandestine Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation surveillance operations had been authorized by President Nixon in 1970 against domestic opponents, antiwar protestors, and government officials suspected of leaking classified material about the planning for the Vietnam War. In 1972, the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP), headed by former Attorney General John Mitchell, approved a plan to wiretap the phones of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. The June 17, 1972, break-in was botched, and the perpetrators were arrested. The ensuing cover-up involved senior administration officials and even the President himself.

Over a period of nearly two years, the details of the story gradually came to light through a combination of investigative journalism, judicial action, and legislative inquiries. In February 1973, the Senate created the Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities (widely known as the Ervin Committee, after its chairman, Sam Ervin of North Carolina) to investigate the break-in. By 1974, after a series of indictments and resignations involving top officials in the Nixon administration, the House Judiciary Committee initiated formal proceedings to impeach the President. When the committee voted to support articles of impeachment, President Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974. Two first-term Congresswomen, Barbara Jordan and Liz Holtzman, served on the Judiciary Committee during the impeachment process. A large television audience was mesmerized by Jordan's eloquence on the immense constitutional questions that hung in the balance. Her work on the committee transformed her into a national figure. Holtzman, too, earned a reputation as an erudite member of the panel, particularly for her sharp questioning of President Gerald Ford, who later testified before the committee to explain his pardon of Nixon in September 1974.

Watergate and mounting concerns over the abuse of power in federal agencies spurred Congresswomen like Bella Abzug to make government more accountable

President Gerald R. Ford signs a proclamation marking Women's Equality Day on August 26, 1974. Present are a group of Congresswomen: (from left) Yvonne Burke of California, Barbara Jordan of Texas, Elizabeth Holtzman of New York, Marjorie Holt of Maryland, Martha Keys of Kansas, Patricia Schroeder of Colorado, Cardiss Collins of Illinois, and Lindy Boggs of Louisiana.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

to the public. As chair of a Government Affairs subcommittee, Abzug shepherded through the House the Privacy Act of 1974, which expanded "sunshine laws," making government records more available for public scrutiny. A companion to the Freedom of Information Act of 1966, which allowed private citizens access to government records, the Privacy Act permitted individuals to view federal records about themselves and to amend inaccuracies. The Privacy Act also required government agencies to publish descriptions of their record-keeping systems and prohibited the disclosure of personal information to third parties.[35]

Much of the effort to reform government during this era was focused on Capitol Hill itself. One of the most important attempts to reform House practices and procedures was undertaken by the Democratic Caucus's Committee on Organization, Study, and Review, later known as the Hansen Committee for its chair, Representative Julia Hansen. The Hansen Committee was part of a larger effort to overhaul internal congressional procedures, a task begun by liberal reformers as far back as the 1930s. For several decades, most of these efforts were consistently blunted by conservative southern Democrats, who held the most powerful committee posts and perceived reform as a threat to their autonomy. Reformers sought to centralize the Democratic Party's decision-making process, to diminish the power of autocratic committee chairs, to provide better resources for subcommittees and, generally, to make the system more responsive to rank-and-file Members and the public.[36] By the early 1970s, junior Members like Ella Grasso argued that the tenure-based committee system had to be reformed so that chairs would be chosen "on the basis of intelligence and leadership." Grasso explained that the party would be best served by permitting "all the qualities of intelligence and vigor in the House Democratic membership to have full effect."[37]

Members' respect for Hansen and her moderate approach made her a logical choice to head the panel, which reviewed radical proposals put forward by a select committee led by Representative Richard Bolling of Missouri in 1973–1974. The Bolling Committee recommended altering committee jurisdictions, abolishing some panels entirely, and expanding resources for subcommittees. But the House approved the recommendations of the Hansen Committee in the fall of 1974, leaving jurisdictions intact but weakening chairmen by further curbing the power of the Rules Committee and expanding the membership and the resources of subcommittees.[38] Reform efforts during this period resulted in better committee assignments for new Members and allowed them to participate more directly in the formulation of party strategy and legislation. Gladys Spellman of Maryland, one of the early leaders of the House freshman class of 1974, the so-called "Watergate Babies," helped conduct a review of entrenched committee chairmen. Several of the most powerful—W.R. Poage of Texas of the Agriculture Committee, Felix Edward Hébert of Louisiana of the Armed Services Committee, and Wright Patman of Texas of the Committee on Banking and Currency—were forced from their positions in rapid succession.

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Identity: Changing Social and Institutional Perceptions About Women

After the disruption, alienation, and insecurity of the Great Depression and the Second World War, the family, more so than ever before, became the center of American life. Couples wed early (in the late 1950s the average age of American women at marriage was 20) and in proportions that surpassed those of all previous eras and have not been equaled since. They reared large families. Many moved to sprawling, affordable tract housing developments in the suburbs, bought modern conveniences ranging from cars to dishwashers, and enjoyed more leisure time.

Postwar prosperity made the banalities of housework less taxing but often came at a cost to the women who gave up careers to maintain the domestic sphere. This lifestyle stressed the importance of a one-income household, with the husband working and the wife staying at home to raise the children. Historian Elaine Tyler May called it a kind of "domestic containment": In seeking to nurture their families in the suburbs of the 1950s, housewives and mothers often gave up their aspirations for fulfillment outside the home.[39] For instance, the decline in the proportion of women who sought higher education degrees can be attributed in large part to marital and familial priorities. In 1920, 47 percent of college students were women; by 1958, that figure stood at 38 percent, despite the availability of more federal aid to pay for university education.[40]

Social expectations for what constituted a woman's proper role outside the home also constrained women Members of Congress. . . . The primacy of family responsibilities and the power of society's expectations of what constituted a "woman's sphere" in the 1950s is aptly illustrated by the demise of Coya Knutson's congressional career.

Social expectations for what constituted a woman's proper role outside the home constrained women Members of Congress as well. When asked if women were handicapped in the rough-and-tumble of political campaigns because society held them to different standards than men, Maurine Neuberger, who served for years in the Oregon legislature before succeeding her late husband in the U.S. Senate, replied, "Definitely. . . . A woman enters into a man's world of politics, into back-fighting and grubbing. Before she puts her name on the ballot, she encounters prejudice and people saying, 'A woman's place is in the home.' She has to walk a very tight wire in conducting her campaign. She can't be too pussyfooting or mousy. Also, she can't go to the other extreme: belligerent, coarse, nasty."[41] Congresswoman Gracie Pfost observed that a woman seeking political office "must be willing to have her every motive challenged, her every move criticized," and added that she "must submit to having her private life scrutinized under a microscope . . . and [being] the subject of devastating rumors every day."[42]

The primacy of family responsibilities and the power of society's expectations of what constituted a "woman's sphere" in the 1950s is aptly illustrated by the demise of Coya Knutson's congressional career. The first woman to represent Minnesota, Knutson was an early advocate for the creation of a food stamp program, funding for school lunches, and federal student loans. But after two terms, her abusive husband sabotaged her promising career by conspiring with her opposition to publicly embarrass Knutson. He accused her (falsely) of neglecting their family, which included a young adopted son, and of having an affair with a Washington aide. The press sensationalized the story, along with Andy Knutson's plea, "Coya come home." In the 1958 elections, Knutson's opposition subtly exploited this theme, and her constituents voted her out of office by a slim 1,390-vote margin. Although the House elections subcommittee agreed with Knutson's complaint that the accusations had contributed to her defeat, the damage had been done. Knutson's 1960 bid for re-election failed by an even wider margin.

Knutson's experience reinforced the widely held perception that women politicians could not manage both a career and family. The debate over balancing domestic responsibilities and professional life lasted well into the 1990s, and though male political opponents were less inclined to exploit it in latter decades, women politicians were repeatedly put on the defensive by the media and constituents who raised the issue.

Shifting social norms quickly altered staid notions of domesticity. Amidst the routine of household duties, many postwar wives and mothers were frustrated by their lack of professional fulfillment. Betty Friedan memorably identified this malaise as "the problem with no name" in her landmark book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). The book's popularity attested to Friedan's connection with a feeling of discontent. Daughters who came of age in the 1960s were determined to make their lives less constrained than those of their mothers. Consequently, the women's rights movement and the sexual revolution of the 1960s challenged many of the traditional notions of motherhood and marital relationships.[43] Many young women rejected the sexual conventions of their parents' generation. Open discussion of sexuality and cohabitation outside marriage became more socially accepted. As birth control became more widely available, women exercised greater control over when, or if, they would have children. In the landmark *Roe v. Wade* (1973) decision, the Supreme Court upheld on the grounds of privacy a woman's constitutional right to terminate her pregnancy.

Sexual and reproductive freedom provided more options for women, who previously chose either a career or marriage. By the 1970s, many marriages involved two careers, as both the husband and the wife worked and, increasingly, shared familial duties. These added stress to family life. The divorce rate rose, and the phenomenon of the single, working mother became more commonplace. Yet, throughout this period, more young women pursued careers in traditionally male-dominated fields such as law, medicine, and business—loosening their bonds to home and hearth and preparing the way for a new and larger generation of women in state and national politics.

These changes profoundly altered the characteristics of the women who were elected to Congress from the 1970s onward. As younger women entered the institution, they faced questions about motherhood and family. Like many of their contemporaries outside politics, some Congresswomen chose motherhood as well as a career. In November 1973, a year after winning election to the U.S. House, Yvonne Burke gave birth to a daughter, Autumn, becoming the first sitting Member of Congress to become a mother.

Young mothers in Congress entered territory where few, if any, of their predecessors could provide guidance. Representative Schroeder recalled that several weeks after her first election, Congresswoman Bella Abzug telephoned to congratulate her. Abzug then asked incredulously how Schroeder, the mother of two young children, planned to maintain two careers: Representative and mom. "I told her I really wasn't sure and had hoped she would give the answer, not ask the question!"[44] Schroeder said. Service in Congress, she recalled, placed many extra demands on her family and required some creativity on her part—bringing diapers onto the House Floor in her handbag, keeping a bowl of crayons on her office coffee table, moving the family wholesale from Denver to Washington, and contending with her husband's decision to leave his career to follow hers.[45] Schroeder's

In November 1973, a year after winning election to the U.S. House, Yvonne Burke gave birth to a daughter, Autumn, becoming the first sitting Member of Congress to become a mother.

contemporaries and later women Members often echoed her descriptions of the disruption and uprooting of familial rhythms.

Challenging the Institution

The younger generation of feminist lawmakers also tended to buck many of Capitol Hill's most visible discriminatory and patronizing practices. In the 1960s, Patsy Mink publicly protested the House gym's exclusionary policy towards women by marching on the facility with Charlotte Reid and Catherine Dean May. "It was just a symbolic gesture that there are so many ways in which sex discrimination manifests itself in the form of social custom, mores or whatever, that you really have to make an issue whenever it strikes to protest it," Mink recalled. "You can't tolerate it."[46] The women also complained that the only bathroom facilities directly off the House Floor were for men. By the early 1960s, there were nearly 20 women Members sharing a single lavatory. Congresswoman Edith Green appealed to the House Administration Committee to set aside a space for the women, and in 1962, they were assigned a suite off the Old House Chamber that included a powder room, a kitchen, and a sitting area. Eventually the suite was named the Lindy Claiborne Boggs Congressional Women's Reading Room in honor of Representative Boggs's long service to the institution.[47]

"The day I wore a pants suit onto the floor you'd have thought I asked for a land base for China," Armed Services member Pat Schroeder told a local newspaper. "I just want to do my job. Does it make any difference if I have a bow in my hair or not?"

Deviating from traditional dress codes was another way women challenged congressional custom. Bella Abzug broke long-standing tradition when she insisted on wearing her trademark hat onto the House Floor. Others followed her lead, often contending with resistance and outright scorn. "The day I wore a pants suit onto the floor you'd have thought I asked for a land base for China," Armed Services member Pat Schroeder told a local newspaper. "I just want to do my job. Does it make any difference if I have a bow in my hair or not?"[48]

Feminists not only challenged their male colleagues; they also questioned the conviction, prevalent among the older generation of Congresswomen, that they should not organize to champion their own agenda. In 1971, Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm helped organize the National Women's Political Caucus to promote greater participation of women in all aspects of U.S. politics. More than 320 women attended the founding conference in Washington, D.C.[49] Abzug, Chisholm, and other new Members, including Schroeder and Holtzman, pushed to create a formal congressional women's caucus, both to organize women and to educate the rank-and-file Membership about issues of special importance to women. Early efforts floundered, however, without the sanction of senior women leaders. The most influential among them—Leonor Sullivan, Julia Hansen, and Edith Green—subscribed to more-traditional views and generally hoped to avoid the establishment of a women's caucus.[50]

This clash was primarily generational rather than ideological, pitting older Democratic Members against a younger cadre of party members. By 1970, the dean of congressional women was 68-year-old Representative Sullivan, who proved far more traditional than many of her younger colleagues. She was the only Congresswoman to vote against the Equal Rights Amendment, not only because she believed it was a threat to labor laws, but because she believed it would jeopardize the family. "I believe that wholesome family life is the backbone of civilization," Sullivan said. Passage of the ERA would "accelerate the breakup of home life."[51] She added, "There are differences between male and female roles in our

society and I hope there always are."[52] Sullivan refused to countenance a women's caucus because she believed it unnecessary and a possible affront to male colleagues. Julia Hansen, a pioneer at virtually every level of Washington state government, also showed little support for a women's caucus. Having made her way in the male political world principally by hard work, talent, and determination, without benefit of caucuses or women's groups, Hansen was reluctant to advocate a caucus that would distinguish her based on her gender.[53] Caucus advocates also received no support from Edith Green. Like Sullivan, Representative Green viewed a potential women's caucus as a polarizing force that would do little to ease divisions and might even hinder legislation that addressed inequities for women and minorities.[54]

Other factors added to the reluctance to create a women's group. The leadership's lack of support for the effort led some women to question the legitimacy and staying power of a women's caucus. Others, elected by more-conservative constituencies, feared they might alienate voters by joining a group that likely would advocate nontraditional issues. Also, many Members were particularly concerned with the probable participation of Bella Abzug, a domineering and highly partisan Member some feared might quickly become the public face of the caucus.

New impetus for organization came after Sullivan, Green, and Hansen retired in the mid-1970s and Abzug left the House to run for the Senate in 1976. By 1977, the deans of House women—Republican Margaret Heckler of Massachusetts and Democrat Shirley Chisholm of New York, elected in 1966 and 1968, respectively—had only about a decade of seniority.[55] These changes enabled a renewed effort to form a women's caucus and continued emphasis on legislation that addressed women's economic, social, and health concerns.

NOTES

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3 Leroy F. Aarons, "Legislator With a Subtle Touch," 22 October 1972, *Washington Post:* K1.

4 Louise Sweeney, "Congress's Millicent Fenwick: A Blueblood With a Social Conscience," 25 June 1975, *Christian Science Monitor:* 17.

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6 Catherine Dean May, Oral History Interview, 1 March 1979, 9 March 1979 and 20 April 1979, U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress (hereinafter cited as USAFMOC), Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.: 148–149.

7 For the 1955–1960 period, see Allan G. Bogue, Jerome M. Clubb, Carroll R. McKibbin, and Santa A. Traugott, "Members of the House of Representatives and the Processes of Modernization, 1789–1960," *Journal of American History* 63 (September 1976): 275–302. For the 1970, 1972, and 1974 election, figures were compiled using birth dates from the *Congressional Directory*. Two hundred thirty-three individuals were elected to the House in the 92nd, 93rd, and 94th Congresses; 17 were women. Eighty-two men were elected in their 30s, and 11 men were elected in their 20s.

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10 Susan J. Carroll, "Representing Women: Congresswomen's Perceptions of Their Representational Roles," paper delivered at the 13–15 April 2000, conference on "Women Transforming Congress," Carl

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11 Mildred Amer, "Major Leadership Election Contests in the House of Representatives, 94th–108th Congresses," 3 September 2003, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Amer, "Women in the United States Congress, 1917–2004," 1 July 2004, CRS Report for Congress, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

12 For lists of women committee chairs and subcommittee chairs and a list of women elected to leadership positions, see Appendices E, F, and G.

13 For more on the origins and history of the Great Society, see James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996): 524–592; Robert Dallek, *Flawed Giant: Lyndon Johnson and His Times, 1961–1973* (New York: Oxford University Press: 1998).

14 *Congressional Record,* House, 91st Cong., 2nd sess. (10 August 1970): 28005; see also Martha Griffiths, Oral History Interview, 29 October 1979, USAFMOC, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.: 82–83.

15 This effort is explained in detail in Griffiths's USAFMOC oral history.

16 All quotes from the *Congressional Record,* House, 88th Cong., 2nd sess. (8 February 1964): 2578–2583.

17 Unpublished article by Martha Griffiths on sex in the Civil Rights Act, Appendix I, Griffiths USAFMOC Oral History Interview; see also 73–76.

18 Griffiths, USAFMOC, Oral History Interview: 73–76.

19 See Joan Hoff-Wilson, *Rights of Passage: The Past and the Future of the ERA* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).

20 *Congressional Record,* House, 91st Cong., 2nd sess. (10 August 1970): 28004–28005; Martha Griffiths's letter to House colleagues, 2 September 1970, included in her USAFMOC interview.

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24 Shirley Washington, *Outstanding Women Members of Congress* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Capitol Historical Society, 1995): 29.

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33 Bruce Lambert, "Millicent Fenwick, 82, Dies; Gave Character to Congress," 17 September 1992, *New York Times:* D25.

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35 See House Report 108–172, Committee on Government Reform, "A Citizen's Guide on Using the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974 To Request Government Records," http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/cpquery/T?&reportffihr172&dbnamefficp108&.

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37 Susan Bysiewicz, Ella: *A Biography of Governor Ella Grasso* (The Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc., 1984): 56.

38 See Zelizer, *On Capitol Hill:* 139–151.

39 See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988): especially 16–36.
40 Figures cited in Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963), chapter one, "The Problem That Has No Name."
41 Myrna Oliver, "Maurine Neuberger; One of First Women in the Senate," 24 February 2000, *Los Angeles Times:* A20.
42 Hope Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members: Women in the U.S. Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1973): 230.
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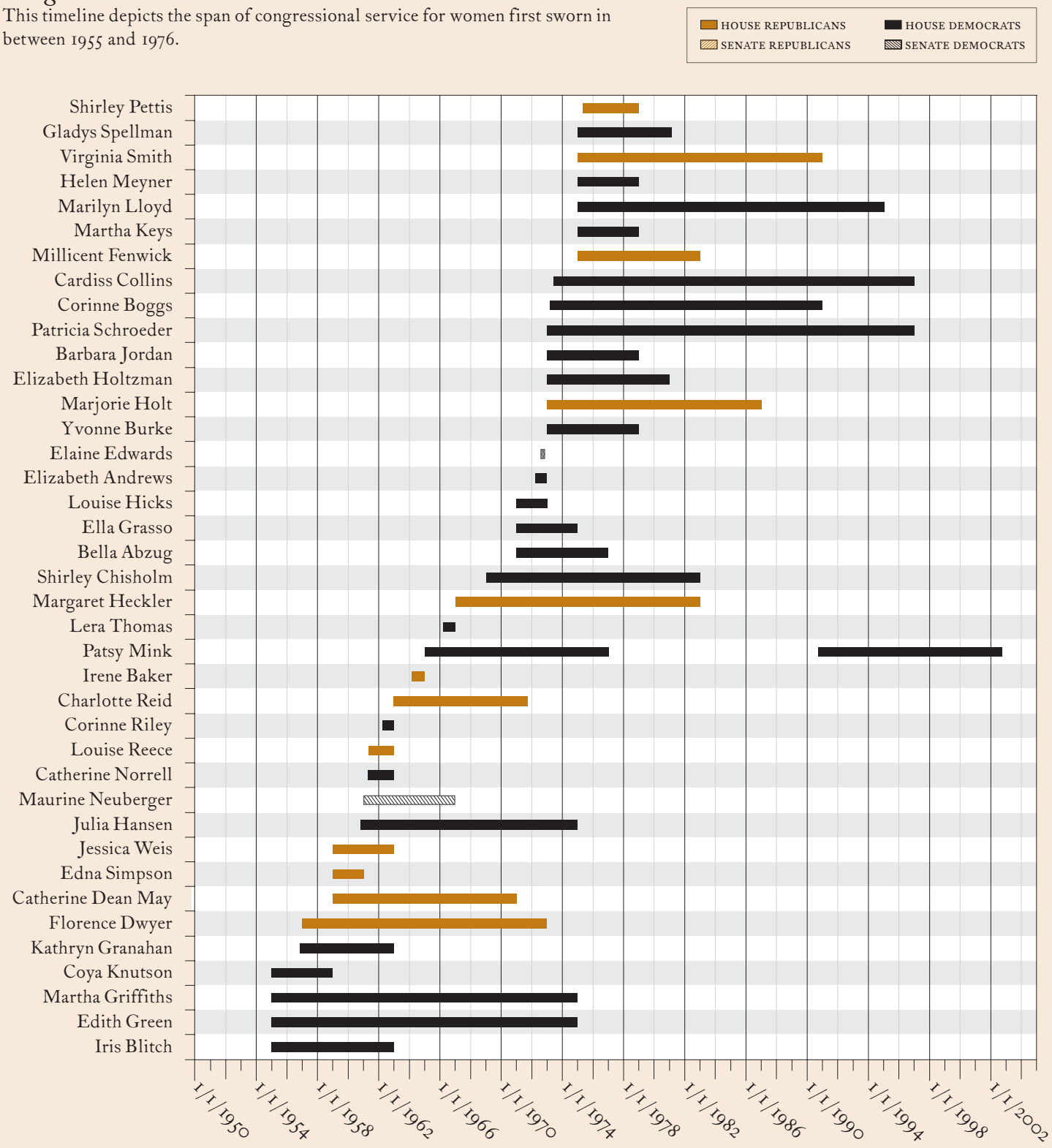
44 Patricia Schroeder with Andrea Camp and Robyn Lipner, *Champion of the Great American Family: A Personal and Political Book* (New York: Random House, 1989): 15.
45 Schroeder, *Champion of the Great American Family:* 16–17.
46 Mink, USAFMOC, Oral History Interview: 111.
47 "History of the Lindy Claiborne Boggs Congressional Women's Reading Room, H-235, United States Capitol," prepared by the Architect of the Capitol; see also, William Allen, *History of the United States Capitol: A Chronicle of Design, Construction, and Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2001): 432.
48 Joan A. Lowy, *Pat Schroeder: A Woman of the House* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003): 85.
49 See the National Women's Political Caucus history page, http://www.nwpc.org/index.php?displayffiShowSpecialPage&nameffiHistory (accessed 1 April 2005).
50 See Irwin N. Gertzog, *Congressional Women: Their Recruitment, Integration, and Behavior* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995): 165–169.
51 Both quotes from Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members:* 234.
52 Lowy, *Pat Schroeder:* 86.
53 Susan Tolchin, *Women in Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976): 35; Gertzog, *Congressional Women:* 167–168.
54 Gertzog, *Congressional Women:* 167–169.
55 Ibid.

Visual Statistics IV

Congressional Service[1]

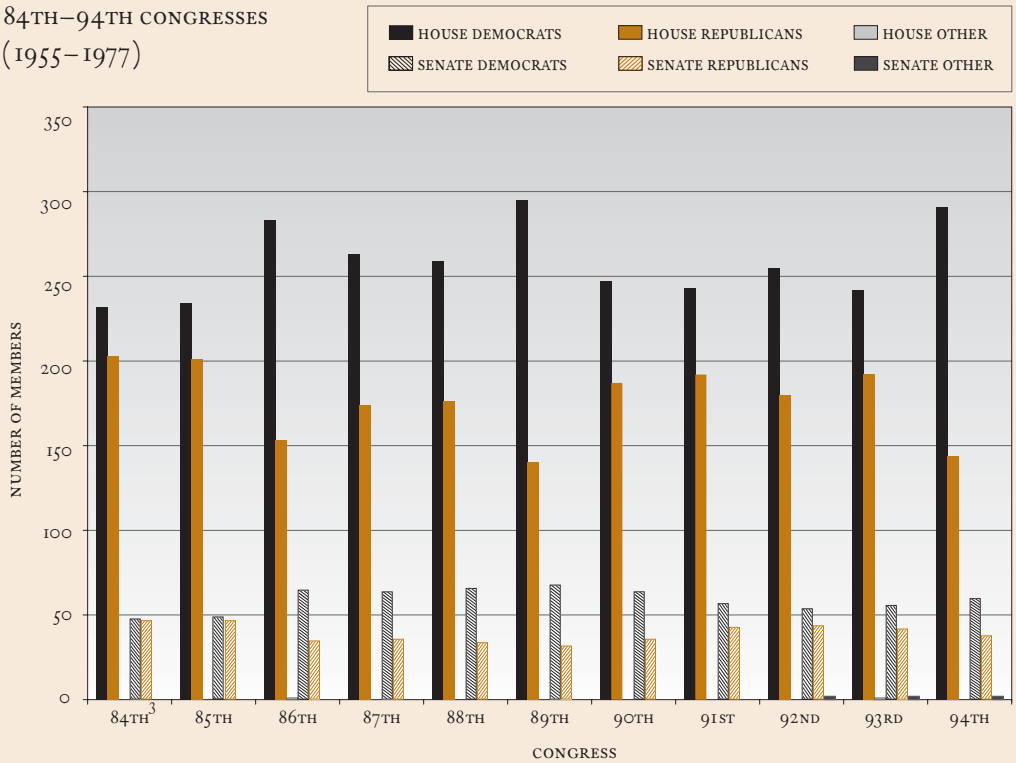
This timeline depicts the span of congressional service for women first sworn in between 1955 and 1976.



1. Source: *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774–2005* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005); also available at http://bioguide.congress.gov.

House and Senate Party Affiliation[2]

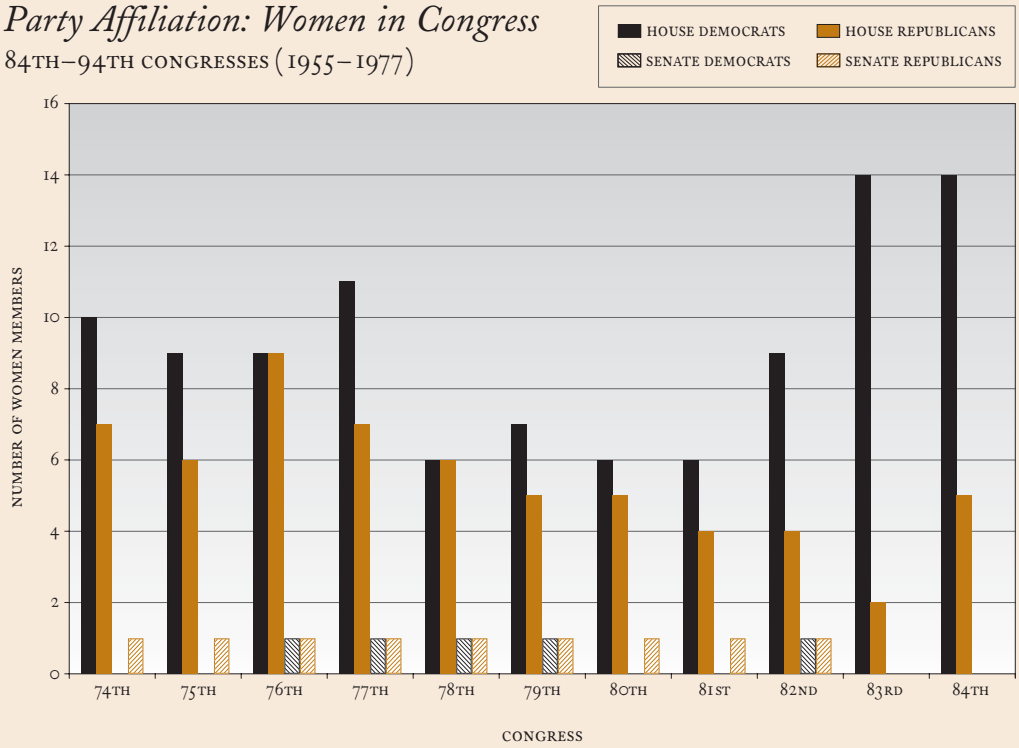
84th–94th congresses
(1955–1977)



This chart depicts the party affiliation of all Members of Congress from 1955 to 1977. The following chart depicts a party breakdown only for women Members during this time period.

Party Affiliation: Women in Congress

84th–94th congresses (1955–1977)



2. House numbers do not include Delegates or Resident Commissioners. Sources: Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives; U.S. Senate Historical Office.

3. Strom Thurmond (SC) was an Independent Democrat during the 84th Congress (1955–1957) until his resignation on April 4, 1956. In November of that year he was elected as a Democrat to fill the vacancy created by his resignation. The Independent Member listed above was Wayne Morse (OR), who changed from an Independent to a Democrat on February 17, 1955. [U.S. Senate Historical Office]

Iris Faircloth Blitch

1912–1993

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM GEORGIA
1955–1963

Representative Iris Blitch of Georgia embodied a peculiar mixture of progressive feminism and southern conservatism during her long political career, which included four terms in the U.S. House. As a Georgia state legislator she pushed women's rights concerns. In the U.S. House, while displaying considerable legislative ability, she hewed to more traditional lines, advocating on behalf of agricultural interests in her rural district while denouncing federal efforts to enforce civil rights in the South. Over the span of her career, Blitch earned a reputation as a quick-tongued legislator who enjoyed the give-and-take of debate. "I can't remember a time when I wasn't interested in politics," she once recalled.[1]

Iris Faircloth was born near Vidalia, Georgia, on April 25, 1912, daughter of James Louis Faircloth and Marietta Ridgdill Faircloth. She attended public elementary schools in Georgia. Both of her parents died by the time she was nine, so Iris Faircloth moved to Frederick, Maryland, to live with her two older sisters. She graduated from Hagerstown High School and returned to Georgia in 1929 to attend the University of Georgia at Athens. After her first year of school, Iris Faircloth married businessman Brooks Erwin Blitch, Jr. The couple raised two children, Betty and Brooks, while working together in their pharmacy, lumber, cattle, and fertilizer businesses, as well as tending to the family farm in Homerville.

Iris Blitch became involved in politics during the Great Depression, out of concern for the lack of assistance for people suffering from the economic disaster. At the time, Georgia politics were controlled at the executive level by Democratic Governor Eugene Talmadge's political machine, characterized by its popular conservative, rural, and anti-New Deal stance.[2] In this context, Blitch first ran for elective office as a Democratic candidate for the Georgia state house of representatives in 1940. Although she was unsuccessful, she later won a seat in the Georgia state senate in 1946. Two years later, Blitch was elected to the state house of representatives. While in the legislature, she managed to pass a bill to allow women to serve on Georgia juries. When opponents objected that women were too delicate for "indecent" courtroom responsibilities, Blitch shot back, "then it is time to bring women into the court rooms to clean them up."[3] Blitch also returned to school in 1949 and attended South Georgia College at Douglas, where she studied political science, accounting, and English. After losing her 1950 re-election campaign, she was elected to the state senate in 1952 and served until December 1954 as a close ally of the administration of Governor Herman Talmadge (Eugene's son) and was soon recognized as a top leader in the Talmadge machine.[4] During this time she also was heavily involved with the national Democratic Party, serving from 1948 to 1956 as one of the eight members of the Democratic National Committee's executive committee.

In 1954, Iris Blitch set her sights on the U.S. House of Representatives. In the race for the Democratic nomination for a southeastern Georgia seat, Blitch faced four-term incumbent Representative William McDonald "Don" Wheeler, an Alma, Georgia, native, Air Force veteran, and lawyer. Wheeler had made headlines in June 1953 when he introduced a motion to impeach Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas after Douglas granted a temporary stay of execution to Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. The Rosenbergs had been convicted of passing along classified atomic information to the Soviet Union.[5] Blitch

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

blasted Wheeler for his absence during a number of House votes and for what she described as his failure to protect the district's large agricultural constituency. She also advocated a major water conservation program for the South, along with the development of the harbor in Brunswick, Georgia.[6] In the September 1954 Democratic primary, Blitch won by about 1,400 votes—46 to 44 percent in a three-way race—carrying 13 of the district's 20 counties. In the then-one-party system in place in Georgia, the nomination was tantamount to election, and Blitch had no opposition in the general election. The Congresswoman also was unopposed in each of her three succeeding elections.[7] Throughout her House career, Blitch ran a district office from her converted garage at her Homerville residence.[8] The family bought a Washington, D.C., residence, but Brooks Blitch commuted to Homerville to tend to his cattle and timber businesses.

Benefiting from her strong party ties, and from her connections to powerful southern Congressmen, Blitch was given a seat on the popular Public Works Committee, where she served on three subcommittees: Roads, Rivers and Harbors, and Public Buildings and Grounds. As a member of Public Works, she steered a series of federal projects into her district including the construction of many post office and public buildings and the development of a major port at Brunswick Harbor. Blitch also proved to be something of a conservationist and won appropriations to protect the Okefenokee Swamp from overdevelopment and the threat of reduced water levels. During her first year, she introduced a bill providing for the conservation of water on small farms and the drainage of lowlands to make them suitable for growing timber. Her amendment to the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act encouraged small water conservation projects by providing individual property owners with federal funds.[9] The bill was passed during her second term in the House. "The management of soil and water resources must be the concern of everyone who loves his Nation," Blitch once remarked in a floor speech.[10]

Much of her focus was devoted to the agricultural issues that affected her rural district. Working closely with the Agriculture Committee, she tried to meet the needs of farmers of wheat, tobacco, and jute, a fibrous material used for carpet backing. Seeking to protect the jute-backing industry in her district and to encourage its growth throughout southern Georgia, Blitch favored amending the 1930 Tariff Act to make it more difficult for foreign-made jute to enter the country.[11] Business-oriented as well, she expended much effort on attracting other industries to her district.[12] Blitch was a fiscal conservative who opposed federal funding for education. She described efforts to allocate federal money for public schools and universities as "a naked lust for national power, rather than a pious beneficence"; an intrusion of federal oversight on local, particularly southern, school systems.[13] Along similar lines, she argued throughout her four terms that the U.S. should not provide large foreign aid packages to its Cold War allies and other developing nations. "We cannot continue throwing good money after bad just hoping that it will save us," she told House colleagues. "It is up to the people of the different countries, including the United States of America, to assume some responsibility for themselves."[14]

In March 1956, Blitch was part of a group of 100 Members of Congress—19 Senators and 81 Representatives—from 11 southern states who signed the "Southern Manifesto." The document pledged the signatories to work to reverse the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision outlawing racial segregation in public schools. Many southerners viewed the decision as infringing on state's rights, and the "Manifesto" denounced it as a "clear abuse of judicial powers."[15] Blitch also attacked a proposed voting rights amendment then on the House Floor as "iniquitous, infamous" and a "cancer of indecencies." In reaction to federal efforts to enforce civil rights legislation in the South, Blitch argued that "in an age where millions have died to preserve freedom, the executive, the judiciary, the legislative branches of the United States are destroying it."[16] She blasted a proposed 1956 Civil Rights Bill as a measure designed to sow internal discord between southern blacks and whites. "If you do not think that this bill is a Communist plan, then you are

Blitch described efforts to allocate federal money for public schools and universities as "a naked lust for national power, rather than a pious beneficence"; as an intrusion of federal oversight on local, particularly southern, school systems.

not using the brain that God gave you," she declared in a floor speech. "Russia would rejoice at the passage of this bill because it would accomplish what she wants. It would divide and separate us."[17] During debate on federal aid to education in 1956, Blitch went so far as to argue that "a grave cloud of doubt" hung over the "legality" of the post-Civil War amendments to the Constitution, including those outlawing slavery, guaranteeing citizenship rights for all Americans, and conferring voting rights to African-American men.[18] She also argued against the legislation which eventually was signed into law as the Civil Rights Bill of 1957.[19]

Due to severe arthritis, Blitch declined to run for renomination for a fifth term in 1962. Among the 10 colleagues who spoke about her retirement on the House Floor, Majority Leader Carl Albert of Oklahoma remarked, "I have never known anyone more persistent in her devotion to duty. I have seen her sit here on the floor attending to every item of duty when she was ill and in pain. She is a real soldier."[20] Not long after she left Congress, however, Blitch once again made headlines. In August 1964, she announced her decision to leave the Democratic Party to support the Republican presidential candidacy of Senator Barry M. Goldwater. "In my political lifetime," Blitch said during her endorsement of Goldwater, "only one leader has come forward to give the American people a choice between a more centralized state and the complete dignity of the individual."[21] Afterward, Blitch retired from active politics and settled on St. Simons Island off the southeastern coast of Georgia. Late in life, Blitch moderated her stance on civil rights and supported then-Governor of Georgia Jimmy Carter when he declared that "the time for racial discrimination is over."[22] In 1988, she moved to San Diego, California, to be nearer to her daughter. Iris Blitch died there on August 19, 1993.

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University of Georgia (Athens, GA), Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies. *Papers:* 1954–1985, 80.5 linear feet. The Iris F. Blitch Papers document her four terms representing Georgia's Eighth District in the U.S. Congress and, to a lesser extent, her campaigns and personal life. Well-documented throughout the entire collection, particularly in the Legislative Series and the Subject Series, are the issues that were important to Blitch and to the 20 counties that composed her district, such as agriculture, conservation, and the environment. The papers provide insight into the political climate for women in the second half of the 1950s and the early 1960s as well as into social mores regarding their participation. As one of only 15 women Members (and the only southern woman) in the House of Representatives in 1958, the challenges faced by Blitch and other women in Washington, as well as the public's perceptions, are well-documented throughout the papers, mainly in feature newspaper articles and interviews. Iris Blitch's personal beliefs and opinions of women in government and politics, as well as their roles and responsibilities, are evident in speeches and interviews she gave throughout her career and can be found primarily in both the Subject and Personal Series. Also documented in the papers, particularly in the Subject Series, is her position on segregation and an integrated society. To a lesser extent, and primarily

through correspondence found in the Personal Series, is information relating to her immediate and extended family as well as her fragile health, which ultimately forced her retirement in 1963. A finding aid is available in the repository and online.

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20 *Congressional Record*, House, 85th Cong., 2nd sess. (10 October 1962): 23088.

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22 Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members*: 251.

Edith Starrett Green
1910–1987

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM OREGON
1955–1974

Few women in Congress have left such a substantial legacy as did Edith Green, and few have demonstrated such independence of mind and deed. From the time that she was elected to the 84th Congress (1955–1957), through her service in the nine succeeding Congresses, she left her mark on almost every education bill enacted and subsequently gained considerable influence in the Democratic Party despite her refusal to support the party's Presidents on all issues. Though Representative Green originally supported federal aid to education and the antipoverty programs, she grew disillusioned with what she perceived as an inefficient federal bureaucracy. Her increased frustration with "big government" contributed to her eventual drift from the liberal agenda of the Democrats.

The daughter of two schoolteachers, James Vaughn and Julia Hunt Starrett, Edith Louise Starrett was born on January 17, 1910, in Trent, South Dakota. At the age of six, she and her family moved to Oregon, where she went to public schools in Salem. She attended Willamette University from 1927 to 1929 and later enrolled at the University of Oregon, where she eventually graduated in 1939. While teaching school in Salem, Oregon, in 1933, she married Arthur N. Green. The Greens raised two sons, James and Richard, but later divorced. After 11 years as an educator, Edith became an announcer at KALE radio station in Portland, Oregon, and also served as legislative chairperson of the Oregon Congress of Parents and Teachers for three years. In this leadership position, Green gained experience in state politics, advanced her knowledge of national and regional educational issues, and learned the importance of lobbying—all of which served as a valuable foundation for her future career in Congress.[1]

Upon the urging of friends and Democratic officials, Green ran for secretary of state of Oregon in 1952. Although unsuccessful in her bid, she garnered enough public exposure to make a competitive run for the House seat encompassing much of Portland, Oregon, and its eastern suburbs in 1954.[2] After winning by a wide margin against her closest competitor, C.S. Johnston, in the Democratic primary, Green subsequently defeated the state's future governor, Republican Tom McCall, in the general election with 52 percent of the vote.[3] She became the second woman to represent Oregon in the House of Representatives. (Nan Wood Honeyman was the first in 1937.) Green went on to win her nine succeeding elections with ease, rarely facing any serious opposition.[4] Although offered the opportunity to run for the U.S. Senate on three separate occasions, she opted to continue serving in the House. Citing a fondness for the seniority system, which she believed allowed women the capacity to wield power that otherwise would remain unattainable because of gender discrimination, Green also feared the steep cost of a Senate campaign would require accepting contributions with "strings attached."[5]

As a recognized expert on educational policy, Green was appointed to the Committee on Education and Labor during her freshman term in the House. She served on that committee for 18 years, eventually becoming the second-ranking Democrat, a prominent position that enabled her to shape much of the social legislation of the United States. During her final term in Congress, she stepped down from her coveted committee assignment to take a seat on the influential Committee on Appropriations

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because, according to Green, the latter had more "action."[6] Green also served various terms on other House committees, including Interior and Insular Affairs, House Administration, Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and the District of Columbia.

Green's legislative interests were focused on education, so much so that she earned the epithets "Mrs. Education" and "the Mother of Higher Education."[7] Due in great part to her own experience with financial hardship that forced her to withdraw from college, Green dedicated herself to drafting and endorsing legislation to provide students of all economic backgrounds the opportunity to pursue higher education. Early in her political career, Green helped secure the passage of the National Defense Education Act (1958), a bill designed to ensure that American students kept pace with their Soviet counterparts by improving science and math education. The measure established a series of loans for impoverished students and allocated graduate fellowships for prospective college instructors.[8] According to Green, the deliberate addition of the word "defense" to the bill ensured its success. Conscious of the political climate of the Cold War, Green and other liberal backers of the legislation used the prevailing fear of the Soviet Union to convince conservative Members of the House that additional funds for education would strengthen American national defense. Green later speculated that the launching of the Soviet satellite *Sputnik* in 1957, which set off intense fear in Washington that the Soviets were winning the nascent space race, "did more for American education than the Congress was ever able to do up to that time."[9]

Green also authored two significant bills that changed the face of secondary education: the Higher Education Facilities Act (1963) and the Higher Education Act (1965). Labeled by President Lyndon B. Johnson as the "greatest step forward in the field" in 100 years, the Higher Education Facilities Act allocated federal funds for the expansion and improvement of college and university libraries, classrooms, and laboratories.[10] Two years later, Green guided the passage of the Higher Education Act, which authorized the first-ever federal financial assistance for undergraduate students. She also worked to improve the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (1965) by adding a series of amendments (commonly referred to as the Green Amendments) to provide further employment training opportunities for urban youth.[11]

Despite insisting that she avoided feminist causes because she would "become too emotionally involved," Green's legislative record in Congress demonstrated a genuine commitment to advancing the rights of women. Advised as a young woman not to pursue a career as an electrical engineer because of her gender, Green spent much of her adult life attempting to eliminate the social and legal obstacles that prevented women from achieving equality. Because she believed that "a woman has to work twice as hard as a man to prove that she can do the job," she focused on drafting legislation that would even the scales between the sexes.[12] Two of her perennial concerns as a Representative, pay equity and gender equality in postsecondary education, resulted in the passage of landmark legislation that vastly improved the opportunities for American women. Signed into law in 1963, the Equal Pay Act mandated that women and men receive equal pay for equal work. Although pleased by the passage of the groundbreaking bill, Green bemoaned that it took "eight years to persuade Congress that a woman doing identical work with a man ought to be paid the same salary!"[13]

One of Green's most enduring legislative triumphs was Title IX, a part of the 1972 Higher Education Act that prohibited federally funded colleges and universities from discriminating against women. As chair of the Subcommittee on Higher Education of the Education and Labor Committee, Green presided over seven days of hearings in which a wide range of witnesses explained the various ways women faced discrimination in postsecondary education. She set the tone for the proceedings when she exclaimed, "Let us not deceive ourselves. Our educational institutions have proven to be no bastions of democracy."[14] Green overcame opposition from many university administrators, as well as from conservative Congressmen who feared the proposed bill would force school officials to construct unisex locker rooms and admit an equal number

of male and female students. When reflecting upon the passage of Title IX, she stated: "I don't know when I have ever been so pleased, because I had worked so long and it had been such a tough battle."[15] Although Green did much to advance the rights of women, she did not always place this issue ahead of all others. For instance, because of her ardent commitment to civil rights legislation, she voted against the inclusion of the word "sex" in the Civil Rights Act (the only Congresswoman to do so), because she feared it might "help destroy" the bill.[16]

Early in her career, Green's liberal record made her a recognized asset to the Democratic Party. As evidence of her high standing within the party, Green seconded the presidential nomination of Adlai Stevenson at the Democratic National Convention in 1956, and four years later she performed the same honor for John F. Kennedy. As a show of thanks for successfully managing his presidential campaign in Oregon, Kennedy offered Green the position of U.S. Ambassador to Canada. Green declined the offer but later accepted an appointment to Kennedy's Presidential Committee on the Status of Women.

Over time, however, Green distanced herself from the Democratic Party agenda. Though originally a vocal supporter of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society social welfare package, Representative Green grew increasingly disenchanted with the expanded role of the federal government.[17] Her mistrust of big government caused her to reject much of the legislation she had worked for during the previous two decades. Fearful that federal programs had done little to alleviate the plight of the poor or to improve the quality of American education, Green advocated shifting responsibilities to state and local governments.[18]

At times, Green even retreated from legislation she helped push through the House, as was the case when she proposed denying federal aid to universities that failed to control student riots. Even though Green considered her suggestion "moderate," liberal members of the Education Committee branded it repressive.[19] Her ideological drift from the mainstream beliefs of her party, as well as her willingness to align with conservative southern Democrats and Republicans, triggered animosity and hostility in many of her former allies, including President Johnson.[20] When asked about her shifting political stance, Green protested that she had not become more conservative, but that "ultra-liberals have moved so far to the left that they have distorted the position of all other liberals."[21] Former Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield, a political contemporary and friend of Green, described the Congresswoman as a "political maverick" who crossed party lines, at times to even support the candidacy of Republican candidates such as Hatfield.[22]

As an independent thinker and as a Congresswoman who believed in remaining true to her principles, Green often represented the minority opinion. Throughout her career, Green had shown a propensity for staking out positions that exposed her to political criticism. As one of only seven House Members to vote against Johnson's 1965 request for increased funds for the escalation of military involvement in Vietnam, Green remarked, "I cannot in good conscience lend myself to that kind of usurpation of congressional power." After the measure passed, Green expressed her discontent with her congressional colleagues and with the President: "I find it impossible to understand why an admittedly unnecessary appropriation request need be mantled in a cloak of urgency and secret meaning, with full, free, and frank discussion of its merits denied."[23] Green's steadfast determination, straightforward approach (as evidenced by her recurring campaign motto: "You Get Straight Answers from Edith Green"), and ability to make stirring speeches frequently worked to her advantage. These qualities, in conjunction with her sharp intellect, oftentimes enabled Green to persuade her colleagues to support her political agenda.[24]

Although virtually assured of re-election for the indefinite future, Green refused to stand for renomination to the 94th Congress (1975–1977) and resigned from the House on December 31, 1974. Two years prior to her retirement from congressional politics, Green quipped, "One thing is for certain. They won't have to drag me out of here in a coffin—I don't have Potomac fever."[25] Determined to leave Congress at an "appropriate time," Green declared that "twenty years in any one job is a reasonably long

time."[26] After leaving the House of Representatives, Green taught at Warner Pacific College, served as co-chair of the National Democrats for Gerald Ford, and in 1979 was appointed to the Oregon Board of Higher Education. When asked to comment on her political career, Green succinctly noted, "It was plain hard work."[27] Green resided in Portland, Oregon, until her death in Tulatin, Oregon, on April 21, 1987.

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Martha Wright Griffiths

1912–2003

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM MICHIGAN

1955–1974

Known as the "Mother of the ERA," Martha W. Griffiths, a peppery and quick-witted Detroit Representative, was a key figure in bringing women's rights legislation to successful passage in Congress. During her 20 years in the U.S. House, Representative Griffiths compiled a distinguished record on tax reform and civil rights. She was the first woman to serve on the powerful Ways and Means Committee.

Martha Edna Wright was born on January 29, 1912, in Pierce City, Missouri. She was one of two children reared by Charles Elbridge Wright, a mailman, and Nell Sullinger Wright. Martha Wright graduated from Pierce City High School in 1930. Realizing that without an education her daughter would eventually be dependent on her future husband, Nell Wright took on extra jobs to pay for Martha's college tuition.[1] Her mother's foresight and her paternal grandmother's struggle to raise three children after the death of her husband inspired Martha Wright to pursue equal rights for women. She attended the University of Missouri at Columbia, earning an A.B. in political science in 1934. In college she met and married Hicks G. Griffiths, a future Michigan Democratic Party chairman and her husband of 62 years until his death in 1996. The couple studied law at the University of Michigan, where Martha Griffiths worked on the staff of the *Michigan Law Review*. She graduated with an LL.B. in 1940 and was admitted to the bar the next year. Her first job was working in the legal department of the American Automobile Insurance Association in Detroit. During World War II she worked as a contract negotiator in the Detroit district for Army Ordnance. In 1946, Griffiths opened her own law practice; Hicks joined a few months afterward. A year later, G. Mennan "Soapy" Williams, heir of the Mennan toiletries fortune and a former college classmate, became a partner in the firm.

Martha Griffiths entered politics at her husband's suggestion by making an unsuccessful bid for a seat in the Michigan house of representatives in 1946. She later won election to the state legislature in 1948 and 1950. During her first term she and her husband organized the Michigan Democratic Club, which engineered the election of G. Mennan Williams as governor. In the fall of 1952, Griffiths captured the Democratic nomination for a seat in the U.S. Congress from a Michigan district encompassing northwest Detroit and some outlying suburbs but lost the general election by a margin of 10,500 votes (or about six percent of the total) to Republican Charles G. Oakman. In April 1953, Governor Williams appointed her a recorder and judge of recorders court in Detroit. The following November she was elected as judge and served until 1954. At the time, she observed, "It is at least an unusual experience to assist for four years in making the laws of this state, and then sit as a judge of people charged with breaking those laws."[2] During her brief tenure she conducted more than 430 criminal examinations, including a highly publicized teamsters' conspiracy case.

The name recognition Griffiths garnered as a 1952 candidate and as a judge helped her mount another bid for the Detroit seat in the U.S. House in 1954. She revived from her initial campaign a district-wide tour by house-trailer—meeting tens of thousands of voters in their neighborhoods and serving them refreshments. Facing Oakman in the general election, Griffiths unseated the incumbent with about a 7,000-vote margin, 52 to 48 percent. Griffiths's victory came without the support of organized labor and the state's Democratic Party, as both

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backed other candidates.[3] Despite this opposition, Griffiths never was seriously challenged again, winning nine more terms and gradually increasing her margins of victory: 53 percent in 1956, 69 percent in 1966, and 80 percent in 1970.[4]

The second woman from Michigan elected to the U.S. House, Griffiths was appointed to the Banking and Currency and Government Operations committees. During the 91st Congress (1969–1971) she served on the Select Committee on Crime, and she also had a seat on the Joint Study Budget Control Committee during the 92nd (1971–1973) and 93rd (1973–1975) Congresses. In the 90th (1967–1969) through 93rd Congresses, Griffiths chaired the Select Committee on the House Beauty Shop, a largely ceremonial assignment which oversaw the institution's operations.

In a move that astonished many observers, Griffiths ran for her former position as judge of the Detroit recorders court but was defeated in the April 1959 election. She later explained that she was motivated by a desire to return to Detroit and by her frustration with the protocols and pace of the committees, particularly the Banking and Currency Committee.[5] Griffiths retained her House seat, however, and a year later she was re-elected to Congress with 58 percent of the vote.

Congresswomen had lobbied Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas in 1961 to assign a woman to the prominent Ways and Means Committee, extracting a pledge from him that an appointment would be made at the next vacancy. Rayburn died in November 1961, but his promise was fulfilled in 1962 when Griffiths became the first woman Representative to win appointment to Ways and Means. Eventually, she became the fourth-ranking Member on that powerful panel. She also was assigned to the Joint Economic Committee, where she served through the 93rd Congress and eventually chaired the Subcommittee on Fiscal Policy. From both of these prominent positions, Congresswoman Griffiths pursued tax reform and proposed legislation to repeal the excise tax on automobiles, to provide tax relief for single parents, to amend tax laws to aid married couples and widows, and to reduce social security taxes paid by low-income families. Her skills as a former judge, solid preparation, and ability to pick apart arguments, along with her sometimes blunt style, made her a fearsome opponent. She was especially attentive to frequent requests from women on how to circumvent discrimination in the workplace. On one occasion, when it came to light that a major airline fired a flight attendant on the grounds that she was going to be married soon, Griffiths grilled the airline's personnel manager: "You point out that you are asking a bona fide occupational exception that a stewardess be young, attractive, and single. What are you running, an airline or a whorehouse?"[6]

In 1964, Griffiths made one of her two greatest contributions to the women's rights movement. As the House Judiciary Committee began to deliberate a landmark civil rights bill pertaining to racial discrimination, Griffiths argued that sexual discrimination must be added to it. She did much to frame the sex discrimination amendment to Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and later prompted the new Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to enforce the act more vigorously. She relied on a deft legislative move to secure her amendment. The chairman of the powerful Rules Committee, Democrat Howard Smith of Virginia, was preparing to make his own sexual discrimination amendment to the bill, in hopes of making the bill so controversial as to derail the entire Civil Rights Act. Griffiths, realizing that Smith would easily bring 100 southern votes if he introduced the amendment on the floor, held back on introducing the amendment herself. When Smith made the argument in the well of the House, Members erupted in laughter and jeers.[7] Griffiths immediately took to the floor to make her case. "I presume that if there had been any necessity to point out that women were a second-class sex, the laughter would have proved it," she scolded colleagues. The chamber fell silent.[8] With a southern bloc voting for the amendment and Griffiths's own efforts to line up votes, the measure was passed and added to the act. Though many of the southern lawmakers who passed the amendment voted against the whole Civil Rights Act of 1964, the House and Senate eventually

passed the bill, and President Lyndon Johnson signed it into law that year.

Griffiths also was pivotal in bringing the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to a vote, eventually steering it to successful passage in the House. Though she originally thought that the way to secure women's rights was to bring case after case before the Supreme Court, Griffiths eventually came to believe that a constitutional amendment was the only way to overcome the high bench's history of decisions which, in her view, denied that women were "'persons' within the meaning of the Constitution."[9]

Every year since she entered the House in 1955, she had introduced ERA legislation, only to watch while the bill died in the Judiciary Committee.

In 1970, Congresswoman Griffiths relied on the discharge petition, a little-used parliamentary procedure which required that she get a majority (218 of the House's 435 Members) to support her effort to bring the bill out of committee and onto the floor for general debate and a vote. For nearly 40 days, Griffiths stalked reluctant Congressmen, cornering them on the House Floor after roll call votes, visiting their offices, and calling in favors in order to add names to the petition. At one point, she approached the Democratic Whip, Hale Boggs of Louisiana, for his signature. Boggs at first demurred. "But he promised to sign as Number 200, convinced that I would never make it," Griffiths recalled. "You may be sure that when I had Number 199 signed up, I rushed to his office, and Hale Boggs became Number 200."[10] Griffiths got the 218 signatures in the required time, and on August 10, 1970, took to the House Floor to open debate. "Mr. Speaker, this is not a battle between the sexes–nor a battle between this body and women," Griffiths said. "This is a battle with the Supreme Court of the United States."[11] With 62 Members not voting, the House passed the ERA by a vote of 352 to 15.[12] Later that fall the Senate voted to amend the ERA with a clause exempting women from the draft. The House and Senate failed to work out their differences in conference committee before Congress adjourned for the year. Griffiths began the process again, and this time the amendment cleared the House in 1971 and was approved by the Senate in March 1972 without revision. The ERA, however, was ratified by only 35 of the requisite 38 states and never became part of the Constitution. Despite the amendment's ultimate failure, Griffiths's recognition soared after her work on ERA. In 1970, she was rumored to be in consideration for Majority Whip and, therefore, the first woman to hold a major leadership post; however, she never was selected for that position.[13]

Griffiths declined to run for an 11th term in 1974, citing age and a wish to spend time with her family as her reasons for leaving. She did not disappear from politics, however, returning in 1976 as the chair of the Rules Committee for

"My grandmother wanted to live long enough to vote for a woman President. I'll be satisfied if I live to see a woman go before the Supreme Court and hear the Justices acknowledge, 'Gentlemen, she's human. She deserves the protection of our laws.'"

—Martha W. Griffiths

Though she originally thought that the way to secure women's rights was to bring case after case before the Supreme Court, Griffiths eventually came to believe that a constitutional amendment was the only way to overcome the high bench's history of decisions which, in her view, denied that women were "'persons' within the meaning of the Constitution."

the Democratic National Convention, and in 1982, becoming Michigan's first elected lieutenant governor on a ticket with Michigan Representative James J. Blanchard. In 1986, the pair was re-elected, but Blanchard decided to drop the 78-year-old Griffiths from the ticket for a third term because of her age. "Ridiculous!" she retorted. She then told a crowd of reporters: "The biggest problem in politics is that you help some s.o.b. get what he wants and then he throws you out of the train."[14] Blanchard lost in the general election to Republican John Engler, an outcome many observers attributed to disaffected women and senior votes that Griffiths had helped swing to Blanchard in the previous two elections. After her terms as lieutenant governor, Griffiths resumed practicing law. Martha Griffiths died of pneumonia at her home in Armada, Michigan, on April 22, 2003.

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Coya Knutson
1912–1996

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM MINNESOTA
1955–1959

Unlike so many women whose marriage connection catapulted them to Congress, Coya Knutson's familial ties brought her promising political career to a premature close. Knutson's work in the House, devoted largely to protecting the family farm and opening educational opportunities, unraveled after her husband publicly called on her to resign. "I am not a feminist or anything else of that sort," Knutson once explained. "I do not use my womanhood as a weapon or a tool. . . . What I want most is to be respected and thought of as a person rather than as a woman in this particular job. I would like to feel that I am respected for my ability, my honesty, my judgment, my imagination, and my vision."[1]

Cornelia "Coya" Genevive Gjesdal was born on August 22, 1912, in Edmore, North Dakota, to Christian and Christine (Anderson) Gjesdal, Norwegian immigrant farmers. She attended the public schools of Edmore, worked on her father's farm, and, in 1934, earned a B.S. degree from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. Coya completed postgraduate work at the State Teachers College in Moorhead. In 1935, she briefly attended the Julliard School of Music in New York City. An unsuccessful appearance on a national amateur hour radio show convinced her to abandon a career as a professional singer. For the next dozen years, she taught high school classes in North Dakota and Minnesota. In 1940, Coya Gjesdal married Andy Knutson, her father's farm hand. The young couple moved to Oklee, Minnesota, his hometown, where they eventually operated a hotel and grain farm. In 1948 the Knutsons adopted an eight-year-old boy, Terry.[2]

Coya Knutson's involvement in politics developed through community activism. During World War II, Knutson served as a field agent for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, investigating issues of price support. She helped establish the Oklee Medical Clinic, a local Red Cross branch, and the Community Chest Fund. She became a member of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor (DFL) Party, created in 1944 when state Democrats, a minority party, merged with a third party composed of agricultural and factory workers. In 1948, Knutson became a member of Red Lake County Welfare Board and was appointed chair of the DFL's Red Lake County organization. In the fall of 1950, she won election as a DFL candidate to the Minnesota house of representatives. Meanwhile, Andy Knutson resented his wife's burgeoning political career and lent little support. Moreover, their marriage deteriorated because of his alcoholism.

In 1954, Coya Knutson decided to make a run for the U.S. House, against the wishes of DFL Party leaders, who preferred she remain in the Minnesota legislature. Undeterred, Knutson crisscrossed the northwestern Minnesota district covering most of the Red River Valley, trying to meet as many farmers as possible to discuss agricultural issues and commodity prices. Knutson polled 45 percent to 24 percent against Curtiss Olson, the closest of her four rivals. In the general election, she challenged Republican Harold Hagen, a six-term incumbent. Knutson proved an adept and tireless campaigner, traveling more than 25,000 miles by car to stump in each of the district's 15 counties, at times delivering a dozen speeches per day.[3] The state DFL organization ignored her, and Knutson funded the campaign from her own savings. She favored farm supports and higher price levels for staples such as poultry, eggs, and milk.[4] She also attacked President Dwight Eisenhower and Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson for pushing a plan for lower agricultural

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commodities pricing. She defeated Hagen by a 2,335-vote plurality out of more than 95,500 votes cast, interpreting her triumph as a "protest vote" against the Eisenhower administration's farm program.[5] When Knutson took her seat on January 3, 1955, she became the first Minnesota woman to serve in Congress.

With her background and largely rural constituency, Knutson followed the advice of neighboring Minnesota Representative John Blatnik and immediately wrote to Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas and Majority Leader John McCormack of Massachusetts to express her interest in serving on the Agriculture Committee. Delegate Elizabeth Farrington of Hawaii had just been on the Agriculture Committee as its first woman Member in the previous Congress. But Chairman Harold Cooley of North Carolina, a 22-year veteran of the committee, had no intention of allowing another woman to serve with him. Speaker Rayburn intervened on Knutson's behalf.[6] Less than six months later, Cooley took to the House Floor to explain his newfound respect for Knutson. "Frankly, I would not swap her for one-half dozen men," Cooley admitted.[7]

During her tenure on Agriculture, Knutson's only committee assignment, she fought for a variety of programs to increase the distribution and profitability of farm commodities. She advocated higher price supports for farm products, an extension of the food stamp program into which farm surpluses could be channeled, and a federally supported school lunch program, including free milk for primary school students. Knutson also urged U.S. officials to reinvigorate the international export of foodstuffs, which had slackened between 1951 and 1954.[8] "American agriculture cannot prosper if it can only produce the food and fiber needed for the people of the United States. Agriculture must export or die," she said on the House Floor. One of her more inventive proposed measures would have permitted farmers to place fallow land into a national "conservation acreage reserve" and still be paid rent on the unproductive acreage from federal funds. Knutson argued that this would help replenish the soil, protect it from overuse, and, ultimately, boost future yields.[9] As the economy went into recession in 1957–1958, Knutson was a caustic critic of the spending priorities of the Eisenhower White House. "All this talk about 'conquering outer space' is just jibberish if Congress and the administration do nothing about conquering the vast inner space in the hearts of young Americans—from the family farm, or whatever their origin—who have lost their jobs," she said.[10] Knutson authored 61 bills during her four years in the House, 24 of which addressed agricultural issues.[11]

The Minnesota Congresswoman's greatest legislative triumph, however, came in educational policy. She wrote a measure creating the first mechanisms for a federal student financial aid program. It drew on her experience as a teacher, work in the Minnesota state legislature, and deep desire to find a way for "poor country kids to go to college."[12] Based on government-administered loan programs in Norway, Knutson's measure, first introduced in 1956, called for federal loans for higher education based on a student's economic needs. "Educational freedom and progress are most dear to my heart," Knutson told colleagues on the House Floor. "We can't take the risk of limiting education to only those who can afford it. As our Nation grows, so should our democracy grow, and our thinking along educational lines should and must grow with it."[13] The legislation received a boost in 1957 when the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik*, the first man-made object to orbit the earth. Public debate swirled around whether or not the United States had fallen behind the Russians in education and the sciences. Knutson's bill passed in September 1958 as Title II of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). The NDEA established a seven-year, $1 billion loan and grant program. Knutson's contribution was the creation of a program of loans for needy students. Among its other provisions were graduate fellowship programs for aspiring college instructors (Knutson called it "dollars for scholars") and a series of grants for college guidance programs, educational television, and the construction of vocational schools.[14]

Though popular and unusually effective as a new Member of Congress, Knutson had a tenuous grasp on

her seat because of her strained relations with the DFL. Local leaders still resented Knutson's defeat of their handpicked candidate in the 1954 primary. In 1956, against the wishes of party leaders, Knutson supported Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee for the Democratic presidential nomination, serving as his Minnesota state co-chair. DFL officials had lined up behind Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, the Democrats' 1952 nominee. Stevenson eventually won the presidential nomination, but DFL leaders privately fumed at Knutson. Still, in the 1956 primaries, Knutson was unopposed and benefited from public notoriety generated by her tour with Kefauver. Knutson turned back a challenge from Harold Hagen with 53 percent of the vote, a 6,000-vote plurality out of almost 112,000 cast.

Congresswoman Knutson's political problems mushroomed when angry DFL leaders conspired with Andy Knutson to subvert her political career. As early as 1957, DFL politicians approached her husband for his help in supporting an alternative candidate in the 1958 primaries. Jealous of his wife's success, broke, and deeply suspicious of her principal legislative aide, Bill Kjeldahl, Andy Knutson threw his support behind local DFL leader Marvin Evenson. At the district convention in May 1958, Coya Knutson's supporters mounted a frenzied defense and managed to retain the nomination for a third term. Days after the convention, Andy Knutson released a letter to the press (written by DFL officials) which asked his wife not to run for re-election. The *Fargo Forum* reprinted the letter and coined the phrase, "Coya, Come Home." The Associated Press picked up the story and sent it over the national wires. Andy Knutson then sent another letter, a press release also drafted by DFL leaders, which publicized the Knutsons' marital problems. These revelations, along with Andy Knutson's accusations that Kjeldahl exercised "dictatorial influence on my wife" (hinting at a love affair between Kjeldahl and the Congresswoman) were political dynamite.

Coya Knutson was hamstrung because she believed that public expectations of duty to family prevented her from attacking her husband's charges frontally. She settled on a policy of refusing to discuss her married life, submerging from public view a long history of physical and mental abuse by her spouse.[15] "It has always been my belief that an individual's family life is a personal matter," Knutson told the *Washington Post*.[16] House colleagues rallied to her support. The first time she entered the chamber after the story broke, she recalled, "I was so busy shaking hands I had no time for anything else."[17]

Representative Knutson survived another challenge from Evenson (who again received Andy's endorsement) in the September DFL primary, defeating him by more than 4,000 votes.[18] But she entered the general election severely compromised and without DFL support. Her opponent was Odin E. Langen, a Minneapolis native and the Republican leader in the state legislature. Pitching himself as a "family man," Langen brought his wife and son to campaign events, in stark contrast to Andy Knutson's absence from his wife's re-election rallies.[19] Langen won with a 1,390-vote margin out of slightly more than 94,300 cast. Knutson, the only incumbent Democrat nationwide to be unseated by a Republican in 1958, filed a formal complaint with the Special House Elections Subcommittee, arguing that she had the victim of a "malicious conspiracy" between her husband, DFL opponents, and associates of Langen.[20] Coya and Andy Knutson testified before a subcommittee on campaign expenditures, with Andy expressing regret that his wife's political opponents had "duped" him.[21] A majority of the committee agreed that "the exploitation of the family life of Mrs. Knutson was a contributing cause to her defeat."[22] But the committee found no evidence to link Langen directly to the alleged conspiracy and thus ended its investigation.[23]

Coya Knutson challenged Langen again in 1960, this time with Andy Knutson's support. She managed to defeat the DFL's handpicked candidate in the September primary, State Senator Roy Wiseth.[24] In the general election, however, she lost to the incumbent, 52 to 48 percent. In June 1961 President John F. Kennedy appointed Knutson the liaison officer for the Department of Defense in the Office of Civil Defense, where she served from 1961 to 1970. In 1962, the Knutsons were divorced; Andy died in

1969. In 1977, Knutson ran for Congress again but failed to capture the DFL Party nomination in a special election primary. Retiring from the political scene, Knutson lived with her son's family and helped raise her grandchildren.[25] On October 10, 1996, Coya Knutson died at the age of 82.

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Kathryn E. Granahan
1894–1979

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM PENNSYLVANIA
1956–1963

The widow of Philadelphia Democratic Congressman William Granahan, Kathryn Granahan succeeded her late husband and followed his example as a liberal New Dealer who supported workers' rights, welfare legislation, and civil rights. From her post as chair of the Post Office and Civil Service Subcommittee on Postal Operations, however, Granahan embarked on a moral mission to halt the spread of pornography. "The peddling of smut to children is a heinous crime that must be stopped," Granahan explained, noting that many parents and localities "are seemingly unaware of the size and seriousness of this problem."[1] During her congressional service, Granahan linked obscenities in literature and sexual content in movies to juvenile delinquency and even communism.[2]

On December 7, 1894, Kathryn Elizabeth O'Hay was born to James and Julia (Reily) O'Hay in Easton, Pennsylvania. She graduated from Easton High School and Mount St. Joseph Collegiate Institute (later Chestnut Hill College) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She became the supervisor of public assistance in the state auditor general's department and liaison officer between that department and the department of public assistance, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, from 1940 to 1943. In that job, O'Hay met William T. Granahan, a World War I veteran, member of the state Democratic committee, Democratic ward leader in Philadelphia, and chief disbursing officer for the Pennsylvania treasury. In 1943, the couple married. A year later, William Granahan won election as a Democrat to a U.S. congressional district encompassing Philadelphia's west end. He lost his bid for re-election in the national Republican sweep of 1946, but recaptured his seat from the incumbent, Robert N. McGarvey, and returned to office in 1949. Congressman Granahan earned a reputation as a progressive liberal during his years of service as Ranking Member on the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee. He was an original sponsor of the Full Employment Act and also had been an author of a Fair Employment Practices Bill and other antidiscrimination legislation.[3] Representative Granahan caused something of a stir when, in 1945, he broke with precedent and refused to resign his post as ward leader; he held the position throughout his House service.[4] Having no children, the Granahans worked closely together on the needs of the district's constituents. Kathryn assisted her husband both within the district and in his Washington office, residing with him in their Mayflower Hotel apartment for much of his decade of service. She also served as chair of the board of governors of the Women's Democratic Club of Philadelphia and was a trustee of several other civic service associations.

Shortly after winning the 1956 primary, Congressman Granahan passed away unexpectedly on May 25, 1956. A week after his death, local committeemen elected Kathryn Granahan to succeed William Granahan as ward leader. Several days later Philadelphia's Democratic powerbrokers chose her to run for her husband's vacant seat in the House, both for the remainder of the 84th Congress (1955–1957) and for the full term in the 85th Congress (1957–1959).[5] Mrs. Granahan was a natural choice to replace her husband. She understood the needs of her community and was accustomed to commuting and working between Washington, D.C., and the district. As the new political leader in western Philadelphia, Granahan sought to change the manner in which politics were con-

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ducted in the old Democratic ward. She eliminated the traditional beer barrel at political meetings and replaced it with tea and cookies. "I believe that only the highest type of people should be in politics-even in the lowest echelons," Granahan declared.[6] A self proclaimed "mad hatter," she campaigned wearing a lucky hat which she would not change until after her election. On November 6, 1956, Kathryn Granahan won the special election to the remainder of the 84th Congress and at the same time was elected to serve a full term for the 85th Congress, winning 62 percent of the vote against GOP candidate Robert Frankenfield. Her service began with the special election, thus giving her seniority over incoming freshmen in the 85th Congress. In 1958 and 1960, Granahan topped her Republican challengers by ever-wider margins—66 percent and 72 percent, respectively.[7]

Granahan made an unsuccessful bid to replace her late husband and become the first woman to serve on the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee. Instead, she received appointments to two committees: District of Columbia and Post Office and Civil Service. After a year, she left the District of Columbia Committee to accept a seat on Government Operations. In 1959, she became chair of the Post Office and Civil Service Subcommittee on Postal Operations, where she served for the remainder of her House career. In 1960, she was selected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention which nominated Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy as the party's presidential candidate.

Granahan's primary legislative undertaking was an effort to halt the spread of pornographic materials through the U.S. mail, specifically those which worked their way into the hands of children and teenagers. Legislating for public morality seemed to contradict her liberal credentials, but Granahan nevertheless pressed on with two months of hearings in 1959 that broadly addressed the dangers pornography presented in American society. "There are many things we don't allow our juveniles to do," she said. "We don't allow them to drink, carry guns or drive vehicles. So why allow these filth merchants to sell youngsters material which is a contributing cause of juvenile delinquency?"[8] In April 1959, using her clout as a subcommittee chair, she appealed to private citizens and organizations to help take the lead in crushing the pornography trade. Granahan charged that the Post Office Department had been "lax in halting the circulation of pornography" and called on Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield to appear as a witness before her committee.[9] In August, she introduced legislation requiring mandatory jail sentences for persons found guilty of operating pornographic mail order businesses. At the time, she told the *Christian Science Monitor*, "I don't want to repeal the Constitution or deny a free press. It is a most difficult problem to solve."[10] Granahan also was a chief sponsor of a bill passed by the House in September 1959 that strengthened the post office's power to impound mail addressed to recipients suspected of mailing pornographic materials.

In 1961, Congresswoman Granahan tried to counsel the Supreme Court to issue stricter guidelines to help authorities determine if publications were obscene. The high court eventually rendered a decision in *Manual Enterprises v. Postmaster General Day*, a case in which the postmaster of Alexandria, Virginia, had determined that hundreds of magazines were unfit for delivery. The Justices ruled that post office officials could not arbitrate what constituted pornography. Granahan, disappointed by the finding, delivered a speech that lambasted the decision and implied that Congress itself must curtail the distribution of pornography. "It is my earnest hope that prompt and vigorous action will now be taken to strengthen the criminal laws and close the U.S. mails to muck merchants and vendors of pornography and propaganda of perverts," she told colleagues.[11] She also tried her best to link pornography to national security: "There is a campaign of filth and smut aimed at the nation's youth," she once warned, "that might well prove to be communist inspired."[12]

Meanwhile, Representative Granahan also used her Postal Operations chair to wage a campaign to clean up motion pictures, an industry over which her panel had no jurisdiction, except as movies were often sent through the mails. Nevertheless, for three days in February 1960, her subcommittee interviewed witnesses. Granahan urged

motion picture officials to follow a policy of "effective self-regulation." She argued that the core question at stake was not one of "censorship, but of propriety," that is, whether movie content was "degrading or objectionable when tested against the moral standards of the American public."[13]

When the 1960 Census revealed that Pennsylvania would lose three of its House seats, a political fight erupted among state party officials. U.S. Representative Bill Green, who also served as the powerful Democratic chairman of Philadelphia, wanted to keep the city's six seats in the House. But as part of a compromise plan, Green and other Democratic leaders chose Granahan's seat for elimination. As the only woman among the Philadelphia Representatives and, moreover, the only potential woman candidate statewide for the 1962 election, Granahan and her supporters (including women's groups) protested bitterly but kept their dissent within the confines of the party.[14] Granahan eventually agreed to the plan and promised not to run against the incumbent whose new district would encompass her old one. As recompense, Green (who had orchestrated a huge voter turnout for John F. Kennedy in Philadelphia which helped him carry the state in 1960) convinced the President to appoint Kathryn Granahan Treasurer of the United States after the post was vacated in April 1962.

Granahan finished the House term for the 87th Congress (1961–1963) on January 3, 1963, and began her Cabinet appointment on January 9, 1963. Among her proposals as the fourth woman to head the Treasury was the return of the two-dollar bill to circulation. In May of 1965, Mrs. Granahan underwent brain surgery for a blood clot caused by an accidental fall. While the surgery was successful, Granahan worked a reduced schedule and her capacity to serve as Treasurer eventually was called into question. On June 10, 1966, a Philadelphia judge set aside a petition to have her declared incompetent and to appoint a guardian to her estate. Four months later, Granahan submitted her resignation to Treasury Secretary Henry H. Fowler. Kathryn Granahan died in Norristown, Pennsylvania, on July 10, 1979.

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Florence P. Dwyer
1902–1976

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEW JERSEY
1957–1973

Florence Price Dwyer, a New Jersey Representative who described herself as a "progressive" Republican, pushed for civil rights legislation, consumer protection measures, and institutional reform during her 16-year House career. Though she did not consider herself a feminist, Dwyer was a consistent champion of women's rights who supported the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and an "equal pay for equal work" bill modeled after one she had initially steered through the New Jersey state assembly.

Florence "Flo" Louise Price was born on July 4, 1902, in Reading, Pennsylvania. Educated in the public schools of Reading and Toledo, Ohio, she briefly attended college at the University of Toledo. Price left college to marry M. Joseph Dwyer, the Toledo football coach and, later, an industrial relations executive. The couple raised a son, Michael, and moved to Elizabeth, New Jersey. Florence Dwyer's role as a member of the local Parent Teacher Association initiated her interest in politics. She joined the Republican Club in Elizabeth in the 1930s: "At the time women were used to lick envelopes and take messages," she recalled.[1] A delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1944, Dwyer subsequently worked as a lobbyist in Trenton, the state capital, for the New Jersey Business and Professional Women's Clubs. State Assemblyman Joseph Brescher, who served as majority leader and speaker, hired Dwyer as his secretary. When Brescher retired in 1949, Dwyer succeeded him, serving from 1949 to 1957 and eventually rising to the assistant majority leader post.

In 1956, at the urging of New Jersey Senator Clifford Case, Dwyer entered the Republican primary for a U.S. House district just south of Newark. The district coincided with the Union County boundaries and encompassed the most industrialized part of the state. Dwyer's chief competitor was Irene T. Griffin, a former assemblywoman. But Dwyer's name recognition, her support across the party from moderates to conservatives, and her longtime base of support in Elizabeth, which sat in the eastern section of the district, helped her secure the nomination.[2] She faced a two-term incumbent Democrat, Harrison A. "Pete" Williams, Jr., in the general election. Historically a Republican stronghold, beginning in 1951, factionalism within the party had weakened the GOP's grip on the district. The 1956 campaign quickly became a contest over which of the candidates could best court the voters who supported President Dwight Eisenhower. Dwyer centered her campaign on domestic issues such as more funding for education and pressing for an equal-pay bill in Congress.[3] Vice President Richard Nixon campaigned for Dwyer, while Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson stumped for Williams. Dwyer's campaign literature read: "Ike Wants Flo" and "A Vote for Flo Is a Vote for Ike."[4] The incumbent President carried the district by nearly 80,000 votes, while Dwyer edged out Williams by a little more than 4,000. (Williams would go on to serve in the U.S. Senate for more than two decades.)

Dwyer quickly proved she could get votes on her own.[5] In her next four campaigns, she won increasingly by larger margins, garnering between 51 and 59 percent of the vote. Redistricting in 1966 cost Dwyer her traditional Elizabeth base, so she sought re-election in another newly realigned district, which included part of Union County and eastern Essex County to the north.[6] In the middle-class, suburban district, she crushed her opponents by margins of 33 to 50 percentage points.[7] In all, Dwyer won eight consecutive terms in the House. Throughout her career, she described herself to voters as a "moderate or

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progressive Republican" who did not follow the party line "unless the measure benefits the people I represent and the national interest."[8] The Congresswoman was not afraid to stand apart from other Republicans. She once told House Minority Leader Charlie Halleck of Indiana, "When you see me walk on the floor wearing pink, you'll know I'm going to step to the left and vote with the Democrats. But if I'm wearing black or white, you'll know I'm with the Republicans."[9]

Dwyer served on the Committee on Government Operations throughout her term in the House. She particularly concerned herself with institutional reforms. In 1961, Dwyer gained notoriety as the leader of the "saintly seven," a group of GOP Members who voted with House Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas and the Democrats to increase the membership of the Rules Committee, which controlled the flow of legislation on the House Floor.[10] The episode involved a bitter power struggle between Speaker Rayburn and Rules Committee Chairman Howard Smith of Virginia. The "saintly seven" were actually part of a group of 22 northern Republicans who supported the reform and declared their intention to "repudiate" a GOP alliance with southern Democrats "to attempt to narrow the base of our party, to dull its conscience, to transform it into a negative weapon of obstruction. . . ."[11] By a margin of 217 to 212, Rayburn prevailed. The vote changed House rules and undercut the power of a coalition of southern Democrats and conservative Republicans who used their influence on the committee to prevent major social legislation—including civil rights measures—from reaching the House Floor. In 1965, Dwyer authored legislation that called for a four-year term for Members of the House. A longer term "could greatly improve the quality of representation," Dwyer told the *New York Times*. "Under the present two-year system, most House Members must spend an excessive amount of time politicking and campaigning—simply to survive. A term of three or four years would give us time to think and plan and produce a more consistent and constructive legislative program."[12] During consideration of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, she was author of an amendment requiring the recording of individual teller votes. Prior to that rule change, Members merely walked down the aisle and were counted, but their names were not recorded.

Congresswoman Dwyer was an early supporter of civil rights reform. Just a month into her first term in 1957, she introduced a version of the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration's Civil Rights Bill.[13] The measure called for, among other things, the creation of a bipartisan Commission on Civil Rights to secure voting rights for African Americans in the South. It also provided for an assistant attorney general at the Department of Justice, tasked solely to civil rights issues. The New Jersey Congresswoman supported a constitutional amendment to outlaw the poll tax, which discriminated against African-American and poor white voters in the South. In 1960, Dwyer introduced a bill to create a "Commission on Equal Job Opportunity Under Government Contracts," which aimed at providing for fair contract award processes for minority businesses and individuals.[14] She often cast the necessity for civil rights reforms at home against the backdrop of the Cold War abroad. "If freedom has any meaning at all, if our opposition to world communism is at all justifiable, then we have no alternative but to make secure for all Americans—regardless of race or color or religion or national origin or economic status—the practice and opportunity of full freedom," she said on the House Floor. Equal opportunity in voting, education, work, and housing were essential, she argued.[15]

Dwyer championed women's issues in Congress in a consistent but unadorned manner. True to her initial campaign promise, she pursued a pay equity bill for women during her first term in the House. In March 1957, Representative Dwyer and colleague Cecil Harden of Indiana introduced "Equal Pay for Equal Work" legislation. "The need for equal pay is a matter of simple justice," Dwyer said. "Women are contributing more and more to the economic life of our country. And yet they are expected to accept a second-class role as far as wages are concerned."[16] Dwyer also was a firm and early supporter of the ERA, endorsing it during her first term in office on the observance of Susan B. Anthony Day.[17] Nevertheless, she

refused to run her campaigns by appealing to her gender. "I am campaigning on my record," Dwyer once told group of New Jersey women. "I have never campaigned as a woman; if I can't take on any man running against me, I don't deserve to represent the women and men of the county."[18] When Republican Richard Nixon became President in 1969, she and four other GOP women from the House urged him to appoint more women to federal office. "None of us are feminists," Dwyer told Nixon. "We do not ask for special privileges. . . . Our sole purpose is to suggest ways and means by which women's rights as citizens and human beings may be better protected, discrimination against women be eliminated and women's ability to contribute to the economic, social and political life of the Nation be recognized."[19]

Dwyer decided not to run for re-election in 1972 to the 93rd Congress (1973–1975). Health issues, her age (she was 70), and yet another reconfiguration of her district convinced her to leave the House "with some reluctance."[20] Dwyer maintained, "The time has come to rearrange my priorities—to spend more time with my family and to devote myself to a number of matters which have not received my attention during my years in Congress."[21] Dwyer retired as Ranking Republican on the Government Operations and Banking and Currency committees. In the 1972 elections she campaigned actively for Republican candidate and State Senator Matthew J. Rinaldo, who won the seat to succeed her. Dwyer retired to Elizabeth, New Jersey, where she resided until her death on February 29, 1976.

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Catherine Dean May

1914–2004

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM WASHINGTON

1959–1971

The first woman to represent Washington state in the U.S. House of Representatives, Catherine May, entered public service after her father insisted that she not repeat his example of avoiding the political arena. Congresswoman May established herself as a moderate. She advocated for the needs of her agrarian district, congressional ethics, and women's rights, supporting such measures as the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and the inclusion of the sex discrimination clause in the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Catherine Dean Barnes was born on May, 18, 1914, in Yakima, Washington, to Charles H. Barnes, a deparment-store owner and real estate broker, and Pauline Van Loon Barnes. She attended Yakima Valley Junior College and, in 1936, graduated from the University of Washington with a B.A. in English and speech. Catherine Barnes taught high school English in Chehalis, Washington. In 1940, she pursued a radio broadcasting career in Tacoma and Seattle. On January 18, 1943, she married James O. May. The following year, while waiting for her husband to be discharged from the U.S. Army, Catherine May worked as a writer and assistant commentator for the National Broadcasting Company in New York City. The couple returned to Yakima in 1946, where James May established a real estate and insurance business while she worked as a women's editor for a local radio station. The Mays raised a son and daughter, Jamie and Melinda. The couple became active in politics after Charles Barnes, whose department store went bankrupt in the Great Depression, revealed that his great regret in life was not participating in local government to address public problems.[1] The Mays joined the Young Republicans and became active precinct workers. In 1952, at James's urging, Catherine May ran for a seat as Yakima's representative in the Washington legislature.[2] Elected as a Republican, she served for six years.

When eight-term U.S. Representative Otis H. Holmes declined to seek re-election for his U.S. House seat in 1958, May entered the race against heavily favored Democrat Frank Le Roux (who had nearly unseated Holmes in 1956). The sprawling Washington state district was bordered by Idaho to the east, Oregon to the south, and the Cascade Mountain range to the west and extended into the Columbia River basin in the north. Running on a lean budget, May resorted to distributing handbills and going door-to-door to meet voters, while Le Roux bought billboards to reach the district's thinly spread electorate. May turned LeRoux's advertising against him, challenging him to a debate (which he declined) and delivering campaign speeches in which she declared: "Come out from behind those billboards."[3] May defeated Le Roux by a margin of 10,000 votes, tallying 54 percent of the total. That was the closest race Congresswoman May encountered in six successful campaigns, as she steadily increased her margins of victory: 59 percent in 1960, 65 percent in 1964, and 67 percent in 1968.[4] The 1964 election was especially noteworthy since the strong turnout against Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater cost four incumbent Washington Republicans their House seats.

May entered the 86th Congress (1959–1961) as the first Washington woman ever to serve in the U.S. Congress. Part of her campaign pledge to the farmers and poultry producers had been that she could secure a seat on the prestigious House Agriculture Committee. May's break came when Representative Katharine St. George of New York won a seat on the Republican Committee on Committees.

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As a committee member, St. George could cast her state delegation's votes to select membership to various committees. For the Republicans, states were awarded a number of votes equal to the number of that delegation's GOP representatives. Committee members typically reserved their votes for Members of their own state delegations; however, St. George made an exception for May. With the clout of the largest congressional delegation at the time—including 25 Republicans—St. George secured May one of just three openings on the Agriculture Committee, where she served throughout her career.[5]

May also served briefly on the Committee on the District of Columbia, earning appointment at the opening of the 91st Congress (1969–1971) in January 1969. She left the District of Columbia Committee after just six months when she was offered a seat on a panel she long had sought because of the important Hanford Nuclear Power Plant located in her district: the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. May established a record as a moderate Republican who generally backed the economic policies of the Dwight D. Eisenhower and Richard M. Nixon administrations and sought to curb the Great Society programs of the Lyndon B. Johnson administration.[6] In 1965, she was rewarded for her party loyalty with spots on the Republican Policy and Research Committee, which determined GOP positions on future legislation, and the Committee on Committees. Only on rare occasions, usually when agrarian and western power and utility issues were involved, did May break with her party.

Much of Congresswoman May's agenda focused on her assignment to the Agriculture Committee, where she tended to her district's farming interests. She championed domestic beet sugar production, a key agricultural industry in Washington. She favored establishment of a special fee on imported sugar and, in 1964, proposed a higher permanent quota for domestic beets. May cosponsored a joint resolution in 1967 to establish the U.S. World Food Study and Coordinating Commission, which examined the market structure of the food production industry. In addition, May also took an interest in using agricultural surpluses to help feed poor families and children. She amended the 1966 Child Nutrition Act to include children in overseas American-run schools in the school milk program. In 1970, Representative May sponsored the Nixon administration's proposal to provide free food stamps to families with monthly incomes of less than 30 dollars.

Another focus for May was the Hanford Nuclear Plant located on the Columbia River in her district. Originally built in secret to provide plutonium for the Manhattan Project and subsequent weapons projects, the Hanford Plant was targeted as a facility to produce nuclear energy for Washington state. In the early 1960s, May sought to preserve the reactor from reduced output or deactivation—a move urged by environmentalists concerned about the effects on local aquatic life. May countered that it provided cost-effective electric power and jobs. The reactor remained open, though the plutonium reactor was eventually shut down (the creation of steam power from uranium continued).[7] Eventually, opposition from coal power interests in Congress led the Nixon administration to deactivate the plant in the early 1970s.[8]

In the fall of 1966, May sponsored a measure to establish the House Select Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, serving on it briefly before it became a standing committee in early 1967. A series of congressional scandals—May specifically cited proceedings related to Representative Adam Clayton Powell's misuse of congressional funds as "the tip of the iceberg"—and her own experience with lobbyists and outside interest groups convinced her that the House needed an ethics committee.[9] "It concerned me," May later recalled, "I certainly had no claim to morality, I didn't feel superior, but I knew it was hurting Congress and that it was going to hurt the very institutions of freedom themselves."[10] Noting that the late 1960s was a time of social unrest in the United States, May emphasized that Americans needed to be able to trust their public officials: "The great danger was the people of America losing faith in their institutions—that is the beginning of the end of a nation."[11]

May supported women's rights legislation during her House career, noting after her first election that she had a "tremendous feeling of responsibility toward all women."[12]

May supported women's rights legislation during her House career, noting after her first election that she had a "tremendous feeling of responsibility toward all women."

Nevertheless, she avoided defining herself as an activist. In part, she had to educate herself about discrimination at the national level. "I wondered what women were screaming about when I went to Congress, because we had had equal rights in the state of Washington for years," May recalled, concluding, "Boy, I learned."[13] She became active in a legislative sense, fighting on behalf of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, and joined a group of women lawmakers who demanded access to the then-all-male House gym. May supported the insertion of Title VII in the 1964 Civil Rights Act that prohibited discrimination based on sex. She also backed the ERA, which remained bottled up in the Judiciary Committee for most of her House career. Asked if America was a "woman's country" early in her career, May replied, "No, if it were a woman's country, it would give priority to the humane side of problems that seem like details to men. But sometimes these details have big implications in regard to the safety, comfort, or health of the people."[14]

Like other Washington state Republicans in the 1970 election, May faced voter discontent with the stagnant local economy and rising jobless rate for which Democrats successfully blamed the GOP and the Nixon administration. She lost her re-election bid to Democrat Mike McCormack, a former Hanford scientist, by a plurality of about 7,000 votes out of more than 125,000 cast, a 55 to 45 percent margin. Months before the election, May had divorced her husband after six years of legal separation. She married a management consultant, Donald Bedell, in November 1970. President Nixon appointed her as chair of the U.S. International Trade Commission, where she served from May 1971 to 1981. In 1982, the Ronald W. Reagan administration named May a special consultant to the President on the 50 States Project, an effort to weed out gender-discriminatory state laws. Catherine May Bedell passed away in Rancho Mirage, California, on May 28, 2004.

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Edna O. Simpson
1891–1984

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM ILLINOIS
1959–1961

Edna O. Simpson, the wife of Congressman Sid Simpson of Illinois, was unexpectedly thrust into public life when her husband collapsed and died less than two weeks before the 1958 midterm elections. A day after Sid Simpson's death, Edna Simpson agreed to replace him as the GOP nominee in the western Illinois congressional district. Virtually unknown in Washington prior to her election, Simpson remained an outsider during her single term in the House. In 1960, she declined to stand for renomination.

She was born Edna Borman, daughter of John and Emily Armstrong Borman, in Fieldon, Illinois, on October 26, 1891. On February 1, 1920, Edna Borman married Sidney E. Simpson, an automobile dealer and longtime GOP chairman of Greene County, in western Illinois. The Simpsons raised two daughters, Martha and Janet. In 1942, Sid Simpson was elected as a Republican to the House of Representatives for a seat encompassing Greene County and 13 other counties situated between the Mississippi River and the capital of Springfield in the central part of the state. He went on to serve a total of eight terms in Congress and, from 1953 to 1955, chaired the District of Columbia Committee when Republicans controlled the House. As chair and later as Ranking Republican Member, Simpson helped to create a long-range public works program for the capital.[1] He also rose to the third-ranking spot on the Agriculture Committee. Simpson was re-elected by sizeable majorities and, in his final four elections, carried each county in his district.[2] During her husband's 16 years in the House, Edna Simpson and her daughters resided primarily in Carrollton, Illinois, Sid Simpson's hometown.

Ten days before the November 4, 1958, election, Sid Simpson collapsed and died while presiding over the dedication of a new hospital wing in Pittsfield, Illinois. Edna Simpson was seated beside him and watched as doctors tried unsuccessfully to revive him. Only a day later, on October 27, the congressional district's GOP committee convinced Edna Simpson to put her name on the ballot in place of her husband's.[3] With congressional redistricting looming on the horizon—Illinois eventually lost a House seat with the reapportionment that transpired after the 1960 Census—party leaders may have found it difficult to recruit a seasoned politician to replace Sid Simpson in the House. Additionally, Edna Simpson's candidacy most likely held appeal for the GOP due to potential voter sympathy for the grieving widow and the significance of name recognition in such an abridged election campaign.[4] Her opponent was Democratic nominee Henry W. Pollack, an attorney from Quincy, Illinois, whom Congressman Simpson had defeated by a wide margin in 1956. Edna Simpson did not campaign or make a single speech, but won a seat to the 86th Congress (1959–1961) by easily defeating Pollack with 55 percent of the vote.[5]

In Washington, Edna Simpson chose to remain an obscure figure. She brought her daughter, Janet, who had worked in Sid Simpson's office and for Dwight D. Eisenhower's adviser Sherman Adams, to act as her principal legislative aide. During her two years in the House, Edna Simpson never made a speech on the floor, remaining virtually unknown to her colleagues. Nevertheless, her Illinois colleague Marguerite Stitt Church observed that during her single term, Simpson compiled "an admirable record of service" on the House Administration

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During her two years in the House, Edna Simpson never made a speech on the floor, remaining virtually unknown to her colleagues. Nevertheless, her Illinois colleague Marguerite Stitt Church observed that during her single term, Simpson compiled "an admirable record of service" on the House Administration Committee and the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.

Committee and the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.[6] The reclusive Congresswoman proposed an amendment to the Railroad Retirement Act that allowed retirees who received veterans' benefits to collect their full annuities. Apparently, one of the only times she wielded her official prerogative was in a dispute with the Office of the Clerk of the House about the name that would appear on her congressional stationery. The Clerk planned to print "Edna Oakes Simpson" (Oakes was the name of her first husband, who died less than a year after they were married). Over the Clerk's objection, the Congresswoman received her preference: "Edna (Mrs. Sid) Simpson."[7] In serving as a "Mrs.", she set a precedent, since previous women, both married and single, served under their given names without a salutatory title.[8]

In December 1959, Edna Simpson announced she would not seek re-election in 1960, choosing instead to retire to a quiet private life in Illinois. She died in Alton, Illinois, on May 15, 1984.

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Jessica McCullough Weis
1901–1963

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEW YORK
1959–1963

A gregarious socialite from a well-to-do family, Jessica Weis originally became involved in upstate New York Republican organizations because she was concerned with the scope of New Deal reforms in the 1930s. "I really went into politics because I got tired of sitting around the sitting room objecting to the ways things were being run," Weis recalled. "I decided I ought to do something about it or stop objecting to it."[1] Working her way through the local GOP hierarchy, she eventually became a national committeewoman and spokesperson on the party's lecture circuit. Speaking before numerous audiences and working closely with party activists came naturally to her. "Politics, after all, is a matter of human relationships," she once said.[2] Weis eventually represented her Rochester district in the U.S. House of Representatives, where she defended local agricultural interests and championed women's equality in the workplace.

Jessica "Judy" McCullough was born on July 8, 1901, in Chicago, Illinois, daughter of Charles H. McCullough, Jr., and Jessie Martin McCullough. Her father was president of the Lackawanna Steel Company in Buffalo, New York. Born into privilege, Judy McCullough attended elite finishing schools in Pennsylvania and New York. In September 1921, McCullough married Charles W. Weis, Jr., who went on to become president of a lithography company in Rochester, New York.[3] They settled there and raised three children: Charles, Jessica, and Joan. Judy Weis joined the Rochester Junior League and participated in other local charities, often joking that a "deep-seated hatred of housework" drove her to politics.

Weis became active in the New York Republican Party during the 1930s when she "got upset about those who worried about the New Deal and didn't do anything about it."[4] She first served on the local GOP finance committee and, during the 1936 presidential election, organized motorcar caravans throughout the state to support GOP nominee Alf Landon. In 1937, Weis was appointed vice chair of the Monroe County Republican Committee, where she served for the next 15 years. In 1940, Weis was elected president of the National Federation of Republican Women and was chosen by the state's "Committee of 48" to notify Wendell Willkie of his nomination for the presidency.[5] In the early 1940s she traveled on the GOP's national speaking circuit, addressing groups on a range of topics from women's issues to the need for an internationalist foreign policy.[6] When former New York Congresswoman Ruth Baker Pratt resigned as New York's committeewoman to the national GOP in January 1943, Weis was named to succeed her.[7] From 1940 through 1956 she also was a delegate at-large to GOP conventions. In 1948, Weis seconded the nomination of New York Governor Thomas Dewey for the presidency and then became the first woman to work as associate manager of a national campaign when she joined the Dewey-for-President team.[8]

Throughout this period, her chief base of operations was her Rochester home, "just like the party symbol, a big ungainly gray elephant," she once observed. When asked if she would consider elective office in 1954 she demurred, "I'm not interested—I think it would affect my amateur standing."[9] In 1953, President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Weis to the National Defense Civil Advisory Council; he reappointed her in 1956 and 1960. In 1956, Weis worked as the planning chair for the GOP National Convention in San Francisco, gaining additional national attention.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

With more than 20 years' experience in Republican politics in 1958, Weis was one of a dozen New York GOP members considered for the party nomination to fill the vacancy created when U.S. Senator Irving M. Ives announced his retirement in 1958; other candidates included Congresswoman Katharine St. George and Representative Kenneth Keating, who had represented Rochester and Monroe County for a dozen years.[10] Keating eventually was nominated for and won the vacant Senate seat; however, Weis won a hard-fought four-way race for the nomination to Keating's old House seat. "I can outlast any man," she declared afterward. In the general election she faced Democrat Alphonse L. Cassetti. Weis's name recognition and her network of women's GOP groups throughout the state made her a strong candidate. During the campaign she described herself as a "middle of the road" Republican, although she added, "I hate all labels." Her platform had few specifics, though she spoke broadly of "peace and the economy."[11] She coasted past Cassetti, garnering 58 percent of the vote in the heavily Republican district. In 1960, Weis was re-elected by the same margin against Democrat Arthur B. Curran, Jr.[12]

In her first term, Congresswoman Weis served on the Government Operations and the District of Columbia committees. She was a solid supporter of the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration's legislative program. In one of her first votes on a major piece of legislation, she supported the 1959 Landrum–Griffin Act, which was designed to control illegal practices by labor unions. "I am convinced that the bill will go a long way toward routing out the corruption and racketeering which had worked its way into the labor–management relations field," Weis said. "I do not believe that this bill will harm the clean, democratically run union; it will, in fact, protect and promote honest trade unionism."[13] As a fiscal conservative, she opposed domestic spending initiatives for veterans' housing, airports, power plant construction, and water pollution control. As a Representative from an agricultural district, however, Weis did not regard aid to farmers as inflationary and lent her support to agricultural subsidies. She opposed a proposal to increase parcel post rates, arguing that mail order nurseries in her district would be adversely affected by the rate hike.[14]

During her second term, Weis was appointed to the newly created Committee on Science and Astronautics. As part of her new assignment, she worked on provisions for the Apollo Space Project that eventually sent manned missions to the moon. "We have been in the space age now for only a very short time and we are just on the threshold of a vast and largely unknown universe," she said in a 1962 floor debate on space technology appropriations. She urged her colleagues to vote for a provision to boost federal money to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's program developing meteorological and communications satellite capabilities.[15]

On issues of women's rights, Weis supported the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, and urged an end to wage discrimination against women. Weis took to the House Floor in 1959 and 1962 to support the proposed Equal Pay Act, which provided for pay equity between men and women in the workplace. "Mental capacity, talent, imagination, and initiative are not parceled out on the basis of sex," Weis declared, shortly before passage of the bill. "In the space age, with the premium on excellence in these various qualities, this Nation cannot afford to waste its human resources by discriminatory pay practices which demean and cheapen the contributions of women."[16] Weis also returned home to Rochester each year to participate in the annual celebrations commemorating one the city's most famous natives, Susan B. Anthony. Weis helped raise funds and awareness for the preservation of the leading suffragist's home. Weis used these activities to inspire other women to become involved in politics.[17] She encouraged young women to "get started early in politics and be noisy about it."[18]

Congresswoman Weis's career was cut short by terminal cancer. In June 1962 Weis informed the New York Republican State Committee that her health prevented her from running for a third term. She was succeeded by Republican Frank J. Horton. In a final effort to inspire young women, Weis donated her congressional papers to the women's history archives at Radcliffe.[19] Judy Weis died on May 1, 1963, in Rochester.

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Julia Butler Hansen
1907–1988

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM WASHINGTON
1960–1974

Julia Butler Hansen's seven terms in the House capped a 43-year career in elective office on the city, state, and federal level. Her legislative interests focused on issues affecting western states, such as transportation infrastructure, resource management, and improving the quality of life of Native Americans. As the first woman to chair an Appropriations subcommittee, Hansen thoroughly enjoyed the workings of Congress, once commenting, "I have a knack for legislation, and I like the rough and tumble of legislation."[1] Admired by her House colleagues, Congresswoman Hansen chaired a Democratic Caucus committee in 1974 which recommended procedural reforms that reined in committee powers and made exclusive committees more accessible to junior Members.

Julia Caroline Butler was born in Portland, Oregon, on June 14, 1907. Her father was a carpenter and her mother a schoolteacher. "I was raised by my mother and my New England grandmother, who believed that idle hands were the devil's workshop and I was always raised to keep busy," she recalled.[2] Julia Butler attended Oregon State College from 1924 to 1926, and while working as a dietician and swimming instructor eventually graduated from the University of Washington in 1930 with a degree in home economics. A year before marrying lumberman Henry Hansen in July 1939, she was elected to the city council of Cathlamet, Washington, where she served until 1946. The lack of a transportation infrastructure in Washington state brought Hansen into politics: "You couldn't help but be interested in transportation when you came from this area because we did not have a road in or out of here until 1930," she recalled.[3] Between 1939 and 1960, Julia Hansen served in the Washington state house of representatives, eventually rising to speaker *pro tempore* from 1955 to 1960 and chairing several committees: education, highways, and elections and privileges. One of the major transportation projects that Hansen helped develop was the state's extensive ferry system. She also chaired the Eleven Western States Highway Policy Committee from 1951 to 1960, managed a title and casualty insurance business from 1958 to 1961, and, all the while, helped to raise her only child, David.

In 1960, Hansen won the Democratic primary for the special election to fill the southwestern Washington seat held by Representative Russell V. Mack, who had died in office. On November 8, 1960, Hansen defeated Republican Dale M. Nordquist, 53 to 47 percent, to fill Mack's unexpired term in the 86th Congress (1959–1961).[4] On the same November 8 ballot, Hansen prevailed by the same margin against Nordquist for the full term to the 87th Congress (1961–1963). Hansen's election was impressive, considering that she was one of just two Democrats from Washington who won election to the House in the 87th Congress. Representative Don Magnuson had won by fewer than 200 votes in his Seattle district and, in the presidential balloting, Richard M. Nixon led John F. Kennedy by about 30,000 votes statewide. In Congresswoman Hansen's six subsequent bids for re-election, she was never seriously challenged, winning a range from 57 to 70 percent of the vote, including a 66–34 percent win in her final campaign in 1972.[5]

Although Hansen's House service commenced on the date of her special election, she was not sworn in to office until January 1961 at the start of the 87th Congress. She received assignments on three committees: Veterans' Affairs, Education and Labor, and Interior and Insular Affairs. Within a month, she left Veterans' Affairs, at the request

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

of Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas, who planned to place her on the influential Ways and Means Committee.[6] That position never developed but, when a spot opened in the following Congress on the powerful Appropriations Committee, Hansen was on the short list of potential candidates for the exclusive post. Only one other woman, Representative Florence Kahn of California in the 1930s, had served on the committee. Representative Hansen used the political prowess she had developed during three decades in state and local politics to lobby for the assignment. Appropriations Committee Chairman Clarence Cannon of Missouri had told her in a letter, "I'd love to have a woman on my committee." Hansen's chief competition, Representative Arnold Olsen of Montana, lobbied Cannon by saying, "You don't want a woman on your committee." From Hansen's perspective, Chairman Cannon wavered and appeared ready to deny her the post. An intense competition developed, with Hansen threatening Cannon through an emissary, "You wouldn't want your opposition to women and your letter to me to appear in the press, would you?" To Olsen she said directly, "If you want to run versus me on the basis of knowledge, experience, and what votes we can get, fine. But if you are going to run versus me on grounds that I'm a woman, I'll go out to Montana where I often go to make speeches to Democratic women, and I'll cut you to pieces out there."[7] The next day Olsen conceded, and Hansen secured the post that she held for the duration of her time in Congress.

In 1965, Hansen became the first woman in House history to chair one of the Appropriations Committee's 13 subcommittees—and the only one until Barbara Vucanovich of Nevada in 1995.[8] When she was under consideration for the chairmanship of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee on Appropriations, Chairman George Mahon of Texas, who succeeded Cannon, privately polled other committee members as to whether or not a woman was an appropriate candidate for the position. Hansen cornered him: "Mr. Chairman, have you ever run around and asked the members of the committee if a man would make a good chairman?" She recollected years later that Mahon "looked kind of sheepish" and quit his surveying.[9]

As one of the 13 Appropriations "cardinals," Hansen relied on her legislative experience to master floor procedure and to navigate the deal making that went on behind committee doors. An allusion to the "College of Cardinals," who elect and advise the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, the cardinal title was meant to convey the power and authority vested in the handful of Appropriations members who shaped federal appropriations. As the Interior and Related Agencies chair, Hansen thoroughly grounded herself in floor procedure. "If you know your parliamentary procedures you've got no problems," she observed. "The parliamentarian said to me after I handled my bill for the first time, 'Julia, I'm going to quit worrying about you.'"[10] Martha Griffiths of Michigan later recalled that Hansen "probably understood more of how to deal with power than any other woman who was ever in Congress." When she brought her first bill as subcommittee chair to the full committee, Chairman Mahon decided to test her. "Oh, Julie, you're going to have to cut at least $2 million out of that bill," Mahon said. Hansen complied. The next morning, after conferring with her subcommittee, she reported to Mahon that she had cut $2.5 million from the bill. "Julie, that's wonderful," Mahon said. "Where did you take it out of the bill?" She replied, "Right out of your district, Mr. Chairman."[11] The episode only enhanced Hansen's popularity and stature on the Appropriations Committee.

From her Appropriations seat, Hansen helped parcel out federal funds for government-owned land for each of the annual budgets for a decade. Her subcommittee, which Hansen claimed "had a deep interest in the environment long before it was fashionable" was the first to appropriate funds for the development of the Alaska Pipeline and helped pass the stipulation that oil companies pay for the cost of any environmental cleanup—a requirement that she said was responsible for the careful construction and development of the project. In addition, she used her position to promote and protect federal forests and national parks. Hansen's interest in protecting the environment often caused friction with developers from her home state, especially in her timber-rich district.[12]

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Hansen did not share the focus on women's issues of the younger feminists who came to serve in Congress during the 1970s. Hard work and determination shaped her career and her outlook. "Women of my generation who entered public office had a very different kind of experience than those who come in today," she recalled. "There was little women's movement . . . and one had to work one's way up the political ladder without too much assistance from either men or women. When I was one of four women in the Washington state house of representatives, in 1939, the other 95 members could not have cared less whether we were there or not."[13] In 1972, however, she did vote for the Equal Rights Amendment. Though sympathetic to efforts in the early to mid-1970s to create a formal caucus for women's issues, Hansen ultimately did not support the proposal.[14]

During her final term, Hansen chaired the Democratic Caucus Committee on Organization, Study, and Review (also known as the Hansen Committee), which recommended the first changes in committee structure since passage of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946.[15] It was a delicate task, and Hansen's role in the project demonstrated her colleagues' admiration for her work and her sense of fairness as a widely respected moderate. The "Hansen Committee" reviewed a controversial plan to change committee jurisdictions and to reform procedures proposed in 1974 by the Select Committee on Committees, headed by Richard Bolling of Missouri. Hansen's alternative plan, which passed the House by a vote of 203 to 165 on October 8, 1974, included provisions to expand permanent committee staff, to prohibit voting by proxy in committee, to require committees of more than 15 Members to have at least four subcommittees, to empower the Speaker to refer bills to more than one committee (to resolve jurisdictional disputes), and to mandate that the House meet in December of election years to organize itself for the next Congress. The Hansen Committee, however, abandoned most of the far-reaching jurisdictional changes proposed by the Bolling Committee.[16]

The episode pitted much of the House leadership and senior Members against the Bolling plan, while many junior Members, including half of the Democratic freshmen, were against the more conservative reforms enacted by the Hansen plan.[17] Though Representative Hansen herself believed in the need to restrict the number of committees on which a Member could serve, she had reservations about radically altering the seniority system to more quickly advance younger Members. One reporter asked her if she supported an age limit for committee chairs. Hansen snapped, "Would [you] suggest that the Democratic Party should be the first group to go down to the office of discrimination and explain why, against the law, they have discriminated against anybody over 65?" Years later she observed, "They've got young people in Congress now to a large extent, and I don't see that they've done a damn bit better than the old boys did. That's where—you know, there is a great thing for experience. You know, with age comes some wisdom and some experience and some knowledge."[18]

Even before the Hansen Committee circulated its proposals, Congresswoman Hansen announced in February 1974 that she would not run for renomination to an eighth term and resigned her seat on the last day of the year. She cited overwork and the grind of being "pursued by an endless string of people who want everything from post offices to gasoline."[19] Hansen had been a prize-winning author long before entering politics, writing a work of juvenile fiction, *Singing Paddles* (1935). In retirement she continued her writing endeavors as an author and playwright. She also stayed active in government administration. In 1975 she was appointed to a six-year term on the Washington state toll bridge authority and state highway commission, which she had helped create during her years in the state legislature. She chaired the Washington state transportation commission from 1979 until her resignation in 1980. Julia Hansen resided in Cathlamet until her death on May 3, 1988.

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Maurine B. Neuberger

1907–2000

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ DEMOCRAT FROM OREGON
1960–1967

With her husband Richard Neuberger, Maurine B. Neuberger was part of a "mediagenic power couple" that together reformed the Oregon Democratic Party and emerged onto the national scene.[1] After her husband's death in 1960, Maurine Neuberger succeeded him in the U.S. Senate to become a leading advocate for consumer rights and reform and an outspoken critic of the tobacco industry.

Maurine Brown was born in coastal Cloverdale, Oregon, on January 9, 1907, the daughter of Walter T. Brown, a country doctor, and Ethel Kelty Brown, a schoolteacher. She had one brother, Robert.[2] Brown graduated from Bethel High School in Polk County, Oregon, and in 1924 earned a teacher's certificate at the Oregon College of Education in Monmouth. She taught physical education and modern dance at private and public schools before returning to college. She earned a B.A. in English and physical education in 1929 from the University of Oregon in Eugene. She later took graduate courses at the University of California at Los Angeles. For 12 years Maurine Brown taught public school in Oregon, before returning to the family dairy farm during World War II. While teaching in Portland in 1936 she had met Richard (Dick) L. Neuberger, a young writer who aspired to politics. After Neuberger's tour in the U.S. Army during World War II, the couple married on December 20, 1945. They had no children.

Maurine Neuberger's political career began in 1946 when she helped her husband during his campaign as a Democratic candidate to the Oregon senate. Richard Neuberger lost the race but was elected to the state senate in 1948. Inspired by her husband's victory, Maurine Neuberger won election to the state house of representatives in 1950, making the Neubergers the first husband and wife to serve simultaneously in both chambers of a state legislature.[3] When the couple arrived in Salem, Richard Neuberger once told an associate, there were so few Democrats that, "Maurine and I can caucus in bed!"[4] Together the Neubergers played an important role in the revival of Oregon's Democratic Party, which previously had been overshadowed by the Republicans.[5] Maurine Neuberger focused on consumer rights and education reform, successfully arguing for the repeal of a state ban on colored oleomargarine (she won her wide notoriety for her demonstration of the process of making the product on the Oregon house floor) and initiating programs for students with special needs. She was wildly popular among Oregon voters, who often came to her husband's campaign appearance especially to see her. Richard Neuberger once observed that his wife went further in politics than anyone else who regularly spoke their mind. In 1952 she outpolled President Dwight D. Eisenhower and, in 1954, collected more votes than anyone on the state ticket. In 1954, the Neubergers chronicled their rise in state politics in a book, *Adventures in Politics: We Go to the Legislature*. That same year, Richard Neuberger defeated the Republican incumbent for a U.S. Senate seat. Maurine Neuberger, who had been his chief strategist, joined him as an unpaid aide in Washington in 1955 after completing her final term in the Oregon house. Despite her husband's ascension into national politics, when asked if she would run for the United States Congress in 1956, Maurine Neuberger replied, "One member of Congress in the family is enough. I find my duties as a wife and official hostess keep me occupied full time."[6]

Maurine Neuberger changed her mind about running

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE U.S. THE SENATE HISTORICAL OFFICE

for national office when, on March 10, 1960, Richard Neuberger, who had suffered from cancer, died of a brain hemorrhage just months before his bid for re-election. "I couldn't think of anything except going back to Washington and getting Muffet, our cat, closing the office, and moving out of our apartment," she recalled. "But as I thought more about it, I began to realize I was probably as qualified as any other potential candidate. And, above all, I knew in my heart that Dick would have wanted me to run."[7] Despite the pleas from many Democrats, Oregon Governor Mark O. Hatfield passed over Maurine Neuberger as the appointee for the last nine months of her husband's term running up to the general election. Wanting to choose someone who would not be seeking the full term the following November, Hatfield selected longtime Oregon state supreme court judge Hall Stoner Lusk.[8] Against steep odds, Maurine Neuberger sought and won the Democratic nomination and defeated Republican Elmo Smith, a former governor, for both the unexpired term (November 9 to January 3, 1961) and the full term ending January 3, 1967. In the general election, Neuberger capitalized on her wide name recognition and the vocal support of Oregon Representative Edith Green and her personal friend, former Democratic presidential nominee Adlai E. Stevenson. She polled about 55 percent of the total vote.

Neuberger carried on her husband's emphasis on reform legislation, though she specialized in consumer issues. She eventually served on three standing committees: Agriculture and Forestry, Banking and Currency, and Commerce. Neuberger also was appointed to the Special Committee on Aging and the Committee on a Parliamentary Conference with Canada. She is best remembered as a reformed pack-a-day smoker who took on the tobacco industry by initiating a nationwide anti-smoking campaign even before the U.S. Surgeon General had publicly linked cigarettes with cancer. Her position enraged the tobacco industry but put momentum behind an eventually successful campaign to get the Federal Trade Commission to regulate tobacco advertising. Neuberger sponsored one of the first bills to require warning labels on cigarette packaging. In 1961, she voted for a two-year extension of federal payments to states which regulated billboards along highways as part of her attempt to fight cigarette sales. "The question is whether the view from the highway will be 'purple mountain majesties' or ads for cigarettes," Neuberger said in a speech on the Senate Floor.[9] In 1963, she followed up this legislation by publishing a scathing book on industry practices that popularized her efforts: *Smoke Screen: Tobacco and the Public Welfare*.

Neuberger's emphasis on reform led to her eventual transfer to the Commerce Committee, where she authored and cosponsored a range of consumer protection legislation. She pushed for honest packaging and labeling techniques on food products, challenged the meat packing industry for its additives, and criticized bedding manufacturers that sold flammable blankets. "No industry I know of has ever been able to regulate itself to the interest of the consumer public," she once observed.[10] One of her earliest bills, in May 1961, proposed authorizing federal contributions to presidential and congressional candidates and placing spending caps on campaign expenditures.[11] In 1962, she cosponsored legislation with New Jersey Senator Clifford Case that required Members of Congress and the executive branch to make periodic public disclosures of their financial interests. Neuberger also worked to protect women's roles in the workplace by ensuring that the Labor Department received funding to establish the President's Commission on the Status of Women. In 1964, she introduced an amendment to the Revenue Act, making it easier for taxpayers to deduct expenses for childcare. She also supported reformed immigration laws which ended the national origins quota system, one of the first bills to reduce automobile emissions levels, and a bill to establish the Oregon Dunes National Seashore.

Neuberger worked on behalf of farming and, especially, lumber interests within her state, advocating higher soybean price supports and sponsoring a bill to enable foreign ships to convey U.S. lumber to Puerto Rico. She recalled later, however, that her short term on the Agriculture Committee was largely "four miserable years, fruitless years."[12] Neuberger chafed under the control of the

committee by prominent southerners who focused their attention on crops such as tobacco, rice, and peanuts. Forestry concerns were rarely, if ever, addressed.

On November 1, 1965, Neuberger announced that she would not seek re-election to a second full term. Concerned about her health after undergoing abdominal surgery in 1961 to remove a malignant tumor, Neuberger also was somewhat disillusioned with the Senate procedures and her chilly relationship with Oregon's senior Senator, Wayne Morse. Morse, a fellow Democrat, had become outspoken in his opposition to American intervention in the Vietnam War; Neuberger typically supported President Lyndon Johnson's administration, once commenting "When it came to foreign policy, I did whatever Bill Fulbright said I should do."[13] Despite her eventual ideological shift concerning Vietnam (from voting for the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution to publicly criticizing the war), Neuberger still considered Morse "impossible to work with," citing his indifference to her political agenda and his expectation that she defer to the senior Senator.[14] "But the real, actual, hard core reason I didn't run was raising the money that I knew it was going to take," Neuberger told an interviewer. "Each year it got more and more expensive, and I just didn't have the heart to go out and buttonhole people in various organizations from New York to California to Florida and Seattle to build a campaign chest. That was the hardest thing about the whole job, raising the money. I just decided I didn't want to do it, so I just bided my time."[15]

After leaving the Senate, Neuberger chaired the Commission on the Status of Women and was a lecturer on consumer affairs and the status of women and taught American government at Boston University, Radcliffe Institute, and Reed College. She briefly remarried, to the Boston psychiatrist Philip Solomon in 1964, but they were divorced in 1967. She retired to Portland, Oregon, tending to her garden and mentoring scores of young Democratic politicians. When Democratic Representative Ron Wyden visited her in 1994 and they talked about congressional investigations of tobacco advertising she told Wyden, "Stay after them."[16] She lived in Portland until her death there on February 22, 2000.

"To many people, 'politician' is a dirty word. But if we don't encourage our children and friends to enter politics, the professional politicians depicted in the cartoons will take over."

—Maurine Neuberger, Speech to the Faculty Women's Club at George Washington University, February 4, 1956

Of her decision not to stand for re-election in 1966, Neuberger remarked: "The real, actual, hard core reason I didn't run was raising the money I knew it was going to take. Each year it got more and more expensive, and I just didn't have the heart to go out and buttonhole people in various organizations from New York to California to Florida and Seattle to build a campaign chest."

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Oregon Historical Society (Portland, OR). *Papers:* In the Richard and Maurine Neuberger Papers, 1954–1966, 13 boxes. Senate files and other papers including press releases and speeches. Topics include agriculture in Oregon, commerce, conservation, public lands, and social security. Finding aid. Also miscellaneous items in various collections.

University of Oregon (Eugene, OR). *Papers:* 1950–1967, 54 feet. Chiefly Senate office files (1960–1967), including correspondence, press releases, newsletters, statements, campaign records, minor legislative files, manuscripts of speeches, scrapbooks, and tape recordings. Topics include conservation, public power, reclamation, public health, and social security. A finding aid is available in the repository.

NOTES

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Catherine D. Norrell
1901–1981

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM ARKANSAS
1961–1963

Having worked alongside her husband, William Frank Norrell, as his legislative assistant for three decades, Catherine D. Norrell succeeded him as an Arkansas Representative in a special election after his death. Her experience as a congressional wife and aide helped to prepare her for new legislative responsibilities. But Norrell was confronted by an almost insuperable barrier to her re-election, as reapportionment carved up her southeastern Arkansas district between two powerful incumbents.

Catherine Dorris was born on March 30, 1901, in Camden, Arkansas. Her father, William Franklin Dorris, was an itinerant Baptist preacher, and he moved his wife, Rose Whitehead Dorris, and their family from congregation to congregation in Texas, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Catherine attended Ouachita Baptist College in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, and the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, training as an accomplished pianist and organist. Before her 1922 marriage to William Frank Norrell, a World War I veteran and Monticello, Arkansas, lawyer, Catherine Dorris was a music teacher and director at the music department of Arkansas A&M College. The Norrells raised one daughter, Julia Jean, nicknamed Judy. After eight years in the Arkansas state senate, William Norrell was elected to the U.S. House in November 1938—the first of 12 consecutive terms representing a southeastern Arkansas district. He would eventually become the sixth-ranking Democrat on the powerful Appropriations Committee and chairman of its Legislative Appropriations Subcommittee.[1] During her husband's tenure in Little Rock and in the U.S. House, Catherine Norrell worked as his unpaid assistant, learning the workings of the legislative process. She also served as president of the Congressional Wives Club and was a close friend of Hattie Wyatt Caraway, the Arkansas Senator and first woman elected to the U.S. Senate.

Reapportionment after the 1960 Census cost Arkansas two of its six House seats. William Norrell's district was carved into two parts, the first being lumped into a northeastern district represented by Wilbur Mills, chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee. The bulk of the Norrell's old district, including his home county, was placed into the district represented by Democrat Oren Harris, a formidable, 20-year incumbent who chaired the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Norrell, who claimed Harris was behind the redistricting effort, vowed to fight him in the 1962 Democratic primary for a seat in a new district which spanned the southern half of the state.[2] He never got that chance. On February 15, 1961, William Norrell died a few days after being discovered unconscious in his office; he had suffered a stroke. Arkansas Democratic leaders soon approached Catherine Norrell to fill the vacancy in a special election. Like many widows running for their husbands' seats, Norrell campaigned on the promise of continuing her husband's policies. Her daughter Judy, on leave from George Washington University Law School, managed the campaign. Norrell's slogan was direct: "Keep Your Congressional Power Up! Elect Mrs. W. F. Norrell . . . the Only Candidate Prepared to Step In."[3] She faced four Democratic men in the campaign, including the top contender, John Harris Jones, a young attorney from Pine Bluff. Jones attacked Norrell for attempting to claim two congressional salaries, one as a widow receiving survivor's compensation and one as a Member were she to be elected. But his efforts to undercut wide sympathy for the widow Norrell

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

were to no avail. In the special election held on April 18, 1961, Norrell prevailed with 43 percent of the vote to 25 percent for Jones and 23 percent for M.C. Lewis.[4]

Catherine Norrell took the oath of office on April 25, 1961, and received an assignment on the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. Despite her experience as a congressional wife, her new duties seemed daunting. She admitted to President John F. Kennedy during a conversation, "Having the responsibility squarely on your shoulders is not quite the same as watching someone else do it."[5] Also clouding the issue was the decision Norrell would soon have to face about challenging Oren Harris in the 1962 primary, a decision that hinged on her ability to raise sufficient finances.

Once in office, Catherine Norrell concentrated her legislative efforts on the promotion of economic prosperity in her district. She was especially interested in protecting the area's clay, textile, and lumber industries through tariffs and other government controls. In August 1961, Norrell supported a bill that eased Internal Revenue Service efforts to collect retroactive taxes from businesses in the clay brick and tile industry.[6] A month later, Norrell joined with Representative Cleveland M. Bailey of West Virginia in insisting that the Kennedy administration was not adequately protecting American industry under the framework of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs. Norrell complained particularly that the wood product industry in her district suffered from a reduction in U.S. tariff rates that foreign countries had failed to reciprocate.[7]

Norrell used her new prominence to acknowledge the contributions women had made to American political life. In May 1961, she sponsored a joint resolution calling for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, a measure long stuck in the House Judiciary Committee.[8] In August 1961, to commemorate the ratification of the 19th Amendment that gave women the right to vote, Norrell told colleagues that the Arkansas state constitutional convention in 1868 considered a measure to grant the vote to "all citizens, 21 years of age." Arkansas also had been home to Catherine Campbell Cunningham, editor of the *Woman's Chronicle*, a weekly newspaper that agitated for women's suffrage. "Woman's place in public life has evolved slowly," Norrell observed. The 19th Amendment, which followed various state suffrage initiatives, "was the result of a lengthy crusade in which thousands of persons endeavored to convince the public that the franchise should not be restricted to men."[9]

Norrell also supported the Kennedy administration's Cold War policies. She cast her first vote in Congress on behalf of a foreign aid bill to Latin American countries, despite feeling that it went "almost against my own conscience." Norrell believed her husband would have voted for the measure, too, though she vowed: "I expect in the future my vote will be more conservative than liberal."[10] She sponsored legislation prohibiting interstate and foreign commerce in goods imported into the United States from Cuba. In July 1962, she marked "Captive Nations Week," recalling her piano idol, the Polish musician-statesman Jan Paderewski, whose remains were interred at Arlington National Cemetery until, as he had wished, Poland was freed from Soviet occupation.[11]

Even as she was elected in April 1961, Norrell faced the impending reapportionment. Political, familial, and, most importantly, financial considerations convinced her not to challenge Harris. Her decision was influenced, ironically, by her campaign manager, daughter Judy, who was concerned about the stress the hotly contested campaign would have on her mother. Judy Norrell explained that she did not want "to lose two parents to the political scene of things. . . . I was of the opinion she should not run—which I think she always regretted."[12] Privately, Catherine Norrell told friends that she could not afford to challenge Harris. Upon her retirement, Catherine Norrell told her House colleagues, "This has been the most challenging and interesting experience of my life. Never having expected to serve in elective office of any kind, I feel a deep sense of gratitude to the people of the Sixth Congressional District."[13]

Shortly after Norrell left Congress, President Kennedy named her as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, a post she held from

1963 to 1965. When President Lyndon Johnson won election to a full term, he appointed Norrell the director of the State Department's reception center in Honolulu, Hawaii, where she served from 1965 to 1969. Upon her arrival at the post, reporters cornered Norrell to remind her that her husband had voted against Hawaii's statehood in the 1950s. "But that was my husband and not me," she replied. "I'm delighted to be here."[14] Norrell stayed in Hawaii for most of her retirement, employed as a church musician, before returning to her hometown of Monticello, Arkansas. She died in Warren, Arkansas, on August 26, 1981.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Catherine Dorris Norrell," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

University of Arkansas Libraries (Fayetteville, Arkansas), Special Collections Division. *Papers:* In the William F. and Catherine D. Norrell Papers, 1932–1981, 39 boxes. Includes materials relating to Congresswoman Norrell's personal life, her activities during her husband's congressional career, and her own term in Congress. Includes correspondence and texts of speeches made by Norrell from 1961 to 1965. Also includes items relating to the Congressional Club, materials addressing the status of women, files from her tenure with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, including files of materials accumulated during her trip to Europe and the Middle East in 1963. There are also scrapbooks containing materials dating from her term in Congress. A finding aid is available in the repository and online.

NOTES

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Louise G. Reece
1898–1970

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM TENNESSEE
1961–1963

Louise G. Reece, an inseparable political companion during her husband Carroll Reece's long service as a Tennessee Representative, won a special election to succeed him after his death in 1961. Her brief career in Congress was a direct product of decades of experience in support of his busy schedule—running Carroll Reece's re-election campaigns, scouting key legislation, and, in his absence, making important contacts on his behalf. During her 19 months on Capitol Hill, Louise Reece followed her husband's example as a fiscal conservative and defender of business interests in eastern Tennessee.

Louise Despard Goff was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on November 6, 1898, the only child of Guy Despard Goff, a lawyer who had left his native Clarksburg, West Virginia, for Milwaukee, and Louise Van Nortwick Goff, a graduate of Wells College. In April 1905, her mother died of a paralytic stroke.[1] Born to a wealthy family of bankers and lawyers, Louise Goff was educated at private schools in Milwaukee and at the prestigious Miss Spence's School in New York City. In 1912, her grandfather Nathan Goff, a former U.S. Representative from West Virginia and a U.S. circuit court judge, was elected to the U.S. Senate. In 1917, Louise Goff moved to Washington, D.C., with her family when her father was appointed a special assistant to the U.S. Attorney General. He worked in that capacity intermittently for six years, while also serving as the general counsel of the U.S. Shipping Board and, during the war, as a commissioned army colonel in the Judge Advocate General's Department. In 1924, Guy Goff won election to his father's old Senate seat from West Virginia. The Goff family lived in Washington, and Louise Goff became immersed in the capital's social life. She left the comforts of home in 1920, to volunteer for an American relief effort in France spearheaded by Anne Morgan, daughter of financier J.P. Morgan. While in France, Goff drove ambulances through areas of the country that had been ravaged by World War I.[2]

In 1923, Louise Goff married Brazilla Carroll Reece, initiating an almost-four-decade-long political union. Carroll Reece, then a second-term Republican Representative from Tennessee, had been a highly decorated World War I serviceman and university administrator. The couple settled into a home in Washington, D.C., and spent their summers and recess breaks in Johnson City, Tennessee, until World War II, when Louise Reece and the couple's only child, a daughter named Louise, moved back full-time to Tennessee. Carroll Reece served 18 total terms in the House (1921–1931; 1933–1947; 1951–1961). He represented the formerly Unionist, and safely Republican, upper-eastern section of the state. Reece was deeply conservative and an isolationist, and forged a close political alliance with Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio. He helped to shape and to amend such measures as the Food and Drug Act and the Federal Communications Act, opposed much of the New Deal, and was a fervent anti-communist during the early Cold War years.[3] Reece also was the acknowledged leader of the Tennessee GOP and the most prominent of southern Republicans.[4] In 1947, he relinquished his House seat to chair the Republican National Committee (RNC), supporting Taft at the 1948 Republican National Convention and resigning his seat after the nomination of Thomas Dewey. He returned to the House in 1951 to serve another decade.[5]

During her husband's lengthy service in the House, Louise Reece made regular appearances on the campaign trail and acted as his chauffeur during campaign swings.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

During several of his re-election campaigns, she later recalled, "he stayed in Washington and I came home and ran things. In those days he only had to show at just one county rally to clinch another term. But all I knew about politics, I learned from him."[6] She also worked as Carroll Reece's eyes and ears in Washington, tracking legislation in caucus meetings or congressional committees, and as an observer and point of contact at GOP meetings, including the national conventions. Even after Louise Reece moved away from the capital in the early 1940s, she returned often to assist her husband while living out of a hotel. One congressional aide recalled that "most East Tennesseans thought of them as Mr. and Mrs. Republican." Their daughter, who, as a licensed pilot, also transported Carroll Reece around eastern Tennessee, recalled of her parents' political partnership, "They were a team."[7]

Following a long battle with cancer, Congressman Carroll Reece died on March 19, 1961.[8] Less than a week after his death, Louise Reece announced her intention to seek the GOP nomination to fill out the remainder of his term.[9] Two days later, local Republican committeemen unanimously chose her as their candidate to succeed Carroll Reece and simultaneously called for a nominating convention for April 15.[10] Reece was opposed in the GOP convention by Leland Davis, a 38-year-old oilman with no previous experience in politics.[11] Reece prevailed handily and, for the next five weeks, campaigned extensively throughout the district, much as she had nearly 20 years earlier on behalf of her husband. "I thought of a lot of back roads my husband had forgotten," she remarked.[12] The first returns on the evening of the May 16, 1961, special election came from Carroll Reece's home county, Johnson County, where Louise won with 1,800 votes out of 2,000 cast. That trend carried over throughout the district. In the three-way race, Louise Reece defeated her nearest competitor, Democrat William Faw, who had been endorsed by Senator Estes Kefauver, by a two-to-one margin.[13] Shortly after winning, she told a reporter, "I am a conservative. You can count on me to be on that side. I'm going with the Republican leaders." She noted that her interests would be in the areas of juvenile delinquency and school building projects. Reflecting on her victory further, Reece said that being a Member of Congress was "the last thing I ever thought of." From her earliest days, such aspirations had, apparently, been discouraged. She recalled her father's exclusionary practices as a Senator: "No woman ever got inside his office door."[14]

Louise Reece took the oath of office on May 23, 1961, and was assigned to the Committee on Public Works. In an effort to protect her district's glass industry, Reece paired with West Virginia Representative Cleveland Bailey in urging President John F. Kennedy to restore tariff rates on certain glass products.[15] She joined the other Republicans on the Public Works Committee in issuing a report in opposition to the Public Works Acceleration and Coordination Act that they thought would needlessly increase federal spending and overburden the bureaucracy. Though she supported government aid to build schools, she opposed federal dollars going towards increasing teachers' pay. "If that comes, the next thing they will do is to tell us what to teach," she said.[16] In a special order marking the 45th anniversary of the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote, Reece dedicated one of her rare floor speeches to recalling the role of Tennessee in providing the final vote for ratification. "I feel highly honored to be a Member of the present delegation from the great Volunteer State that made this contribution to the progress of our country and to women in particular," Reece said, joining most of her women colleagues in a round of celebratory speeches.[17]

A severe arthritic condition cut her congressional career short.[18] The 63-year-old Congresswoman announced in January 1962 that she would not be a candidate for re-election. "A younger person, who can start building up some seniority for the district, ought to be here in Washington," Reece told reporters.[19] Her successor, Republican James Quillen, did just that, winning election in 1962 to the first of 17 consecutive terms in the House. Louise Reece returned to her business interests in Tennessee and West Virginia and succeeded her late husband on the RNC. She was still a member of the RNC when she died in Johnson City, Tennessee, on May 14, 1970.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Louise Goff Reece," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

East Tennessee State University Library (Johnson City, TN), Archives of Appalachia. *Papers:* In the James H. Quillen Papers, ca. 1918–1999, 566 linear feet. The collection also includes some of the papers of James Quillen's predecessors, Brazilla Carroll and Louise Goff Reece. A finding aid is available in the repository and online.

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Corinne Boyd Riley
1893–1979

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA
1962–1963

Riding on the tradition of a "widow's mandate" in South Carolina, Corinne Boyd Riley, without making a single stump speech, appearing at an election rally, or even facing a bona fide opponent, won the special election to fill the last nine months of the term of her late husband, John J. Riley. She became the fourth widow to represent South Carolina and the second from a district in the south-central part of the state. She held the seat long enough to vote for several projects benefiting local interests in the district her husband had represented during his eight terms in the House.

Corinne Anderson Boyd was born in Piedmont, South Carolina, on July 4, 1893. The daughter of a Methodist preacher, Reverend George Boyd, she was named for her mother. She graduated from Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1915 and taught high school for the next 22 years. In 1917, she married John Jacob Riley, a World War I veteran, real estate broker, and insurance businessman. The couple raised a daughter, Helen, and a son, O. Beverley. From 1938 to 1942, Corinne Riley worked as a field representative for the South Carolina textbook commission. During World War II, she joined the civilian personnel office at Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, South Carolina. In November 1944, John Riley won election as a Democrat to the 79th Congress (1945–1947) as a south-central South Carolina Representative. He succeeded Willa Lybrand Fulmer, the widow of longtime Representative Hampton Pitts Fulmer. Riley served two terms before being defeated for the 81st Congress (1949–1951) in 1948; however, he was re-elected to the 82nd Congress (1951–1953) and then to five succeeding terms.[1] He voted in line with other conservative southern Democrats, opposing foreign aid expenditures and seeking a balanced budget. He eventually served on the Appropriations Committee, working on its defense and public works subcommittees.

When John Riley died on January 1, 1962, local and national leaders from both parties urged Corinne Riley to run in the special election to fill her husband's seat.[2] She initially resisted the invitation to represent the state's largest district, but reversed herself and announced her candidacy in mid-January. "I want to finish the work John started," she told reporters. "Women do have a place in politics, of course, but it's not one of leadership. It is one of helping her husband."[3] Nominating a deceased Congressman's widow had become tradition in South Carolina starting in the 1930s, with the precedent set by previous widows Elizabeth Gasque, Clara McMillan, and Willa Fulmer. Both parties respected this gesture of sympathy as a political code.[4] They further announced that if Riley won the nomination, neither party would run another candidate against her with the expectation that she would retire at the end of the term.

However, South Carolina political leaders did not expect another more experienced woman politician to challenge the tradition. Riley faced an 11-term member of the state house of representatives, Martha T. Fitzgerald, in the February 1962 Democratic primary. Fitzgerald claimed her credentials as an able state legislator made her a more suitable candidate than Riley. Still in official mourning for her husband, Riley made no campaign appearances and sent surrogates to read her speeches at various political meetings. She promised only to pursue the conservative agenda of her husband and to retire at the end of his unexpired term. "I know just what my husband thought about foreign aid, the United Nations, the Peace

IMAGE COURTESY OF AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Corps and federal aid to education, and I'll vote his views," she declared, ticking off a series of programs which John Riley had opposed.[5] In the end, tradition won out. Riley triumphed by more than a two-to-one plurality, carried all eight counties in the district, and described the nomination as "a tribute to the voters' confidence in my husband and their faith in me." Despite the strength of precedent and outpouring of sympathy on her behalf, Riley admitted that her defeat of Fitzgerald was "rather surprising."[6] Shortly after Riley's nomination, the *Columbia State* observed that she "would bring to the office a considerable knowledge of its requirements gained through her close association with it through her late husband. Also, since she shares the conservative views of her husband, and since this district is largely (not totally) one of that bent, there would be considerable satisfaction from the service of Mrs. Riley, a dedicated South Carolinian and a woman of considerable force and ability."[7] Corrine Riley faced no challenger in the April 10, 1962, special election.

After taking the oath of office two days later, Congresswoman Riley was assigned a seat on the Committee on Science and Astronautics. Though her husband had served on the Appropriations Committee, she had no illusions about getting on that sought-after committee.[8] She did, however, resist initial offers for the Education and Labor Committee and the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, convincing House Speaker John McCormack of Massachusetts and Majority Leader Carl Albert of Oklahoma that the Science and Aeronautics assignment would be "more useful" to voters in her district. She also expressed satisfaction that the assignment "might mean a trip to Europe."[9] During her brief eight-month term, Riley introduced a bill authorizing the General Services Administration to transfer surplus property to the Aiken (South Carolina) Historical Society for use as a historical monument. She also supported authorizing the Federal Communications Commission to require that television sets be equipped with high-frequency channels, a proposal she hoped would benefit an educational television system operating in her district. "We in South Carolina have worked long and hard to preserve this valuable resource which we call our VHF channel in Columbia," Riley noted in her brief and only floor speech as a Member.[10]

True to her campaign promise, Riley declined to seek re-election in the fall of 1962. Years later she described her congressional career as "a pleasant interlude."[11] Riley retired to Sumter, where she died on April 12, 1979.

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NOTES

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5 Marie Smith, "Mrs. John J. Riley: She'll Vote Husband's Views," 16 February 1962, *Washington Post*: C2.

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7 *Congressional Record*, House, 87th Cong., 2nd sess. (5 February 1952): A1075. In the above-referenced speech, Representative Robert W. Hemphill of South Carolina included the 14 February 1962 editorial of the *Columbia (SC) State.*

8 Smith, "Mrs. John J. Riley: She'll Vote Husband's Views."

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10 *Congressional Record*, House, 87th Cong., 2nd sess. (1 May 1962): 7444–7445.

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"I know just what my husband thought about foreign aid, the United Nations, the Peace Corps, and federal aid to education, and I'll vote his views," Corrine Riley declared, ticking off a series of programs which John Riley had opposed.

Charlotte T. Reid

1913–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM ILLINOIS
1963–1971

Charlotte T. Reid had already enjoyed a career as a nationally acclaimed singer before she began her second career relatively late in life as the widow and successor of a congressional candidate who died in mid-campaign. Opponents objected that Reid's celebrity did not prepare her for public office. But Reid, a fiscal conservative who opposed President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs while supporting American intervention in Vietnam, demonstrated her political aptitude by gaining a seat on the prestigious Appropriations Committee in her third term.

Charlotte Leota Thompson was born on September 27, 1913, in Kankakee, Illinois, the only child of Edward Charles Thompson and Ethel (Stith) Thompson. She attended public schools in Aurora and the Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois. In 1932, she left Illinois College, without taking a degree, to pursue her musical interests. In 1936, Thompson auditioned and won a spot on a popular, Chicago-based show, Don McNeill's "Breakfast Club." Thompson sang under the name Annette King for nearly three years as the show's featured vocalist and became a voice familiar to millions of Americans who listened on the National Broadcasting Company network. On January 1, 1938, she married Frank Reid, Jr., an Aurora attorney. They had four children: Patricia, Frank, Edward, and Susan. Charlotte Reid left her music career for marriage and motherhood, pursing several civic interests in Illinois, including the March of Dimes, the Child Welfare Society, and the Girl Scouts.

In 1962, Frank Reid, Jr., won the Republican nomination for an Illinois seat in the House of Representatives but died suddenly of a heart attack in August during the campaign. Republican leaders in the traditionally conservative district just west of Chicago persuaded Charlotte Reid to run in her husband's place. Though she had little political experience, Reid was an effective campaigner. With the support of retiring Illinois Congresswoman Marguerite Church, she won the general election against Democrat Stanley Cowan, a Dundee, Illinois, businessman, with 60 percent of the vote. Reid was sworn in to the House on January 3, 1963.[1]

Reid faced only one serious challenge, during the 1964 election cycle. Democratic opponent Poppy Mitchell, a mother and college graduate who had never held political office, ran on a pro-Lyndon B. Johnson, Great Society platform, charging that Reid was "unconcerned" about educational improvements and welfare programs. Mitchell managed a grass-roots door-to-door campaign, serving coffee to constituents from an old mail truck and an armored car painted white with red and blue lettering, converted into "Poppy Wagons."[2] Reid's duties in the House kept her from campaigning actively until late in the summer, but she remained the favorite, given the district's traditional conservatism. Moreover, her celebrity and national name recognition from her show business years made her a popular figure among GOP candidates, who heavily recruited her to canvass their districts and stump on their behalf. Among the nearly 20 invitations she received from House colleagues on the campaign trail, Reid campaigned in the districts of House Minority Leader Charlie Halleck of Indiana and GOP Whip Leslie Arends of Illinois.[3] Reid ran on a platform opposed to President Johnson's proposed expansion of federal welfare programs. On the campaign trail, Reid countered, "The federal government has grown big and powerful, and in my way of thinking, exercises far too much control over

CONGRESSIONAL PICTORIAL DIRECTORY, 92ND CONGRESS

each of us."[4] She also suggested that Congress needed to provide funding for a strong military force to achieve "peace with honor" in Vietnam. Reid prevailed with 58 percent of the vote, an impressive result considering the size of Lyndon Johnson's electoral landslide and his lengthy coattails, particularly in Illinois, where Johnson piled up a nearly 900,000-vote margin over Republican nominee Barry Goldwater. After that election, Reid never again was seriously challenged, winning in 1966, 1968, and 1970 with 72 percent, 68 percent, and 69 percent of the vote, respectively.[5]

In Congress, Reid favored fiscal austerity and shrinking the size and scope of the federal government. "I dislike labels as such, but if I have to have one," she once said, "it would be as a conservative Republican."[6] She served in the 88th Congress (1963–1965) on the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. In later terms, she also served on the Public Works and the Standards of Official Conduct committees. In 1967, Reid received an assignment on the Appropriations Committee, just the third woman ever to serve on that panel. During the 88th Congress, she introduced a constitutional amendment to allow public school students to engage in noncompulsory prayer, noting that prayers preceded the daily business of Congress. The Supreme Court decision to ban prayer in public schools, Reid contended, "encourages agnosticism and atheism."[7] She opposed antipoverty measures such as the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and voted against community renewal programs, increased aid to education, and support for low-income home buyers, largely on the basis of reining in the federal budget. "My guiding principles on all questions are economy, decentralization of federal power and freedom of the individual," Reid said in a *New York Post* interview in July 1964. "Not many bills offered today pass that check list."[8]

Reid was an unwavering supporter of the military policies of Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon in Vietnam. In December 1965, she became one of the first Members of Congress to visit South Vietnam after the dramatic expansion of U.S. military forces earlier that summer. Reid paid the costs of the four-day trip on her own, rode helicopters into the war zone, visited the sprawling American bases at Da Nang and Bien Hoa, and boarded the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Ticonderoga* in the South China Sea. "I want to reassure our fighting men that the overwhelming majority of loyal Americans stand back of them 100 percent," Reid said. Her support did not waver, even as American forces became mired in an intractable conflict that eventually drew more than a half-million troops into Southeast Asia. In 1968, Reid voted for the Scherle Amendment to a higher education bill that banned student protesters from receiving federal loans. She also opposed the Cooper–Church Bill, which stipulated that the President could not expand the war into Cambodia without congressional approval.

Reid's conservatism, however, did not cross over into several significant social issues. Though she did not seek out the label, Reid was a strong supporter of women's rights. "I don't like to think I am interested just in women's issues," she once said.[9] Nevertheless, Reid advocated the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, which was sponsored by Democrat Martha Griffiths of Michigan. Reid, Patsy Mink of Hawaii, and Catherine May of Washington state made international headlines for their efforts to open up the House gym to women lawmakers. She regularly encouraged women to enter politics. "You have to work hard, and you don't have time to see the latest shows or read everything on the best seller's list, but you have the satisfaction of seeing some of your ideas enacted into law," she once told a gathering of the League of Republican Women.[10] "Men respect our opinions and ideas," Reid said. "Small as our numbers are [in the House], we create a needed balance in the complicated business of adapting our governmental processes to the requirements of a changing society."[11]

On July 2, 1971, President Richard M. Nixon appointed Reid to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to succeed fellow Illinois Republican Thomas J. Houser. Reid, with some reservations, resigned her seat and accepted the appointment. Nixon was eager to place a woman on the FCC, and Reid was only the second in its history. Reid acknowledged wanting the relative security afforded by

the seven-year appointment. But perhaps the most compelling reason was electoral and derived from imminent redistricting changes after the 1970 Census. In 1971, the Illinois state legislature agreed on a reapportionment plan that split her district in two. A portion went into Republican Robert McClory's district northeast of Chicago. But the vast majority of Reid's old district was merged with a portion of the old district south of the city, which had for nearly three decades elected House Minority Whip Leslie Arends to Congress. Had Reid remained in the House for the 1972 elections, she would have had the unenviable task of facing Arends in the GOP primary or of challenging McClory in a district where she had almost no base of support.[12] The Senate confirmed her appointment on July 22, 1971, with little debate, though the Nixon administration asked her to remain in the House until several pieces of its legislative program cleared the floor. Reid resigned from Congress on October 7, 1971.

During her FCC tenure, Reid was a strong proponent of a hands-off approach to regulation, suggesting that the market, rather than federal overseers, should determine media content. Shortly after marrying H. Ashley Barber, a manufacturer of construction equipment from Aurora, Illinois, on May 26, 1976, Reid resigned from the FCC. Later, she was a member of the President's Task Force on International Private Enterprise from 1983 to 1985. She also served on the board of overseers of the Hoover Institution from 1984 to 1988. Reid resides in Frankfort, Michigan.

FOR FURTHER READING

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4 Mathewson, "Two Women Vie in Illinois Race."
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6 "Congresswoman Reid Says She's a Conservative G.O.P.," 8 January 1963, *Washington Evening Star*: B8.
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Irene Bailey Baker

1901-1994

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM TENNESSEE
1964–1965

Irene Bailey Baker came to Congress as part of the widow's mandate, succeeding a powerful and well-connected husband who died so suddenly that party leaders were caught unprepared to name a long-term successor. Mrs. Baker had long before established herself as a politician in her own right, serving as a Tennessee GOP national committeewoman and chairing the state's Grass Roots Organization of Republican Women. An adept campaigner, she nevertheless ran on the reputation of her late husband, Tennessee Congressman Howard Baker, in a special election to fill his vacant seat. "I stand on Howard's record," Irene Baker declared, on her way to winning election to a 10-month term in which her chief goal was to provide continuity for her husband's legislative agenda.

Edith Irene Bailey was born in Sevierville, Tennessee, on November 17, 1901. She attended public schools in Maryville and Sevierville, and studied music. She served in local government as a court clerk from 1918 to 1924, eventually becoming the deputy clerk and master in the chancery court in Sevierville. Her first husband died, and she was hired by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) as an abstractor of titles in the early 1930s. She met Howard Henry Baker, a widower, and they were married in 1935. The couple raised Baker's two children from his first marriage—Howard H. Baker, Jr., and Mary Elizabeth Baker—and one of their own, Beverly Irene Baker.[1]

Howard Baker was a lawyer who had served briefly in the Tennessee legislature before working as the attorney general for a judicial circuit that encompassed six counties in the northeastern part of the state. He also published the weekly *Cumberland Chronicle* in his hometown of Huntsville, Tennessee. In the 1930s, he became a powerful player in state GOP politics, working as a party official while establishing his own law firm in Huntsville. He was a delegate to the 1940 GOP convention and, in 1948 and 1952, was chairman of the Tennessee delegation at the Republican National Convention. Irene worked on her husband's unsuccessful campaigns for governor in 1938 and for U.S. Senator in 1940. When Howard Baker won election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1950 in an eastern Tennessee district which encompassed Knoxville, Irene worked in his Washington, D.C., office. Congressman Baker eventually became Tennessee's leading GOP power broker and the number-two Republican on the powerful Ways and Means Committee. In his subsequent six re-election campaigns he never faced serious competition, either within his party or from Democrats.[2] Since the founding of the Republican Party in 1856, Baker's district had always voted Republican.

Though aligned with the conservative wing of the party (Congressman Baker had supported Senator Robert Taft for the presidency in 1952), he supported the Democratic majority on such key issues as Social Security entitlements, the TVA, and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). The latter two programs were of special interest to eastern Tennesseans, for whom the TVA provided much of the industrial infrastructure. The AEC, which managed the Oak Ridge Nuclear Laboratories, provided many jobs to the local economy. Baker once described the TVA as "a part of our Second District everyday life."[3] In 1959, Congressman Baker played a key part in the passage of a TVA self-financing act that renewed the agency's authority to generate power for seven states. He also was instrumental in helping the TVA retain its forestry and conservation programs.[4]

When Congressman Baker died of a sudden heart attack on January 7, 1964, the Tennessee Republican leadership chose Irene Baker to run in the March 10, 1964, special election. The decision was motivated in part by the desire to stave off intraparty rivalry. It worked exceedingly well. Baker pledged only to fill the remaining 10 months of her husband's term, allowing GOP leaders to select a candidate for the fall 1964 elections. Irene Baker campaigned on her husband's reputation. "Why need I say I am for full employment at Oak Ridge, in the coal mining regions, in more industry for the district, for a balanced budget and fiscal responsibility and for a reduction in taxes based on a reduction in federal expenditures?" she said during a campaign rally. She also supported her husband's resolution to amend the Constitution to permit the reading of the Bible and prayers in public schools. "To say these things could possibly create questions of how I stand, and there can be no question of that."[5] Potential Republican contenders stepped aside, and Baker ran an efficient campaign against her Democratic rival, Willard Yarbrough, the assistant city editor of the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*. Despite light voter turnout, Baker won the special election by a margin of 55 percent to 43 percent, a plurality of about 9,000 votes out of 72,000 cast.[6]

Congresswoman Baker was sworn in to the 88th Congress (1963–1965) on March 19, 1964. During her short term she served on the Committee on Government Operations. In that position Representative Baker continued many of her husband's policies: advocating a balanced federal budget, looking to protect jobs in her district's major industries of coal mining and nuclear research laboratories, and supporting the TVA. She also advocated cost of living increases for Social Security recipients and criticized the Lyndon Johnson administration for risking inflation through excessive government spending. "I feel that we owe it to Social Security beneficiaries to increase their benefits," Baker explained to colleagues in a floor speech. "It [the economy] is not their fault."[7]

As promised, Baker declined to run for the 89th Congress (1965–1967), returning to private life in Knoxville. She was succeeded by yet another family dynasty, headed by the former mayor of Knoxville, John James Duncan. Duncan served from 1965 until his death in June 1988; he was succeeded by his son, John J. Duncan, Jr. Irene Baker served as Knoxville's director of public welfare from 1965 to 1971. Her stepson, Howard H. Baker, Jr., continued the family political tradition by winning election in 1966 as a U.S. Senator from Tennessee. He served from 1967 to 1985, becoming Senate Majority Leader in 1981. Irene Baker died in Loudon, Tennessee, on April 2, 1994.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Irene Bailey Baker," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

University of Tennessee Libraries (Knoxville, TN), Special Collections. *Papers:* In the Howard and Irene Baker Papers, 1933–1965, 49.5 feet. Congressional papers, as Irene Baker completed the term of her deceased husband, Howard H. Baker. An unpublished finding aid is available in the repository.

NOTES

1 Hope Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members: Women in the U.S. Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1973): 308.
2 "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html.
3 David Walker, "Rep. Baker Dies of Heart Attack," 8 January 1964, *Washington Post*: D4.
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6 Michael J. Dubin et al., *United States Congressional Elections, 1788–1997* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Publishing, Inc., 1998): 638.
7 Susan Tolchin, *Women in Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976): 5.

Baker advocated cost of living increases for Social Security recipients and criticized the Lyndon B. Johnson administration for risking inflation through excessive government spending. "I feel that we owe it to Social Security beneficiaries to increase their benefits," Baker explained to colleagues in a floor speech. "It [the economy] is not their fault."

Patsy T. Mink

1927–2002

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM HAWAII
1965–1977, 1990–2002

Patsy T. Mink, the first woman of color elected to Congress, participated in the passage of much of the 1960s Great Society legislation during the first phase of her congressional career. After a long hiatus, Mink returned to the House in the 1990s as an ardent defender of the social welfare state at a time when much of the legislation she had helped establish was being rolled back. As a veteran politician who had a significant impact on the nation during both stints in the House of Representatives, Mink's legislative approach was premised on the belief, "You were not elected to Congress, in my interpretation of things, to represent your district, period. You are national legislators."[1]

Patsy Matsu Takemoto was born in Paia, Hawaii Territory, on December 6, 1927, one of two children raised by Suematsu Takemoto, a civil engineer, and Mitamia Tateyama Takemoto. She graduated from Maui High School in 1944 as class president and valedictorian and went on to attend Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, before graduating with a B.A. in zoology and chemistry from the University of Hawaii in 1948. Three years later, she earned a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School. In 1951 she married John Francis Mink, a graduate student in geology at the university. The couple had one child, a daughter named Gwendolyn, and moved to Honolulu, where Patsy T. Mink went into private law practice and lectured on business law at the University of Hawaii. In 1954 Mink founded the Oahu Young Democrats and worked as an attorney for the territorial house of representatives in 1955. Mink served as a member of the territorial house of representatives in 1956 and 1958 and was elected to the Hawaii senate, serving from 1958 to 1959 and again from 1962 to 1964, where she eventually chaired the education committee. In 1959, when Hawaii achieved statehood, Mink unsuccessfully sought the Democratic nomination for the state's At-Large seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, which was captured by future Senator Daniel Inouye.

In 1964, after reapportionment created a second seat for Hawaii in the U.S. House, Mink again mounted a grass-roots campaign that relied on a staff of unpaid volunteers; her husband, John, served as her campaign manager, "principal sounding board," and "in-house critic."[2] She ran without the blessing of the state Democratic Party leadership, raising campaign funds largely in small individual contributions. Throughout her career, Mink never had a warm relationship with the state leaders of her party; she attributed their lack of support to her unwillingness to allow the party to influence her political agenda.[3] With help from President Lyndon Johnson's landslide victory in the presidential race, Mink was elected as one of two At-Large Representatives. In a four-way race, she received 27 percent of the total to become the first Asian-American woman and the first woman from Hawaii to serve in Congress. In her subsequent five campaigns for re-election Mink faced a number of difficult primaries in which the local Democratic Party tried to oust her, twice by running women candidates to, in Mink's view, deprive her of the gender issue.[4] She proved a durable candidate in the general elections, however. In 1966 and 1968, in a four-way race for the two House seats, she garnered slightly more than 34 percent of the vote; in the 1966 race she collected more votes than any of the other three

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candidates. In the subsequent three elections, after Hawaii had been divided into two congressional districts, Mink ran unopposed in 1970, won 53 percent of the vote in 1972 and 63 percent in 1974.[5]

In the House, Mink successfully sought a seat on the Committee on Education and Labor, on which she served from the 89th Congress (1965–1967) through the 94th Congress (1975–1977). In her second term she also joined the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and, in the 93rd (1973–1975) and 94th Congresses, served on the Budget Committee. Mink's committee assignments allowed her to concentrate on the same issues that had been the focus of her attention in the Hawaii legislature. Among the education acts Mink introduced or sponsored were the first childcare bill and legislation establishing bilingual education, student loans, special education, and Head Start. As a member of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, she supported the economic and political development of the Trust Territory in the Pacific. As chair of the Subcommittee on Mines and Mining, she helped author the landmark Surface Mining Control and Reclamation (Strip Mining) Act of 1975 and the Mineral Leasing Act of 1976. The House failed to override President Gerald R. Ford's veto of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, though a similar measure was eventually signed into law in 1977.

During the Johnson presidency, Mink strongly supported the administration's domestic programs that were part of the Great Society legislation, but she was a critic of the Americanization of the Vietnam War. In September 1967, she refused to support the President's request for an income tax increase because of her fear that the new revenues would be used for military action rather than the expansion of social programs. It was, she said, like "administering aspirin to a seriously ill patient who needs major surgery."[6] If inflation threatened the economy, she suggested, the administration should tax big business and not just the average working taxpayers.[7] Her views clashed with those of the three other Members of the Hawaii congressional delegation, as well as those of many of her constituents in a state with a heavy military presence. Years later, however, Mink recalled, "It was such a horrible thought to have this war that it really made no difference to me that I had a military constituency. It was a case of living up to my own views and my own conscience. If I was defeated for it, that's the way it had to be. There was no way in which I could compromise my views on how I felt about it."[8]

Mink also advocated many women's issues in Congress, including equal rights. One of her great legislative triumphs was the Women's Education Equity Act, passed as part of a comprehensive education bill in 1974. It provided $30 million a year in educational funds for programs to promote gender equity in schools, to increase educational and job opportunities for women, and to excise sexual stereotypes from textbooks and school curricula. Mink garnered critical support for Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, which barred sexual discrimination in institutions receiving federal funds and opened up opportunities for women in athletics. She realized early in her House career that "because there were only eight women at the time who were Members of Congress, that I had a special burden to bear to speak for [all women], because they didn't have people who could express their concerns for them adequately. So, I always felt that we were serving a dual role in Congress, representing our own districts and, at the same time, having to voice the concerns of the total population of women in the country."[9]

In 1976, passing up a bid for what would have been certain re-election to a seventh term in the House, Mink sought the Democratic nomination for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Mink lost the nomination to fellow House Member Spark Matsunaga.[10] She remained active in politics, however, serving as Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs from 1977 to 1978. For the next three years she was president of the Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal political lobbying organization founded in 1947 by an array of scholars, activists, and politicians.[11] Mink returned to Hawaii and was elected to the Honolulu city council, serving there from 1983 to 1987 (from 1983 to 1985 as its chair). She ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1986 and for mayor of Honolulu in 1988.

In 1990, Mink returned to the U.S. House of Representatives when she won a special election on September 22, 1990, to fill the vacancy in the Hawaii congressional district left by the resignation of Daniel Akaka after his appointment to the Senate. On the same day she won the Democratic nomination to fill Akaka's seat, Mink also won nomination to the race for a full term in the 102nd Congress (1991–1993). She won both races and was re-elected comfortably to five subsequent terms with winning percentages ranging from a high of 73 percent in 1992 to a low of 60 percent in 1996.[12]

Mink was once again appointed to the Committee on Education and Labor (later Education and the Workforce) and also was assigned to the Government Operations (later Government Reform) Committee. During the 103rd Congress (1993–1995), she was on the Natural Resources and Budget committees, serving on the latter through the 105th Congress (1997–1999).

Mink continued to pursue legislative reform in health care and education. Believing that voters cared more about quality health coverage than any other domestic issue, she advocated a universal health care plan that would allow people of all economic backgrounds to receive medical treatment. Mink combined two of the longstanding interests during her congressional career when she co-sponsored the Gender Equity Act in 1993. Disturbed that gender discrimination still persisted in the United States 20 years after the passage of Title IX, Mink asserted that targeting gender bias in elementary and secondary education would help reduce inequalities between the sexes. She told the House, "We must assure that schools all across this country implement and integrate into their curriculum, policies, goals, programs, activities, and initiatives to achieve educational equity for women and girls."[13] Mink continued to crusade for women's rights by organizing and leading the Democratic Women's Caucus in 1995.

Throughout her political career, Mink remained true to her liberal ideals. Previously in the majority, both in her party affiliation and her political ideology, she often found herself in the minority during her second stretch in the House. During the 1990s, Mink expended considerable effort opposing conservative legislation that challenged the liberal agenda she had promoted. An outspoken critic of the welfare overhaul legislation that the Republican Congress and the William J. Clinton administration agreed upon in 1996, Mink exclaimed, "Throwing people off welfare and forcing them to take the lowest-paying jobs in the community has created a misery index for millions."[14] She also raised concerns about the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002. Created in response to the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001,

"America is not a country which needs to punish its dissenters to preserve its honor. America is not a country which needs to demand conformity of all its people, for its strength lies in all our diversities converging in one common belief, that of the importance of freedom as the essence of our country."

—Patsy T. Mink, house floor speech, 1967

Of her opposition to the Vietnam War, Mink recalled, "It was such a horrible thought to have this war that it really made no difference to me that I had a military constituency. It was a case of living up to my own views and my own conscience. If I was defeated for it, that's the way it had to be."

the DHS was charged with preventing further domestic terrorist strikes. Mink feared the DHS might undermine civil liberties by violating the privacy of American citizens in the name of national security. In favor of full disclosure of government attempts to safeguard the nation from international threats, she proposed that no secrets be kept from the public.[15] As Ranking Member of the Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations during the 105th Congress (1997–1999), Mink butted heads with conservative Republicans regarding a proposed $1.4 million investigation of alleged fraud within the Teamsters Union. A loyal supporter of organized labor, Mink accused Republican leadership of sponsoring a "fishing expedition" that wasted "taxpayers' money for sheer partisan political purposes."[16]

On September 28, 2002, after a month-long hospitalization with pneumonia, Patsy T. Mink died in Honolulu, Hawaii. Her name remained on the November ballot, and she was re-elected by a wide margin. Democrat Ed Case defeated Patsy Mink's husband and more than 30 other candidates in the special election to succeed Mink in the 107th Congress (2001–2003) and later won election to a full term in the 108th Congress (2003–2005).[17] Shortly after Mink's death, John Boehner of Ohio, chairman of the Education and Workforce Committee, reflected upon Mink's congressional service: "Patsy Mink was a vibrant, passionate, and effective voice for the principles she believed in. Her passing is a significant loss for our committee, the people of Hawaii and the people of the United States."[18]

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Wichita State University (Wichita, KS), Special Collections and University Archives. *Papers*, ca. 1956–1972, three linear feet. The Patsy Mink collection contains congressional reports, copies of bills, speeches and addresses given by Mink, and an oral history transcript. The material in this collection displays Mink's political concerns, including affirmative action and strip mining legislation.

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Lera Millard Thomas

1900–1993

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM TEXAS
1966–1967

For more than 30 years, Lera Millard Thomas worked behind the scenes to cultivate the political career of her husband, Albert Thomas, who became one of the most powerful Members in the House. Upon Congressman Thomas's death in 1966, however, Lera Thomas opted to run for the vacant seat out of a desire to provide continuity for constituents and to further her husband's political agenda. In her brief nine-month term, Thomas worked on legislation affecting Houston from her Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee seat. A descendant of Texas territory pioneers, Thomas was the state's first woman to serve in Congress.

Lera Millard was born in Nacogdoches, Texas, on August 3, 1900, the daughter of Jesse Wadlington Millard and Annie Donnell Watkins Millard. She attended Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia, and the University of Alabama. In 1922, Millard married her high school sweetheart, Albert Thomas. The couple moved from Nacogdoches to Houston, where Albert took a position as assistant U.S. district attorney for the southern district of Texas. The Thomases had three children: Jim, Ann, and Lera.

Originally, Lera Thomas did not want her husband to become involved in politics. But when Jim died at a very young age in 1934 (he was then their only child), the Alberts decided "to throw ourselves completely away from everything that we had done or where we lived or anything like that."[1] In 1936, Albert left his district attorney post to campaign for a seat in the U.S. House, covering most of Houston, in the 75th Congress (1937–1939). Since radio advertisement time was scarce and prohibitively expensive, Albert and Lera Thomas divided up campaign duties to make the rounds at political events: "He'd go in one direction to picnics and barbeques and I would go in the other direction. Just to meet people." Lera Thomas frequently debated her husband on political issues to help him sharpen his positions. He "used to say I was his severest critic."[2] Thomas won election to the House as a Democrat against a longtime popular mayor of Houston. He went on to win 14 consecutive elections after that and became a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee. Beginning in 1949, he headed the Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations, which eventually controlled funding for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Atomic Energy Commission, among other Cold War appropriations. Congressman Thomas helped make Houston a center for manned space flight operations, often opposed his party on generous foreign aid packages during the Cold War, and was considered an ally of labor unions. Lera Thomas, meanwhile, raised the family in Washington, D.C., and often commuted back to Houston for events in the district. Though Albert Thomas's name was not widely known to the public outside Texas, he worked closely with three Democratic Presidents—Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon B. Johnson. At the time of his death in February 1966, the *New York Times* described him as a "quiet power in the Capitol."[3]

Days after Albert Thomas died from cancer, district party leaders asked Lera Thomas to run for her husband's vacant seat, and she agreed to accept the nomination. In the March 26, 1966, special election, Thomas won with more than 74 percent of the vote against Republican Louis Leman, who himself had encouraged voters to go to the polls for the widow Thomas.[4] Constituents identified with the Thomas name and seemed inclined to believe that Lera Thomas would carry on in her husband's tradi-

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tion. "We see in her, the modesty and integrity that personified her late husband," one supporter observed.[5] Party leaders seemed equally as interested in encouraging her candidacy because she was a safe placekeeper who was familiar with the Washington office operations. It was believed that her presence would create stability to keep experienced staff in place until a long-term successor could be chosen.

Once ensconced in Washington, Congresswoman Thomas was faced with deciding whether or not to run for a full term in the succeeding Congress. Texas election law kept Albert Thomas's name on the May 7 primary ballot for the Democratic nomination to the 90th Congress (1967–1969). A victory for the deceased Congressman would have permitted the Harris County Democratic Executive Committee to name Lera Thomas as the party's candidate in the fall election, but she discouraged the movement to gain her another term in office.[6] Bob Eckhardt, an eight-year veteran of the Texas state legislature, eventually won the nomination and went on to win the general election in 1966.[7]

Sworn in and seated four days after the election on March 30, 1966, Thomas continued her husband's dedicated service to the district during her abbreviated term. She received a single committee assignment: Merchant Marine and Fisheries. Thomas's principal legislative task was to further the support her husband had gained for the space program and other economic interests of the urban Texas district. She petitioned Congress to appropriate funds for the construction of NASA's lunar sample receiving laboratory in Houston. The Congresswoman appealed to her colleagues, "If the lunar laboratory were to be placed at some location other than the spacecraft center . . . administrative and technical support would add considerably to the costs . . . . Who would build a house with a pantry at the opposite end from the kitchen?"[8] From her Merchant Marine and Fisheries seat, she also sought additional funding of the Houston Ship Channel, the waterway connecting Houston with the Gulf of Mexico, which had been another of her husband's projects.[9]

Thomas undertook her most ambitious work as she prepared to leave office. In late 1966, she traveled to Vietnam as a Member and, after the expiration of her term on January 3, 1967, continued on as a journalist to gain an understanding of the prospects of victory in the war. A few days before she was scheduled to leave, she received an urgent message from the White House: She was to meet President Johnson at his plane at Andrews Air Force Base just outside the capital and fly with him on a trip to Texas. Setting aside her packing chores, Thomas complied, though she had no idea why the President needed to see her on such short notice. In mid-flight, Johnson summoned her to the front of the plane. "What do you mean—going to Vietnam?" he demanded. Thomas sensed Johnson's concern about growing congressional criticism of the war and sought to ease his fears that she would join the chorus of dissenters. She replied, "Mr. President you went to Vietnam and I'm not nearly as important as you are." Johnson told her, "All right, then, go on and go."[10] On her six-week trip, Thomas personally delivered letters to U.S. troops. Some of her observations, based on meetings with South Vietnamese, were published by the *Houston Chronicle* and were later reprinted in the *Congressional Record*. In one account, Thomas wrote: "One fact is clear to me: Unless a stable economy is established in South Vietnam and the people are given an incentive to maintain that economy, we will lose what we are fighting for here."[11]

After returning to Washington in February 1967, Thomas served for six months as a consultant in the Vietnam Bureau of the U.S. State Department's Agency for International Development. She eventually returned to Texas and managed the family farm and an antique shop. One of Thomas's legacies was her part in the establishment of the Millard Crossing Historical Center on the north side of Nacogdoches, culminating years of work to preserve buildings and structures dating from the pioneer days of Texas to the Victorian Era.[12] Lera Thomas died of cancer on July 23, 1993, in her hometown of Nacogdoches.

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Margaret M. Heckler

1931–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM MASSACHUSETTS
1967–1983

Margaret Mary Heckler served eight restless terms in the House, as she was frequently mentioned for state office while moving through six standing committees. "Her seniority and bargaining ability were weakened by these frequent moves," observed a colleague, "and she was forced most often to carry her agenda directly to the House Floor."[1] Such activity may have been due to the fact that Heckler was a moderate Republican from one of the nation's most liberal and Democratic states.

Margaret Mary O'Shaughnessy was born on June 21, 1931, in Flushing, New York. She was the only child of John O'Shaughnessy, a hotel doorman, and Bridget McKeon O'Shaughnessy, Irish-Catholic immigrants. She graduated from Albertus Magnus College in 1953, marrying John Heckler, an investment banker, in 1954. Theirs would be a commuter marriage that eventually produced three children: Belinda, Alison, and John, Jr. The marriage ended in 1985 after she left Congress. Heckler went on to Boston College School of Law, where she was the only woman in her class. She graduated in 1956, forming a law office with fellow law school graduates. Shortly afterward she began volunteering in local Republican campaigns, and in 1958 she became a member of the Republican committee for Wellesley, Massachusetts, a position she held for eight years. Heckler became the first woman elected to the eight-person governor's council (an elected advisory body mandated by the state constitution) in 1962, serving two terms. Thereafter, she was frequently mentioned as a possible candidate for statewide office.

In 1966, Heckler dismayed the Republican establishment when she announced her candidacy against Representative Joseph W. Martin, the venerable 81-year-old House incumbent, whose seat encompassed southeastern Massachusetts. Martin had served in Congress since 1925 and was Speaker of the House twice. Heckler's energetic campaign was a marked contrast to the performances of her elderly opponent, who had missed more than half of the votes in the previous Congress.[2] She narrowly won the Republican primary by 3,200 votes.[3] Heckler went on to win the general election against labor lawyer Patrick H. Harrington, Jr., with 51 percent of the vote, to become the first woman from Massachusetts elected to Congress without succeeding her husband. "The men kept saying I couldn't make it," she later recalled, "but the women convinced them that a woman, even if she was the underdog, deserved their backing."[4]

Early in her House career, Heckler quickly moved to build her support. She concentrated on building a reputation as her district's champion in the capital by setting up a toll-free hot line to facilitate communication between her constituents and her Washington office. She also scheduled weekly visits to her district. In addition, Heckler took care to be a policy advocate for her constituents: calling for an end to foreign oil import quotas in order to gain cheaper fuel oil, protecting the New England textile industry, demanding protection of U.S. fishermen from Soviet harassment on the seas, and calling for tax credits to help parochial schools. Four days into her first term, Heckler ignored the chamber's tradition that freshman Members remain silent, when she publicly demanded the release of a constituent, a naturalized citizen, who had been arrested for espionage in Czechoslovakia.[5] Former staffer Jack Horner recalled, "She would never take no for an answer when it came to her constituents."[6]

CONGRESSIONAL PICTORIAL DIRECTORY, 90TH CONGRESS

Heckler struggled to balance party loyalty with the prevailing viewpoints of her district. Moving beyond issues clearly tied to her constituents, she seemed uncertain to some observers, who believed she cast votes based on the lead of other Members rather than her own convictions.[7] A former aide defended her, noting that she survived "in a district that rightfully should have had a Democrat [as] Representative. And she did it by very close calculations on how to vote. She's an astute, careful politician."[8] The liberal Americans for Democratic Action's roll call votes scorecard for Heckler ranged from 47 percent to 74 percent support of their favored issues. The conservative Americans for Constitutional Action issued scorecards for Heckler that ranged from 12 percent to 48 percent support for their issues. That Heckler had entered Congress by deposing her party's favorite and had achieved a level of popularity that resulted in two races, 1972 and 1976, where she ran unopposed, writes Marcy Kaptur, suggested that "she felt no obligation to toe the party line."[9] One colleague in the Massachusetts delegation told the *Washington Post*, "People don't give her credit for being a woman in a man's world, a Republican in a Democratic state, a moderate in liberal country. She's never been in the mainstream, always an outsider. . . . Yes, she's shrill and she doesn't work well with people. But she had to be all those things to get where she is."[10]

Congresswoman Heckler demonstrated a sincere interest in increasing the number of women in politics. During her first term, she described why she had run for Congress. Besides contributing to making good policy, she added, "I also felt very strongly that there should be more women in Congress."[11] Heckler made a fervent and consistent commitment to women's issues, ranging from combating rape, curbing domestic violence, protecting pension rights for women on maternity leave, and prohibiting discrimination based on gender or marital status in acquiring credit. In 1976, she began working to organize a caucus of all women House Members, efforts which were initially rebuffed. In April 1977, she and Representative Elizabeth Holtzman of New York became the first co-chairs of the bipartisan Congresswomen's Caucus. The goal of the caucus was to promote legislation beneficial to women and to encourage women appointments. Fifteen of the 18 women in Congress joined. Heckler served as the Republican chair until 1982, the year the caucus changed its name to the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. "The Women's Caucus is making a difference and it's very important to continue," Heckler remarked on the caucus's 25th anniversary. "The hard struggles have been won, but there will always be small struggles. I have to believe the Caucus was a part of that."[12]

Heckler played a balancing role when it came to abortion. While opposing the use of federal funds for abortions, she also opposed a pro-life constitutional amendment or any requirement for federally funded clinics to notify parents of teenagers receiving birth control prescriptions. The National Women's Political Caucus endorsed Heckler's opponents in 1980 and 1982 because of her stand on abortion.[13] Two years later the National Organization for Women also refused to endorse her. "It was very hurtful to me psychologically," Heckler recalled in 2002. "It was very important to have a Republican component in the advancement of women because these women knew without a Republican, these issues wouldn't be taken seriously. Abortion is difficult, and it has divided women, but I don't think women's identity should focus on that one issue."[14]

A level of restlessness existed during Heckler's House career that is reflected in her committee history. She came to Congress seeking appointment to the Committee on the Judiciary; instead, she was put onto the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. She remained on Veterans' Affairs during her entire House service, rising to Ranking Member in 1975. Her second committee assignment, though, was unusually variable. Originally, Heckler was on the Committee on Government Operations. In her second term she moved to the Committee on Banking and Currency. After serving there for six years, Heckler took the opportunity to move to the Committee on Agriculture. Once again, her tenure lasted six years. During her final term she transferred to the Committee on Science and Technology. Heckler also took a position in the 94th Congress (1975–1977) on the Joint Economic Committee.

Her tenure there lasted eight years. She further served on the Ethics Committee for the 95th Congress (1977–1979), the Committee on Aging in the 97th Congress (1981–1983), and the largely ceremonial House Beauty Shop Committee in the 92nd and 93rd Congresses (1971–1975). Heckler had been characterized as impatient and uncomfortable with the more deliberative pace of the legislative process.[15]

Heckler's congressional career ended unexpectedly in 1982 while she was the most senior Republican woman in the House. The Massachusetts legislature redrew its congressional districts after the 1980 Census, facing the task of losing one House seat. Heckler's decision to forego challenging Senator Edward Kennedy for re-election pitted her against Representative Barney Frank, a Democratic freshman, in a new and economically diverse district encompassing wealthy Boston suburbs and working-class communities in southeastern Massachusetts. In the match-up, Heckler was so heavily favored that Frank considered retiring.[16] Frank worked hard to make the race a referendum on President Ronald Reagan's conservative policies. His campaign repeatedly concentrated on Heckler's support of Reagan's 1981 budget and economic plan, which combined spending and tax cuts. A sagging economy—district unemployment was more than 13 percent—made Heckler vulnerable to Frank's charges, and in response she could only argue that she was not "a Reagan clone." "I've served under five Presidents, unbossed and unbought," she proclaimed.[17] But observers found her campaign poorly organized. Negative TV ads by the Heckler campaign may have hurt her by creating a sympathy vote for Frank. The result was considered a surprise: Barney Frank won re-election with 59 percent of the vote to Heckler's 40 percent.[18]

"I felt the Congress was the office where I could make the best contribution. I was really concerned about the issues of the day, not only in the traditional areas of education and consumer protection, in criminal justice, social security, conservation, air and water pollution. I also felt very strongly that there should be more women in Congress and that the government should be brought closer to the people."

— Margaret M. Heckler, 1968

In the aftermath of Heckler's defeat, President Ronald W. Reagan nominated her as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Nearly a week after the Senate confirmed her appointment, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor swore Heckler into the Cabinet on March 9, 1983. During her tenure she oversaw the establishment of new disability guidelines for Social Security and increased federal funding for Alzheimer's disease. But her greatest challenge was dealing with the emerging HIV/AIDS crisis. Heckler came under attack from conservatives in late 1985 as an ineffective administrator and as weak in her support of the Reagan administration's programs. She accepted President Reagan's offer to be U.S. Ambassador to

Heckler survived "in a district that rightfully should have had a Democrat [as] Representative," noted one of her former aides. "And she did it by very close calculations on how to vote. She's an astute, careful politician."

Ireland and served from December 1985 through October 1989. She currently resides in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

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Shirley Anita Chisholm

1924–2005

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK
1969–1983

Shirley Anita Chisholm was the first African-American woman to serve in Congress, representing a newly reapportioned U.S. House district centered in Brooklyn. Elected in 1968 because of her local roots in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, Chisholm nevertheless served as a national figure—catapulted into the limelight by virtue of her race, gender, and outspoken personality. In 1972, in a largely symbolic undertaking, she campaigned for the Democratic presidential nomination. But "Fighting Shirley" Chisholm's frontal assault on many congressional traditions and her reputation as a crusader limited her influence as a legislator. "I am the people's politician," she once told the *New York Times*. "If the day should ever come when the people can't save me, I'll know I'm finished. That's when I'll go back to being a professional educator."[1]

Shirley Anita St. Hill was born on November 20, 1924, in Brooklyn, New York. She was the oldest of four daughters of Charles St. Hill, a factory laborer from Guyana, and Ruby Seale St. Hill, a seamstress from Barbados. For part of her childhood, Shirley St. Hill lived in Barbados on her maternal grandparents' farm, receiving a British-system education while her parents worked during the Great Depression to make money to settle the family in Bedford-Stuyvesant. The most outward manifestation of her West Indies roots was her slight, clipped, British accent that she retained throughout her adult life. She attended public schools in Brooklyn and graduated with high marks. Accepted to Vassar and Oberlin colleges, Shirley St. Hill attended Brooklyn College on scholarship and graduated *cum laude* with a B.A. in sociology in 1946. From 1946 to 1953, Chisholm worked as a nursery school teacher and then as director of two day care centers. St. Hill married Conrad Q. Chisholm, a private investigator, in 1949. Three years later, Shirley Chisholm earned an M.A. in early childhood education from Columbia University. She served as an educational consultant for New York City's Division of Day Care from 1959 to 1964. In 1964, Chisholm was elected as an assemblywoman in the New York state legislature—the second African-American woman to serve in Albany.

A court-ordered reapportionment, which created a new Brooklyn congressional district carved out of Chisholm's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, convinced her to run for Congress. The influential Democratic political machine, headed by Stanley Steingut, declared its intention to send an African American to the House from the new district. The endorsement of the machine usually meant victory in the primary which, in the heavily Democratic area, was tantamount to election. In the primary, Chisholm faced three African-American challengers: civil court judge Thomas R. Jones, a former district leader and New York assemblyman; Dolly Robinson, a former district co-leader; and William C. Thompson, a well-financed state senator. Chisholm roamed the new district in a sound truck which pulled up outside housing projects while the candidate announced: "Ladies and Gentleman . . . this is fighting Shirley Chisholm coming through." Chisholm capitalized on her personal campaigning style. "I have a way of talking that does something to people," she noted. "I have a theory about campaigning. You have to let them feel you."[2] In the primary in mid-June 1968, Chisholm defeated Thompson, her nearest competitor, by about 800 votes in an election marked by light voter turnout.

In the general election, Chisholm faced the Republican-Liberal candidate James Farmer, a civil rights activist. Both candidates held similar positions on housing,

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employment, and education issues and also were united in their opposition to the Vietnam War. Farmer charged that the Democratic Party "took [blacks] for granted and thought they had us in their pockets. . . . We must be in a position to use our power as a swing vote."[3] But the election turned on the issue of gender. Farmer hammered away, arguing that "women have been in the driver's seat" in black communities for too long and that the district needed "a man's voice in Washington," not that of a "little schoolteacher."[4] Chisholm, whose campaign motto was "unbought and unbossed," met that charge head-on, using Farmer's rhetoric to highlight discrimination against women and to explain her unique qualifications. "There were Negro men in office here before I came in five years ago, but they didn't deliver," Chisholm countered. "People came and asked me to do something . . . I'm here because of the vacuum." Chisholm portrayed Farmer as an outsider (he lived in Manhattan) and also used her fluent Spanish to appeal to the growing Hispanic population in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood; Puerto Rican immigrants accounted for about 20 percent of the district vote. The deciding factor, however, was the district's overwhelming liberal tilt: More than 80 percent of the voters were registered Democrats. Chisholm won the general election by a resounding 67 percent of the vote. Thereafter, she was never seriously challenged for her seat in six subsequent general elections.[5]

Chisholm was part of a freshman class that included African Americans of future prominence: Louis Stokes of Ohio and William L. Clay of Missouri. Chisholm's class boosted the number of African Americans in the House from five to 10, the largest total up to that time. She also was the only new woman to enter Congress in 1969.

Chisholm's welcome in the House was not warm, due to her immediate outspokenness. "I have no intention of just sitting quietly and observing," she said. "I intend. . . to focus attention on the nation's problems." She did just that, lashing out against the Vietnam War in her first floor speech on March 26, 1969. Chisholm vowed to vote against any defense appropriation bill "until the time comes when our values and priorities have been turned right-side up again."[6] She was assigned to the Committee on Agriculture, a decision which she appealed directly to House Speaker John McCormack of Massachusetts (bypassing Wilbur Mills of Arkansas, the chairman of the Democratic selection committee). McCormack told her to be a "good soldier," to which Chisholm responded by bringing her complaint to the House Floor. She was reassigned to the Veterans' Affairs Committee which, though not one of her top choices, was more in tune with her district's makeup. "There are a lot more veterans in my district than trees," she quipped.[7] From 1971 to 1977 she served on the Committee on Education and Labor, winning a place on that panel with the help of Hale Boggs of Louisiana, for whom she had voted as Majority Leader.[8] She also served on the Committee on Organization Study and Review (known as the Hansen Committee), which recommended reforms in the selection process for committee chairmen that were adopted by the Democratic Caucus in 1971. From 1977 to 1981, Chisholm served as Secretary of the Democratic Caucus. She eventually left her Education Committee assignment to accept a seat on the Rules Committee in 1977. She was the first black woman (and only the second woman ever) to serve on that powerful panel. Chisholm also was a founding member of the Congressional Women's Caucus in 1977.

Chisholm's congressional career was marked by continuity with her earlier community activist causes. She sponsored federal funding increases to extend daycare facility hours and a guaranteed minimum annual income for families. She was a fierce defender of federal assistance to education, serving as a primary backer of a national school lunch bill and leading her colleagues in overriding President Gerald R. Ford's veto on this measure. By her own admission, however, Chisholm did not view herself as a "lawmaker, an innovator in the field of legislation." Rather, in her efforts to address the needs of the "have-nots," she often chose to work outside the established system. At times she criticized the Democratic leadership in Congress as much as she did the Republicans in the White House. She played more the role of an explorer and a trailblazer than she did the role of a legislative artisan.[9]

Chisholm's welcome in the House was not warm, due to her immediate outspokenness. "I have no intention of just sitting quietly and observing," she said. "I intend to speak out immediately in order to focus attention on the nation's problems."

True to this approach, Chisholm declared her candidacy for the 1972 Democratic nomination for President, charging that none of the other candidates represented the interests of blacks and the inner-city poor. She campaigned across the country and got her name on the ballot in 12 primaries, becoming as well known outside her Brooklyn neighborhood as she was inside it. At the Democratic National Convention she received 152 delegate votes, or 10 percent of the total, a respectable showing, given her low funding. A 1974 Gallup Poll listed her as one of the top 10 most-admired women in America—ahead of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Coretta Scott King and tied with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for sixth place.[10] But while the presidential bid enhanced Chisholm's national profile, it also stirred controversy among House colleagues. Chisholm's candidacy split the Congressional Black Caucus. Many male colleagues felt she had not consulted them or had betrayed the group's interests by trying to create a coalition of women, Hispanics, white liberals, and welfare recipients.[11] Pervasive gender discrimination, Chisholm noted, cut across race lines: "Black male politicians are no different from white male politicians. This 'woman thing' is so deep. I've found it out in this campaign if I never knew it before."[12] Her campaign also strained relations with other women Members of Congress, particularly Bella Abzug of New York, who instead endorsed George McGovern.

By 1976, Chisholm faced a stiff challenge from within her own party primary by a longtime political rival, New York City Councilman Samuel D. Wright. Wright, born and raised in Bedford-Stuyvesant, was a formidable opponent who had represented Brooklyn in the New York assembly for a number of years before winning a seat on the city council. He criticized Chisholm for her absenteeism in the House, brought on by the rigors of her presidential campaign, and a lack of connection with the district. Chisholm countered by playing on her national credentials and role as a reformer of Capitol Hill culture. "I think my role is to break new ground in Congress," Chisholm noted. She insisted that her strength was in bringing legislative factions together. "I can talk with legislators from the South, the West, all over. They view me as a national figure and that makes me more acceptable."[13] Two weeks later Chisholm turned back Wright and Hispanic political activist Luz Vega in the Democratic primary, winning 54 percent of the vote to 36 percent and 10 percent, respectively, for Wright and Vega.[14] She won the general election handily with 83 percent of the vote.[15]

From the late 1970s forward, speculation among Brooklyn Democrats was that Chisholm was losing interest in her House job. Her name was widely floated as a possible candidate for several education-related jobs, including president of the City College of New York and chancellor of the New York City public school system.[16] In 1982, Chisholm declined to seek re-election. "Shirley Chisholm would like to have a little life of her own," she told the *Christian Science Monitor*, citing personal reasons for her decision to leave the House.[17] She wanted to spend more time with her second husband, Arthur Hardwick, Jr., a New York state legislator whom she had married about six months after divorcing Conrad Chisholm in 1977. Hardwick, who sustained serious injuries in an automobile accident a year after their marriage, died in 1986.

Other reasons factored into her decision. In part, she had grown disillusioned over the conservative turn the country had taken with the election of President Ronald W. Reagan in 1980. Also, there were tensions with people on her side of the political fence, particularly African-American politicians who, she insisted, misunderstood her efforts at alliance building. Chisholm maintained that many in the black community did not understand the need for negotiation with white politicians. "We still have to engage in compromise, the highest of all arts," Chisholm noted. "Blacks can't do things on their own, nor can whites. When you have black racists and white racists it is very difficult to build bridges between communities."[18]

After leaving Congress in January 1983, Chisholm helped cofound the National Political Congress of Black Women and campaigned for Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns in 1984 and 1988. She also taught at Mt. Holyoke College in 1983. Though nominated by President William J. Clinton for U.S. Ambassador to Jamaica,

Chisholm declined due to ill health. Chisholm lived in Palm Coast, Florida, where she wrote and lectured. She died on January 1, 2005, in Ormond Beach, Florida.

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Bella Savitzky Abzug
1920–1998

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK
1971–1977

Bella Abzug, feminist and civil rights advocate, embodied many Americans' discontent with the political establishment in the tumultuous Vietnam War era. She gained notoriety as one of the most colorful and controversial House Members during the 1970s. Once quoted as saying "women have been trained to talk softly and carry a lipstick," the feisty New York Congresswoman spent much of her life refuting the notion that women should remain on the political sidelines.[1] Despite only serving in Congress for three terms, Abzug's political flair and unwavering determination helped inspire an entire generation of women and created a new model for future Congresswomen. "She was such a trailblazer," a former aide noted after Abzug's death in 1998, "It wasn't that she was the first woman in Congress. It was that she was the first woman to get in Congress and lead the way toward creating a feminist presence."[2]

The daughter of Russian-Jewish immigrants Emmanuel and Esther Tanklefsky Savitsky, she was born Bella Savitsky in the Bronx, New York, on July 24, 1920. She received an A.B. from Hunter College in Manhattan in 1942 and immediately entered Columbia University Law School. In 1944, Bella Savitsky married Martin Abzug. As a stockbroker and novelist, her husband had little inclination toward politics. Nevertheless, Bella Abzug counted him as her closest confidant and supporter: "one of the few un-neurotic people left in society."[3] The Abzugs raised two children: Eve and Liz. After interrupting her studies to work in a shipyard during World War II, Bella Abzug served as editor of the *Columbia Law Review*, and graduated with an LL.B. in 1947. For the next two decades Abzug practiced law on behalf of people whom the existing legal and social structures bypassed, citizens she once described as being "on the outside of power."[4] She defended Willie McGee, an African-American man convicted and sentenced to death in Mississippi for raping a white woman. She also represented individuals whom Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigatory committee tarred as communist agents. In 1961 Abzug cofounded Women Strike for Peace, a group which protested the nuclear arms race and, later, the American military commitment in Vietnam. She served as a leader in the "Dump Johnson" movement to remove embattled President Lyndon B. Johnson from the 1968 Democratic ticket. Reflecting on this long record, Abzug later conceded that she was at heart an activist rather than a politician.[5]

In 1970, at the age of 50, Abzug made her first attempt at elected office, when she decided to enter the race for a U.S. House of Representatives seat in Manhattan's wealthy, liberal Upper West Side. Employing the campaign slogan "This woman's place is in the House . . . the House of Representatives!" Abzug ran on an antiwar and pro-feminist platform. Her insistence that she would have a stronger voice and more active presence on Capitol Hill than her opponent helped Abzug earn 55 percent of the vote in the Democratic primary and unseat the seven-term incumbent, Leonard Farbstein.[6] In the general election, Abzug defeated Republican-Liberal Barry Farber, a radio talk show host, in a three-way election, with 52 percent to Farber's 43 percent.[7] Throughout the campaign, Abzug benefited from the support of celebrity entertainers and New York City Mayor John Lindsay. The national media focused on her effort, foreshadowing the publicity she would attract as a sitting Representative.[8]

After taking the official oath of office for the 92nd Congress (1971–1973) on January 3, 1971, Abzug took a

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"people's oath" on the House steps administered by her New York colleague Shirley Chisholm. Onlookers cheered, "Give 'em hella, Bella!" By seeking a seat on the coveted Armed Services Committee, Abzug also flaunted House decorum, which expected freshman to accept lower-level committee assignments. The request was denied (she eventually accepted positions on the Government Operations and Public Works committees). Undeterred, she worked on devising methods to dismantle the entrenched House seniority system that prevented most newly elected Representatives from receiving influential assignments. Despite her freshman status, Abzug made waves in Congress by supporting a variety of controversial causes. On the first day of the session, she introduced legislation demanding the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. She authored a bill to end the draft, an institution she likened to "slavery" motivated by "insane priorities," and she asked for an investigation into the competence of widely feared Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover.[9] "I spend all day figuring out how to beat the machine and knock the crap out of the political power structure," Abzug wrote in her journal, published in 1972.[10] "Battling Bella," an epithet she earned because of her tenacity and confrontational demeanor, also had the distinction of being one of the first politicians to publicly call for the impeachment of President Richard Nixon, even before the 1973 congressional outcry about his Vietnam policy in early 1972.[11]

Writer Norman Mailer once described Abzug's voice as an instrument that "could boil the fat off a taxicab driver's neck."[12] Cognizant that her personality often prompted discussion and, at times, dismay from onlookers, Abzug retorted, "There are those who say I'm impatient, impetuous, uppity, rude, profane, brash and overbearing. Whether I'm any of these things or all of them, you can decide for yourself. But whatever I am—and this ought to be made clear from the outset—I am a very serious woman."[13] Easy to spot in her trademark wide-brimmed hat (which she began wearing as a young female professional because she believed it was the only way men "would take you seriously"), Abzug waged a highly publicized battle to protect her right to wear it on the House Floor. Her colorful style attracted as many dedicated opponents as it did admirers and allies. A 1972 report by Ralph Nader estimated that Abzug's sponsorship of a bill often cost it as many as 30 votes.[14] Nevertheless, she inspired young women, many of whom became prominent politicians. "Let's be honest about it: She did not knock politely on the door," New York Representative Geraldine Ferraro said. "She took the hinges off of it." The 1984 Democratic vice presidential candidate conceded, "If there never had been a Bella Abzug, there never would have been a Gerry Ferraro."[15]

In 1972, when Abzug's district was merged with a neighboring one, she decided to run against popular reform Democrat William Fitts Ryan in a newly created district which extended her former west Manhattan district's boundaries farther south and east. The primary was a bitter contest, even by New York City's standards. Ryan defeated Abzug but died two months before the general election. The Democratic committee appointed Abzug as its replacement candidate. She defeated Ryan's widow, Priscilla, who ran on the Liberal Party ticket in another divisive campaign. Abzug took 56 percent of the vote to Ryan's 28 percent in a five-way race. In 1974, Abzug easily defeated her GOP opponent, Stephen Posner, with 79 percent of the vote.[16]

Abzug's sustained clash with the conventions of Congress and her party's political machine mitigated her ability to fulfill her ambitious political agenda, but she did achieve some solid results. Her most noteworthy contributions, particularly the "sunshine" laws under the Freedom of Information Act, came as a member of the Government Operations Committee. She worked to make government, particularly national security policies, more transparent. The "sunshine law," which required government hearings to be held in public, came out of the Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights, which she chaired.[17] During her first term, she coauthored the Child Development Act with Brooklyn Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm. When promoting the legislation on the floor of the House, she emphasized that the bill concerned women as much as children, commenting, "Without adequate, low-

cost day care facilities, women are doomed to occupy low-paying, low-prestige jobs; without day care, women must remain economic serfs."[18] Abzug also introduced groundbreaking legislation aimed at increasing the rights of lesbians and gays. The bill called for amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964 "to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual or affectional preference."[19]

In 1976, Abzug chose not to run for a fourth House term, instead waging a close but unsuccessful campaign against Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the Democratic primary for an open Senate seat. In 1977, she also failed in her bid for the New York City Democratic mayoral nomination. When the winner of the mayor's race, Ed Koch, resigned from Congress, Abzug tried but failed to win his vacant seat on New York's Upper East Side. President Jimmy Carter named her the co-chair of the National Advisory Committee on Women in 1978, though Abzug later was replaced when she criticized the administration's economic policies. In 1986, Abzug made another bid for the House of Representatives, this time in Westchester County, New York. After winning the Democratic primary, however, she lost in the general election to the Republican incumbent, Joseph DioGuardi.[20] Her last attempt to regain a place in Congress came six years later when Abzug announced her intention to run for the open seat in her old district on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, following the death of Congressman Ted Weiss. Abzug's desire to return to politics was cut short when party leaders failed to back her candidacy.[21]

In her two-decade, postpolitical career, Abzug remained a respected and visible figure in the feminist movement. She addressed international women's conferences in Beijing, Nairobi, and Copenhagen. She also established the Women USA Fund and the Women's Environment and Development Organization, both nonprofit advocacy groups that worked to give women's issues more prominence on the United Nations' agenda. New York Mayor David Dinkins appointed her to chair his Commission on the Status of Women from 1993 to 1995. Her health declined as she battled breast cancer and heart disease. Abzug died in New York City on March 31, 1998.

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Cognizant that her personality often prompted discussion and, at times, dismay from onlookers, Abzug retorted, "There are those who say I'm impatient, impetuous, uppity, rude, profane, brash, and overbearing. . . . But whatever I am—and this ought to be made clear from the outset—I am a very serious woman."

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Ella Tambussi Grasso
1919–1981

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM CONNECTICUT
1971–1975

Connecticut Representative Ella Grasso's brief House career bridged two decades of service in state government and two trailblazing terms as the state's governor. In Congress she concerned herself primarily with combating rampant unemployment in her district while preparing for her triumphant return to Connecticut politics. Throughout her long career in state and national politics, on issues ranging from civil rights to campaign finance reform, Grasso sensed the public mood and positioned herself at the forefront of the legislative response.[1]

Ella Rose Giovanna Oliva Tambussi was born on May 10, 1919, in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, the only child of Italian immigrants Giacomo and Maria Oliva Tambussi. Ella Tambussi, who spoke fluent Italian, attended St. Mary's School in Windsor Locks, and the Chaffee School in Windsor. She received a B.A. in 1940 from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Two years later, she received a master's degree in both economics and sociology from Mount Holyoke. After graduating in 1942, Ella Tambussi married Thomas Grasso, a schoolteacher and principal. The couple raised two children, Susane and James. Ella Grasso served as a researcher and, then, assistant director of research for the war manpower commission of Connecticut from 1943 to 1946.

Grasso first became involved in politics as a member of the League of Women Voters. She later credited that experience with helping her develop "a real understanding of issues." She recalled, "I realized early on that if I was concerned with problems, the best way of getting them solved was to be part of the decision-making process."[2] The veteran of local campaign organizations and a protégé of Connecticut's legendary Democratic leader John Bailey (a close ally of John F. Kennedy and future chairman of the Democratic National Committee), Grasso entered electoral politics in 1952 when she won a seat in the state house of representatives. According to politicians familiar with both Grasso and Bailey, the Connecticut political boss saw Grasso as an important draw for women voters and, as an Italian-American, a prominent member of an increasingly important ethnic minority in state politics long dominated by Irish Americans.[3]

According to her biographer, Grasso took to heart Bailey's central political philosophy: "The mark of a successful politician is one that finds out where the parade is going, takes one step out in front of the band and declares himself the leader." During her service in the state legislature, Grasso fought for equal rights and a law forbidding housing discrimination. In her second term she rose to assistant Democratic leader of the state legislature, and in 1955 she became the first woman elected floor leader. In 1958, Grasso was elected secretary of state of Connecticut; she won her two subsequent bids in 1962 and 1966. The office provided a level of visibility and constituent contact that helped Grasso, like Chase Going Woodhouse before her, to create a strong political network.[4] During her time in the state legislature, Grasso remained active in the Democratic Party, serving as a member of the Democratic Platform Committee in 1960 and as co-chair of the Resolutions Committee for the 1964 and 1968 conventions.

As early as 1966, when the incumbent Democrat in Ella Grasso's home congressional district lost to Republican

opponent Thomas Meskill, party insiders began speculating that she could be a contender for the House seat. Citing family considerations (her husband had recently suffered two major heart attacks), she declined to seek the nomination. In 1970, however, Meskill vacated the seat to make a run for the Connecticut governorship. With the backing of John Bailey, Grasso entered the race and handily beat two rivals, Arthur Powers of Berlin and Andrew Denuzee of New Britain, for the Democratic nomination.[5] The district, located in northwest Connecticut, was created after the 1960 Census, when the resulting reapportionment eliminated the state's At-Large seat. It also straddled two very different groups of constituents, working-class voters in several industrial towns in Hartford County and an affluent, intellectual class that resided in rural Litchfield County. Grasso's Republican opponent in the general election, Richard Kilborne, labeled her "Spender-Ella" and attacked her liberal record as dedicated to government spending to "help the un-helpable."[6] But Grasso's two decisive advantages, wide name recognition and the blessing of Bailey, helped her defeat Kilborne with 51 percent of the vote.[7] Grasso's victory was noteworthy in the sense that Meskill won the governor's race, overwhelming his Democratic opponent by nearly 35,000 votes in Grasso's district.[8]

After entering the House in January 1971, Representative Grasso appealed to Speaker Carl Albert of Oklahoma for seats on the Committee on Education and Labor and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. She had served with Albert as co-chair of the Resolutions Committee at the 1964 Democratic Convention, and impressed by Grasso's political skills, he had promised that if she ever won election to the House of Representatives, she would receive the committee assignments she desired. He was as good as his word, granting both requests.

With her district reeling from unemployment, Grasso sponsored a variety of legislation designed to increase employment, boost the minimum wage, hike Social Security payments, and protect workers. In 1971, she authored amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act, which raised the minimum wage and brought an additional six million workers under benefit coverage. As a conferee of that year's Emergency Employment Act, she managed to secure 600 new jobs within her district. On the Veterans' Affairs Committee she worked to pass a $272-per-month education benefit to veterans returning from Vietnam; while the measure failed, it helped raise the sights of a subsequent bill that passed the House and boosted the benefits to more than $200 per month.[9] Arguably the most important accomplishment of her two terms came with her part in drafting the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, which again provided relief to hundreds of workers in her economically distressed district.

In 1972, Grasso was re-elected with a margin of 60 percent of the vote over her opponent Republican John Walsh. The results were made even more impressive by the fact that Republicans surged in the state delegation—taking control of half the House seats in the wake of incumbent President Richard Nixon's strong electoral showing. In her Connecticut district, where Nixon ran ahead of Democratic candidate George McGovern by nearly 50,000 votes, Grasso topped Walsh by a plurality of about 40,000.[10]

While she earned a reputation as a "moderate-liberal," the diversity of Grasso's district often kept her on the middle of the road on key issues. For instance, though she opposed the Vietnam War, she did so while treading lightly. Arguing that a cut-off date was needed for bringing the troops home, she nevertheless made no floor speeches on the subject and, twice in 1971, skipped two votes on measures to end the war. Part of this stance acknowledged the importance of defense sector jobs located in her district, as well as blue-collar support for the war effort.[11]

The press portrayed Grasso as one of the group of new-style feminist women who entered the House in 1971. At a Washington Press Club address along with Bella Abzug of New York and Louise Hicks of Massachusetts, Grasso stressed their commonalities with a self-deprecating joke: "We're all fat, we're all middle-aged and we spend most of our time together talking about our children."[12] On women's rights issues, however, she remained largely ambivalent and distanced herself from feminists like

Grasso's experience in Congress was not typical of those of most of her women colleagues. "For most of them . . . it was their baptism into politics," one Grasso aide observed, "but for her it was merely a continuation of something that had been going on for 20 years. . . . She was very much the old-school politician."

Abzug on such issues as abortion and childcare. Her biographer notes that Grasso's tack toward the feminist agenda demonstrated "how she skillfully manipulated her position so she could simultaneously identify and disassociate herself with a popular cause." Significantly, her experience was not typical of those of most women then entering Congress. "For most of them . . . it was their baptism into politics," one Grasso aide observed, "but for her it was merely a continuation of something that had been going on for 20 years. . . . She was very much the old-school politician."[13] Grasso worked quietly on the Education and Labor Committee to ensure women's parity in schools and the workplace, allaying some of the criticisms that she did not do enough to advance the feminist cause. In 1971, Grasso supported passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, noting that "Congress must provide the constitutional framework upon which to build a body of law to achieve the goal of equal rights."[14] In the final analysis, however, she correctly calculated that personal political success made her an appealing figure for feminists eager to draw women into politics and that, at the end of the day, women's groups would support her even if she was not the loudest voice in the feminist chorus.[15]

Grasso was never as captivated by the work of Capitol Hill as she had been by Connecticut politics. Privately she complained to colleagues that the legislative process in the House frustrated her.[16] In the Connecticut legislature she had been a senior lawmaker and part of the party leadership, but in the House, she could not work her way out of the rank and file. Eventually, she turned her attention back to the Connecticut statehouse. "I can be a gadfly here," she complained. "But you can't make a long-term career out of Congress at age fifty."[17]

By early in her second term, Grasso largely viewed her House service as a way to raise her political profile in Connecticut. She ran her office much like she had during her time as Connecticut secretary of state, opening a toll-free phone service to her New Britain office (the "Ellaphone") for constituents to speak more readily with her aides. She also held "office hours" by regularly traveling to towns in her district and meeting with a variety of citizens.[18] By early 1973, the press and state political insiders regularly mentioned her name as a likely candidate for Connecticut governor.[19]

In January 1974, Grasso announced her gubernatorial candidacy, which ensured that by the following January she would retire from the House.[20] With the support of Bailey's statewide Democratic organization, Grasso won the gubernatorial race against a GOP House colleague, Representative Robert Steele, and became the first woman to be elected a U.S. governor without succeeding a husband. Grasso's four-year term commenced in January 1975. The fiscal problems of Connecticut forced Grasso to follow a far more conservative policy as governor than she had as a Member of Congress. Despite budget cuts, Grasso maintained her popularity and won re-election in 1978 against another House GOP veteran, Ronald Sarasin. Grasso was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in early 1980, and her condition deteriorated as doctors were unable to stem the spread of the disease. On December 4, 1980, she announced her resignation, effective December 31, after which she returned to her hometown of Windsor Locks. Grasso died in Hartford on February 5, 1981.

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Louise Day Hicks
1916–2003

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM MASSACHUSETTS
1971–1973

A controversial critic of busing to achieve racial desegregation in the Boston public schools, Louise Day Hicks won election in 1970 to fill the Massachusetts congressional seat of retiring Speaker John McCormack. Expectations were that Hicks would become a prominent opponent in Congress of federal efforts to enforce busing programs. But Congresswoman Hicks instead spent much of her single term in the House working to return to power in her home city.

Anna Louise Day was born on October 16, 1916, in South Boston, Massachusetts. Her parents, William J. Day and Anna McCarron Day, raised their four children in a three-story, 18-room house in the predominantly Irish-Catholic community. Louise Day lived there her entire life. William Day eventually became a popular Democratic district court judge. Anna Day died when Louise was just 14, leaving her husband as the principal role model for the children. Years later Louise recalled, William Day was "the greatest influence in my life . . . my first and only hero. My father must have been the creator of women's lib because he felt there were no limitations to what I could do or to the opportunities I should be exposed to."[1] Louise Day graduated from Wheelock Teachers' College in 1938 and taught first grade for several years. On October 12, 1942, she married John Hicks, a design engineer. The couple raised two sons, William and John. As a young mother, Louise Day Hicks earned a B.S. degree in education in 1952 from Boston University. In 1955, as one of just nine women in a class of 232, Hicks graduated with a J.D. from Boston University's School of Law. She was admitted to the Massachusetts bar the following year and, with her brother John, established the law firm of Hicks and Day in Boston. She served as counsel for the Boston juvenile court in 1960.

Hicks's first foray into political office came when she won election to the Boston school committee, which she chaired from 1963 to 1965. At the time, she clashed with the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) over a proposal to integrate Boston schools by busing students to different districts to achieve racial balance. Hicks gained national attention as a stalwart opponent of busing and as the leading defender of "neighborhood schools." Hicks's position on busing brought her notoriety, including a *Newsweek* cover story and local and national condemnation. Under constant threat, she sought a permit to carry a handgun and was regularly accompanied by bodyguards. "No one in their right mind is against civil rights," she remarked at the time. "Only, let it come naturally."[2] She criticized white liberals who lived outside the city but supported busing as a remedy for educational inequalities in urban neighborhoods. "Boston schools are a scapegoat for those who have failed to solve the housing, economic, and social problems of the black citizen," she declared.[3] Congress of Racial Equality leader James Farmer denounced Hicks as "the Bull Conner of Boston," alluding to the police commissioner of Birmingham, Alabama, who turned fire hoses and police dogs on peaceful civil rights marchers.[4] Despite the protestations of the NAACP and the Boston media, she was handily re-elected to the school committee in 1964. In 1967, armed with the slogan "You Know Where I Stand," she ran against Kevin White for Boston mayor and drew 30 percent of the vote in a 10-candidate race, but ended up losing to White by 12,000 votes. In 1969, she

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

won election to the Boston city council by an overwhelming majority.

When U.S. House Speaker John W. McCormack announced his plans to retire at the end of the 91st Congress, Hicks launched a campaign for his seat. The Massachusetts congressional district encompassed a sliver of Boston running north to south through ethnically diverse neighborhoods that included the Italian North End, Irish-dominated sections of South Boston, the African-American enclave of Roxbury, and the racially mixed Dorchester area. Hicks held a great name recognition advantage over the other chief candidates for the Democratic primary nomination—a prominent African-American attorney, David E. Nelson, and widely respected State Senator John Joseph "Joe" Moakley. Voters were so familiar with Hicks that she was able to avoid such racially divisive issues as busing, to embrace a general platform of "law and order" and to campaign at a less frenetic pace than her opponents. She reprised her old slogan, "You know where I stand," skipped television ads, kept the press at arm's length, and refused to appear in debates with Moakley or Nelson. The primary largely became a referendum on Hicks, supported by stalwarts on the busing issues and opposed by those who dismissed her as a bigot.[5] Nelson's appeal to black constituents was simple: "Get it together or Louise will."[6] But Moakley and Nelson split the anti-Hicks vote, allowing her to win the September 15 primary; she beat Moakley, the runner-up, by a margin of about 10 percent.[7] Nomination in the heavily Democratic district was tantamount to certain election. During the fall campaign for the general election, Hicks ratcheted up her platform of law and order, attacking Mayor Kevin White for the city's high crime rate. She promised to "do more for Boston on the federal level" and dominated a three-way race by capturing 59 percent of the vote against Republican Laurence Curtis and Independent Daniel J. Houton.[8]

In the 92nd Congress (1971–1973), Hicks was assigned to the Committee on Education and Labor and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Particularly interested in issues of education, she proposed a system of tax credits for parents of children in private schools, a precursor to the school voucher proposals of the late 1990s, and backed the Higher Education Act of 1971, which expanded federal aid to public universities and colleges.[9] During her time in Congress, Hicks generally supported the Richard M. Nixon administration's conservative agenda, which was based on the premise that a "silent majority" of Americans eschewed 1960s liberalism and supported traditional values instead. She publicly defended the American incursion into Cambodia and, despite calling for the "orderly withdrawal" of troops from Vietnam, Hicks told an audience in Boston, "The disgrace of this war is not our being in Vietnam, but rather in those who oppose our boys while they are there."[10]

Nevertheless, Hicks remained unusually aloof in her role as a U.S. Representative and evinced more interest in Boston political developments than in issues before the House. Her reticence to leave Boston politics was notable from the outset.[11] She had kept her position on the Boston city council for several weeks after being sworn in to the House, hoping to manage both jobs.[12] Five months after taking office she confided to the *New York Times*, "Some mornings, I wake up and I'm positive I'm going to run for mayor [of Boston] again. Then other times I'm not sure at all. If I could only take the Congress to Boston I'd be perfectly happy."[13] Colleagues who had expected her to be a counterpart to "Battling" Bella Abzug, a fellow freshman Representative, were baffled by Hicks's reticence to make floor speeches or join in debates. Her office staff in Washington totaled three—the smallest Hill operation of any Member—while her Boston office employed nine aides. Her efforts to impose a federal ban on busing were, at best, halfhearted. Hicks was not even present for a debate on whether to strike an anti-busing provision from an education appropriations bill. By June 1971, Hicks publicly declared her candidacy for the 1971 mayoral race, challenging incumbent Kevin White.[14] This time, White overwhelmed Hicks by a margin of 40,000 votes. "Being mayor of Boston is the only job she's ever wanted," a friend confided to a writer profiling Hicks.[15]

In her 1972 bid for re-election to the House, Hicks confronted a district race in which reapportionment (based on 1970 Census figures), had reshaped her constituency. Her Boston district had been reconfigured to include more than 100,000 suburban constituents, while the Dorchester area, an Irish working-class stronghold for Hicks, had been stripped out.[16] Though she easily won the Democratic primary, she lost narrowly in a four-way general election to Joe Moakley, who ran this time on the Independent-Conservative ticket. Moakley edged Hicks out with 70,571 to 67,143 votes (43 percent to 41 percent of the total vote).[17] In 1973, Moakley switched his affiliation to the Democratic Party and was re-elected to 14 consecutive terms.

Hicks returned to her law practice in Boston and headed an anti-busing group called "Return Our Alienated Rights" (ROAR) until a 1976 federal court instituted busing. In 1973 Hicks was re-elected to the Boston city council, describing it as her "sabbatical year for the people." She promised to challenge Moakley for the 1974 Democratic nomination but later chose to stay in Boston politics.[18] In 1976, she was elected the first woman president of the city council. After serving on the city council for four terms, Hicks retired from public life entirely in 1981. Louise Day Hicks died in her South Boston home on October 21, 2003.

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Elizabeth Bullock Andrews

1911–2002

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM ALABAMA
1972–1973

Elizabeth Andrews was schooled in elective politics as the wife of a longtime and powerful Member of Congress. When her husband, George W. Andrews, died suddenly in late 1971, friends convinced her to seek election for the remainder of his term to further his legislative agenda. "All I want is to do the best I can for the rest of the term," Elizabeth Andrews told reporters on New Year's Day 1972. "I simply want to complete George's plans as best I can."[1]

Leslie Elizabeth Bullock was born in Geneva, Alabama, on February 12, 1911. Her father, Charles Gillespie Bullock, was a businessman. Elizabeth Bullock attended school in her hometown of Geneva. In 1932 she graduated from Montevallo College, majoring in home economics. Bullock subsequently taught high school home economics in Livingston, Alabama. During the Depression, she relocated to a school in Union Springs for better pay.[2] There she met her future husband, George William Andrews, whom she married in 1936. They raised two children, Jane and George, Jr.

During the 1930s, George W. Andrews served as district attorney in the Alabama circuit court system. He held the position until 1943, when he served as an officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve and was stationed in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii Territory. When longtime Representative Henry B. Steagall of Alabama died in November 1943, Andrews announced his candidacy for the vacant seat in the rural, 12-county southeastern Alabama district. Elizabeth Andrews, at home raising the couple's young daughter, got her first taste of elective politics. With her husband thousands of miles away in the Pacific, she became a lead member of his campaign team, taking to the hustings to make speeches on his behalf. Running as a Democrat, Andrews won the March 1944 special election for a seat in the 78th Congress (1943–1945) while still overseas. He was re-elected to the 14 succeeding Congresses. The couple eventually relocated to Washington, D.C., where Elizabeth became active in the Congressional Club, made up of spouses of Members of Congress. Eventually, she served as vice president of the organization in 1971. George Andrews, meanwhile, became a senior and powerful member of the Appropriations Committee, eventually chairing its Legislative Subcommittee. He was a fiscal conservative, a critic of civil rights legislation, a friend of controversial Alabama Governor George Wallace (whose hometown was in Andrews's district), and a defense hawk. By his final term in office, he was among the top 20 House Members in terms of seniority.

On Christmas Day 1971, George Andrews died after complications from heart surgery. "I had no idea of running for George's office," Elizabeth Andrews later recalled, "until friends encouraged me to do so." One in particular, Lera Thomas, a congressional widow-turned-Representative from Texas, proved most convincing. Thomas, who served out the remainder of her husband's term in the 89th Congress (1965–1967) in 1966, and Andrews had known each other for years; their husbands had served on the Appropriations Committee together. After George Andrews's funeral, Lera Thomas approached Elizabeth: "Don't rule out going to Capitol Hill yourself. You know more about his plans than any other living person, and I personally know what it will mean to the constituency."[3] Andrews told Democratic state party leaders that she would consider running for the office.[4]

On January 1, 1972, Andrews announced her candidacy. Due to the fact that Alabama lost one seat after the 1970

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Census, George Andrews's district was set to be reapportioned out of existence before the November 1972 elections. Andrews's death made the district's boundaries even more vulnerable, as districts of retiring or deceased long-term incumbents were often divided in the case of reapportionment. The impending change in district lines brought in new voters, which also threatened the traditional Democratic dominance in the district; no Republican had served southeastern Alabama since the end of Reconstruction in 1877. (In fact, the new district, which incorporated more central territory, including Montgomery, eventually elected a GOP candidate in November 1972.)[5] A number of Democratic contenders showed some initial interest in the nomination, but the problems created by the impending reapportionment dampened their enthusiasm.[6] This did not bother Andrews, as she also firmly announced her intention not to run for a term in the succeeding Congress.[7] Moreover, Andrews's name recognition and powerful supporters added to the long-term historical trends that favored her candidacy.[8]

When the Alabama Democratic Executive Committee convened to choose a nominee, a group of progressive members opposed Andrews's candidacy, pushing for Lucius Amerson, the state's first elected African-American sheriff since Reconstruction. Amerson seemed to be a symbolic choice given his race, but he also appealed to local Democrats who wanted a strong candidate to seek re-election in November and retain the party's control over the new district.[9] Success in Alabama politics in the early 1970s, however, often depended on the support of personal connections.[10] Andrews's supporters included the powerful Governor George Wallace, formerly an ardent segregationist, who intervened on behalf of his late friend's wife. Though distancing himself from his previous racial views in preparation for a 1972 presidential bid, Wallace endorsed Elizabeth Andrews over Amerson and insisted that if Democrats did not nominate her, he would back her as an Independent.[11] Based largely on the influential Wallace's warning, the committee favored Andrews 72 to 17. Afterward, the state GOP Executive Committee allowed her to run unopposed in the general election if Democrats nominated her, ostensibly to focus on the November campaign for a full term in the next Congress.[12]

On April 4, 1972, facing no opposition, Andrews easily won election to fill out the remainder of her husband's term.[13] The cost of her bid was so low that she was able to return most the donations to her campaign.[14] She became the first woman from Alabama ever elected to Congress; two previous women had been nominated to serve brief terms in the Senate. Andrews, however, minimized the significance of her gender. "Womanhood per se was never an issue," she said. "In Alabama today, if a woman is qualified and capable, she can obtain political support."[15]

In the 92nd Congress (1971–1973), Elizabeth Andrews served on the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, occupying the same office space as George Andrews had from 1950 to 1964. From her committee post, Congresswoman Andrews introduced several amendments to protect medical and Social Security benefits. One of her amendments to Social Security legislation increased recipients' earned income limits; another abolished proposed cuts in welfare aid scheduled because of coincident increases in Social Security payments. Andrews also secured funding for cancer and heart disease research centers in Birmingham, a special pet project of her husband's. Along with Alabama Representative William Nichols, she sponsored a bill establishing a Tuskegee Institute National Historic Park. The site commemorated the teachers' school that Booker T. Washington founded in the late 1880s that later became a center for African-American education and home to an aeronautics program and flight school which produced the legendary Tuskegee Airmen of World War II.

Andrews also favored the Richard M. Nixon administration's plan for withdrawing U.S. troops from Vietnam, the so-called "Vietnamization" of the war effort, noting that "military victory has been abandoned as a goal."[16] Andrews made only one floor speech during her nine months in office, taking to the well of the House to denounce "professional dissenters" and protestors the day after presidential candidate and Alabama Governor George Wallace was critically wounded in an assassination

attempt while campaigning in Laurel, Maryland. "Failure to maintain order for all presidential candidates during their public appearances has resulted in an ominous atmosphere of tension, hostility, and clear danger in which a presidential contender like George Wallace takes life in hand when he goes to the people with the true but unpleasant message that lawless elements in this country are being pampered by our courts, that schoolchildren are being cruelly used by liberal social experimenters, and that our nation's defenses are being undermined from within," Andrews told colleagues. "All Americans, regardless of philosophy or party affiliation, should be dismayed at this vicious assault on a man who dared to go out among the people in his quest for support in a presidential campaign."[17]

When Andrews's term expired, her House colleagues praised her service. Fellow Alabama Representative William J. Edwards noted, "In serving her constituents this year she worked harder than most freshmen Members running for re-election . . . furthering the programs her husband worked so hard for." Jamie Whitten of Mississippi observed that Andrews "carried on in the style her district has been accustomed to."[18] Prior to retiring, the 62-year-old Congresswoman told a reporter that "the district needed the mantle to fall on someone younger."[19] After she left Congress in January 1973, Andrews retired to Union Springs and remained active in civic affairs for several decades. On December 2, 2002, Congresswoman Andrews passed away in Birmingham.

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Elaine S. Edwards

1929–

UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ DEMOCRAT FROM LOUISIANA

1972

Senator Elaine Edwards of Louisiana came to Congress by way of her matrimonial connection, traveling a political path frequented by earlier southern women. Rather than succeeding her husband, however, Edwards was appointed to a U.S. Senate seat by her husband, Louisiana Governor Edwin Edwards. Though not unprecedented, the move was controversial. Yet it allowed Governor Edwards to sidestep a thorny political problem in backing other aspirants to the seat. It also provided Elaine Edwards a chance to practice the political craft she first learned as a congressional spouse and the first lady of Louisiana. Though she served only three months during the frenetic end of the 92nd Congress (1971–1973), Edwards counted a number of admirers. Upon her retirement, Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana described her work as "quietly effective."[1]

Elaine Lucille Schwartzenburg was born on March 8, 1929, in Marksville, Louisiana, to Errol Schwartzenburg, a grocery store owner, and Myrl Dupuy Schwartzenburg. When she was nine years old, she contracted a bacterial bone infection in one leg, underwent several surgeries, and spent five years recuperating.[2] She graduated from Marksville High School and, in 1949, she married her childhood sweetheart Edwin W. Edwards, a Marksville, Louisiana, native and a lawyer. They raised four children: Anna, Vicki, Stephen, and David. Edwin Edwards embarked on a long political career in which he served as a Crowley, Louisiana, city councilman and a state senator. In a 1965 special election, Edwards was elected as a Democrat to the first of four U.S. House terms as a Louisiana Representative. Elaine Edwards was active in her husband's political campaigns at the district and state level. She remained at the family home in Crowley while her husband was in the House of Representatives, but she answered phone calls at home on a second line, working with individual constituents to resolve Social Security and veterans' requests and relaying the information to Congressman Edwards's Washington office.[3] As her husband's political career developed, Elaine Edwards participated in a variety of civic and philanthropic pursuits ranging from the Special Olympics to a project that raised $1 million for the Crippled Children's Hospital of New Orleans.[4] Congressman Edwards left the House in May 1972 to serve as governor of Louisiana, where he remained for a total of four terms.

When longtime Louisiana Senator Allen Ellender died on July 27, 1972, Governor Edwards appointed his wife to fill the vacancy. The governor claimed that the appointment was a "meaningful, symbolic gesture" against decades of discrimination of women in politics.[5] It was not the first time a woman had received a U.S. Senate seat in this manner. Almost exactly 35 years earlier, Alabama Governor Bibb Graves named his wife Dixie to fill Hugo Black's Senate seat after he was appointed to the Supreme Court. Principally, Edwards made the controversial decision in order to avoid the politically tricky endorsement of a successor to Ellender, a 35-year Senate veteran, and the difficulty of finding an interim candidate who would step down shortly after a full-term successor was elected. Among the contenders for the seat were three of his gubernatorial campaign's top backers and his two brothers.[6]

Elaine Edwards was initially reluctant to accept the post, admitting at one point, "I never wanted to be liberated from sewing, cooking, or even gardening." Critics charged that she was merely a "caretaker" or "seat-warmer" who represented the views of the Louisiana governor's mansion

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE U.S. SENATE HISTORICAL OFFICE

in the Senate by consulting Baton Rouge before each vote.[7] The *New York Times* editors described it as a "hollow interim appointment" and also decried the fact that Edwards's "function . . . will be to represent other women by supinely taking orders—and from men at that." Edwards conceded, "I'm no U.S. Senator" and said she believed she would "get along fine" under the guidance of her state delegation and its dean, Senator Russell Long.[8] After a brief meeting with President Richard Nixon in the White House, she took the oath of office on August 7, 1972. Asked if she was likely to vote against her husband's advice, Edwards replied, "I doubt it."[9] She also pledged not to run for the full Senate term.

In Congress, Edwards served on the Agriculture and Forestry Committee and the Public Works Committee. She joined Senator Hubert Humphrey in introducing a bill to establish an educational fellowship in Senator Ellender's name that appropriated $500,000 in fellowships for low-income high school students and teachers. She also cosponsored an amendment to the Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act and another to increase the allowable amount of outside income for Social Security recipients. She took particular pride in securing federal funding for highways in Louisiana, including a 70/30 federally financed toll road. "My proudest moment was convincing members of the Public Works Committee to vote funds for a north-south highway to connect the two east-west interstates in Louisiana," Edwards said. "Now the prospects are very real that we can lure much-needed industry to the central part of the state."[10] In her only floor speech, Edwards spoke on behalf of a motion to vote on the proposed Equal Education Opportunities Act, which would have restricted the use of busing to achieve school integration. Edwards described the bill as a "reasonable, just, and adequate remedy at law to help resolve the critical problems which have arisen from the excessive zeal and bad judgments of U.S. district court judges in the exercise of their discretionary powers."[11] In late September 1972, Edwards voted with a slim majority composed of Republicans and southern Democrats to kill a proposed Vietnam War fund cutoff which would have halted all money for U.S. military expenditures.[12] On October 3, Edwards presided over an evening Senate debate in which a heated confrontation occurred between two of the chamber's elder statesmen.[13]

The senatorial role seemed to suit Elaine Edwards. A month into her new job she told the *Washington Post*: "I like being a Senator very much. I would have liked to have been able to run and keep the seat this fall, had I not been the first lady of Louisiana. . . . But I am going to stay with Ed and do whatever he's doing."[14] Acceding to her husband's wishes, Edwards resigned her seat on November 13, 1972, in order to provide Louisiana Senator-elect J. Bennett Johnston an edge in seniority by finishing the remainder of Ellender's term. As she prepared to retire, nine colleagues, including Henry "Scoop" Jackson of Washington and Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, delivered tributes to Edwards on the Senate Floor. "It is unfortunate that Mrs. Edwards will not be in the Senate for a longer period of time," Jackson said. "It is obvious, even during her short tenure, that she has the ability and capacity to become one of the more influential Members of this body."[15] Elaine and Edwin Edwards divorced in 1989 after 40 years of marriage. Elaine Edwards retired to Baton Rouge, where she continues to reside.

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Yvonne Brathwaite Burke

1932–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM CALIFORNIA
1973–1979

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke was a rising star in California and national politics years prior to winning a U.S. House seat. She was the first African-American woman elected to the California assembly in 1966. At the 1972 Democratic National Convention she served as vice chair of the platform committee, gaining national television exposure. That same year she became the first black woman from California (and only the third ever) elected to the House. Her meteoric career continued with a prime appointment to the Appropriations Committee and her election as the first woman to chair the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). But her most notable distinction for much of the public came in 1973, when Burke became the first serving Congresswoman to give birth and be granted maternity leave.

Perle Yvonne Watson was born on October 5, 1932, in Los Angeles, California, the only child of James Watson, a custodian at the MGM film studios, and Lola (Moore) Watson, a real estate agent in East Los Angeles. Yvonne (she rejected the name Perle) grew up in modest circumstances and at first was enrolled in the public schools.[1] At the age of four she was transferred to a model school for exceptional children. Watson became class vice president at Manuel Arts High School in Los Angeles. She enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley in 1949 but transferred to the University of California at Los Angeles, where she earned a B.A. in political science in 1953. She became only the second black woman to be admitted to the University of California School of Law, earning her J.D. and passing the California bar in 1956. After graduating, she found that no law firms would hire an African-American woman and, thus, entered her own private practice specializing in civil, probate, and real estate law. In addition to her private practice, she served as the state's deputy corporation commissioner and as a hearing officer for the Los Angeles Police Commission. In 1957, Yvonne Watson wed mathematician Louis Brathwaite; their marriage ended in divorce in 1964. Yvonne Brathwaite organized a legal defense team for Watts rioters in 1965 and was named by Governor Edmond Brown to the McCone Commission, which investigated the conditions that led to the riot. A year later she won election to the California assembly. She eventually chaired the assembly's committee on urban development and won re-election in 1968 and 1970.[2]

Brathwaite eventually grew impatient with the pace of social legislation in the California assembly and, when court-mandated reapportionment created a new congressional district, decided to enter the race for the seat. The district encompassed much of southwest Los Angeles, was nearly 75 percent registered Democrat, and had a large African-American constituency. In the Democratic primary, Brathwaite faced Billy Mills, a popular African-American Los Angeles city councilman. She amassed 54 percent of the vote to defeat Mills and three other challengers. Just days after the primary, on June 14, 1972, Yvonne Brathwaite married businessman William Burke, who had been an aide to Mills. Less than a month later, Yvonne Brathwaite Burke garnered national media attention as the vice chair of the Democratic National Convention in Miami Beach that nominated George McGovern. She spent much of the convention controlling the gavel during the long and sometimes raucous platform deliberations, eventually helping to pass revised rules that gave minorities and young voters a greater voice in shaping party policy.[3]

The convention exposure only added to her luster,

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Yvonne Burke became the first Member to give birth while serving in Congress. At the time, she observed that it was "a dubious honor." Speaker of the House Carl Albert subsequently granted Burke maternity leave, another first in congressional history.

though it was hardly a factor in the general election that November in the heavily Democratic district. Burke faced 31-year-old Gregg Tria, a recent law school graduate, who ran on an anti-busing and anti-abortion platform. Burke defeated Tria easily, winning 73 percent of the vote. In Burke's subsequent re-election bids in 1974 and 1976, in a newly reapportioned California district, she won 80 percent of the vote against Republicans Tom Neddy and Edward Skinner, respectively.[4]

In Burke's first term during the 93rd Congress (1973–1975), she received assignments on two committees: Public Works and Interior and Insular Affairs. She gave up both of those panels in December 1974 to accept a seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee, where she served for the duration of her House career. Burke's appointment to the panel signaled the first time that African Americans simultaneously were on the most influential House committees: Appropriations (Burke), Ways and Means (Charles Rangel of New York), and Rules (Andrew Young of Georgia).[5] In the 94th Congress (1975–1977), Burke was appointed chair of the Select Committee on the House Beauty Shop, an honorific position that rotated among the women Members.

Burke made national headlines again as a freshman Member when she revealed in the spring of 1973 that she was expecting a child. When Autumn Roxanne Burke was born on November 23, 1973, Yvonne Burke became the first Member to give birth while serving in Congress. At the time, she observed that it was "a dubious honor."[6] Speaker of the House Carl Albert of Oklahoma subsequently granted Burke maternity leave, another first in congressional history.[7] The Burkes also had a daughter, Christine, from William Burke's previous marriage.

Representative Burke recognized that the civil rights struggle had shifted to a phase in which less overt discrimination must be confronted. "The kinds of things we faced in my generation were easy to understand," she explained. "Your parents said, 'They don't let you sit down here, they don't let you go to that place.' Everybody knew. But now it is so complex, so frustrating to young people when they are led to believe that everything is fine, yet at the same time it is not fine."[8] Minority interests were always in the forefront of Burke's legislative agenda. During her first term in office she fought the Richard M. Nixon administration's efforts to unravel some of the programs established under Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, particularly the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which Nixon stripped of many of its programs. One of Burke's earliest House Floor speeches was a defense of the OEO.[9]

Burke also fought on behalf of equal opportunities for minority owned businesses in the construction of the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline by adding two amendments to the bill that provided the framework for the nearly 800-mile-long project. One amendment required that affirmative action programs be created to award some pipeline contracts to minority businesses. A version of that amendment later would require that any project funded with federal dollars must provide affirmative action incentives, reminiscent of the legislative technique used by Adam Clayton Powell of New York, in which he attached antidiscrimination riders to legislation involving federal funding. "The construction of the Alaskan Pipeline will create substantial employment opportunities, and it therefore seems desirable and appropriate to extend the existing programs for non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity" to that project, Burke told colleagues on the House Floor.[10] Burke's second amendment to the bill, the "Buy America Act," required that the materials to construct the pipeline "to the maximum extent feasible" would be manufactured in the United States.[11] Despite voicing strong concerns about potential environmental problems, Burke continued to back the Alaska pipeline project, believing it would help the impending energy crisis in the United States.[12]

In the House, Burke earned a reputation as a legislator who avoided confrontation and controversy, yet nevertheless worked with determination behind the scenes to effect changes she believed to be important. "I don't believe in grand-standing," she once explained, "but in the poverty areas, if there is something we need, then I'll go after it."[13] Using her experience as a former state legislator in the California assembly, Burke chose her positions carefully

and usually refrained from partisan rhetoric in debates. She also seemed to take to heart the advice of former President Lyndon Johnson, who had advised her as a freshman Member, "Don't talk so much on the House Floor."[14]

With quiet determination, Representative Burke supported most major feminist issues and joined the Congressional Women's Caucus when it was founded in 1977. In that capacity she served as the group's first treasurer.[15] She was part of a successful effort to extend the time limitation for the Equal Rights Amendment by an additional three years.[16] That same year, the California Congresswoman introduced the Displaced Homemakers Act, which authorized the creation of job training centers for women entering the labor market, particularly middle-aged women who had for years been out of the job market but through divorce or the death of a spouse were left to support themselves. The purpose of the bill, which also provided health and financial counseling, was "to help displaced homemakers make it through a readjustment period so that they may have the opportunity to become productive, self-sufficient members of society," Burke explained.[17] In 1977, she vigorously criticized the Hyde Amendment, which prohibited the use of federal Medicaid funds for abortions. "The basic premise which we cannot overlook is that if the Government will not pay for an indigent woman's abortion, she cannot afford to go elsewhere," Burke wrote in a *New York Times* op-ed piece.[18] In 1978, Burke introduced a bill to prohibit sex discrimination in the workplace based on pregnancy, particularly employer policies that kept women out of their jobs for long periods of time both before and after childbirth.[19]

Despite her prominent committee assignments and role as chair of the CBC, which she assumed in 1976, Congresswoman Burke never seemed completely at home on Capitol Hill. Publicly, she expressed her desire to have a more direct and administrative effect on policy than the demands of being one of 435 House Members allowed her. Privately, however, associates believed that by 1977 the distance from her husband and her 4-year-old daughter in Los Angeles, not to mention the toll of the 3,000-mile biweekly commute, had left her exhausted and unhappy.[20]

In 1978, Burke declined to run for re-election to the 96th Congress (1979– 1981), in order to campaign for the office of California attorney general, a position that no woman in America had ever been elected to in state government. She won the Democratic nomination but lost to Republican State Senator George Deukmenjian in the general election. In June 1979, California Governor Jerry Brown appointed Burke to the Los Angeles County board of supervisors, making her the first black person to sit on the panel. In 1980, she lost her bid to a new four-year term and returned to private law practice. In 1984, Burke was the vice chair of the Los Angeles Olympics Organizing Committee. Burke became the first African American to win outright election as an L.A. County supervisor in 1992, defeating future Congresswoman Diane Watson by a narrow margin.[21] A year later, she became the first woman and the first minority to chair the board. Burke has been re-elected twice and most recently chaired the board of supervisors in 2002 and 2003. She resides in her native Los Angeles.[22]

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University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA), Regional Cultural History Collection, Department of Special Collections, Doheny Memorial Library. *Papers:* 1966–1980, 452 feet. Correspondence, photographs, sound recordings, and memorabilia relating to Congresswoman Burke's years in the California assembly, U.S. Congress, and Los Angeles County board of supervisors. Also included are materials relating to her campaign for attorney general of California. Some restrictions pertain to the collection. A finding aid is available in the repository.

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Marjorie Sewell Holt

1920–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM MARYLAND
1973–1987

As a member of the newly formed Budget Committee, Congresswoman Marjorie Sewell Holt was the champion of fiscal conservatism in Congress, seeking to cap federal spending—with the exception of a defense budget—across the board. Famous for her sponsorship of legislation to end busing as a means of racial desegregation, Holt was a consistent supporter of the conservative social politics of the Richard M. Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, and Ronald W. Reagan administrations.

Marjorie Sewell was born on September 17, 1920, in Birmingham, Alabama, to Edward and Juanita Sewell. The oldest of four sisters, Marjorie Sewell spent most of her youth in Jacksonville, Florida. She graduated from Jacksonville Junior College in 1945. In December 1946, Sewell married Duncan Holt, an electrical engineer, and the couple raised three children: Rachel, Edward, and Victoria. That same year, she entered law school at the University of Florida at Gainesville, earning her L.L.B. in 1949. The family moved to Maryland in 1950, where Marjorie Holt practiced law in Annapolis and became involved with GOP state politics. In 1963, Holt was appointed to the Anne Arundel County board of elections and served as supervisor of elections until 1965.[1] She was elected Anne Arundel County circuit court clerk a year later, defeating longtime local Democratic leader, Louis Phipps, Jr. She served as clerk until 1972.

When reapportionment created a new Maryland seat in the U.S. House in 1972, Holt decided to pursue her longtime desire to serve in Congress.[2] As a conservative, Marjorie Holt confronted some challenges in the new district which included a portion of minority-populated Prince George's County and a 5–2 ratio of registered Democrats to Republicans.[3] Holt, however, also enjoyed some advantages. The district's Democratic voters had a recent history of electing local Republican officials.[4] The United States Naval Academy in Annapolis and Andrews Air Force Base, moreover, provided Holt pockets of conservative military voters.[5] Holt later commented on her first campaign, "I saw the perfect district, the timing was right. I started early, amassed support, and muscled [my opponents] out."[6]

After she handily defeated two challengers in the Republican primary, the general election race between Holt and her Democratic opponent, former state legislator and agency head Werner Fornos, was immediately dubbed a contest between conservatism and liberalism. Although both Holt and Fornos opposed busing as a means of desegregating schools, a particularly volatile issue in Prince George's County, both candidates differed considerably on other issues, such as wage and price controls, taxes, the role of federal employees in political campaigns, and the war in Vietnam.[7] Holt summarized her platform, saying, "My whole pitch is for less government."[8] She promised to reduce the size of the federal government through cutbacks in all nonmilitary government spending. Holt defeated Fornos, with 59 percent of the total vote.[9] The aftermath of the election was bitter, as Fornos accused Holt of running a "hate campaign" and later charged Holt's backers with violating campaign laws by spreading anonymous and false charges that Fornos was going to be indicted by a state grand jury.[10] An Anne Arundel County grand jury later acquitted Holt of these charges.[11] Holt easily was re-elected to the six succeeding Congresses, winning by no less than 58 percent of the total votes and, in 1980, taking a career best 71 percent of total returns.[12]

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Holt soon established herself as one of the House's staunchest defenders of local control over education. She led the charge in Congress to end the busing of children to different school districts in order to achieve desegregation.[13] After the 1964 Civil Rights Act granted the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) the power to withhold federal money from school districts that did not meet certain racial percentage quotas, busing became a solution for creating greater diversity in schools. Holt called the busing system, which often placed middle-class and primarily white students in poorer schools, "the new racism." "We should get back on the track and start making every school a good school in providing education for the children," she countered.[14] In 1974, the House passed Holt's measure that prevented HEW from classifying schools by student and teacher racial quotas in order to determine federal funding, a move that Holt believed would end the need for busing.[15] Although it was eventually rejected by the Senate, Holt's amendment set precedent for a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution, introduced by Ohio Democrat Ronald M. Mottl in 1979.[16]

In 1976, Holt left her seat on the House Administration Committee after serving only a partial term for a prestigious appointment to the Budget Committee. Created in 1974, the committee was charged with drafting the federal budget each April. It also featured a rotating membership, allowing Members to serve only six years in a 10-year period. In 1978, Holt countered the Democratic majority's budget proposal by offering an alternative Republican plan, including an amendment that would slow spending by as much as seven percent over the previous year.[17] Although her proposal failed by a 198–203 roll call vote, the practice of offering a substitute budget thereafter became standard strategy for the minority party.[18] A career-long member of the Armed Services Committee, Holt also acted as the unofficial spokesperson for the military from her position on the Budget panel by attempting to protect military spending. Even after her departure from the Budget Committee in 1980, Holt often pushed her Armed Services Committee colleagues to ask for bigger defense allotments, despite apparent opposition on the Budget Committee. "Where are we going to get additional budgetary authority if we don't ask for it?" she said.[19] Holt returned to the forefront in economic policy when she gained a position on the Joint Economic Committee in 1983, serving until 1986.

Holt's tough conservative policies were well respected among her Republican colleagues. However, she suspected that gender discrimination and her conservative "inflexibility" often kept her from attaining leadership positions.[20] In 1975, Holt vied for the vacant chair of the Republican Research Committee, a congressional caucus which served as a legislative conservative think tank. Just before the vote, Minority Whip Robert Michel of Illinois endorsed Minnesota Representative Bill Frenzel, arguing that the conservative bent of the rest of the Republican leaders had to be balanced by a moderate. Though Michel later championed women's participation in the party, some House Members suggested that he did not support Holt's ascendancy based on her gender.[21] She lost another race in 1981 to fill the vacant chairmanship of the Republican Policy Committee. Holt was the favorite for the position until popular freshman and former White House Chief of Staff Dick Cheney of Wyoming, made a last minute pitch for the chairmanship, defeating Holt in 99–68 vote.[22]

Marjorie Holt was reticent to embrace the political cause of women's rights and liberation. "I've always thought of myself as a person and I certainly haven't been discriminated against," she told voters in her first House race. [23] She warned feminists, "I don't think we should de-emphasize the satisfaction of raising children."[24] Consistent with her fight for a smaller federal government, Holt voted in 1976 against providing federal money for daycare centers and abortions.[25] In 1980, she joined other anti-abortionists in barring federal employees from using their health insurance to pay for abortions.[26] After its creation in April 1977, Holt declined to join the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues. In order to gain the membership of all women in Congress, caucus co-chairs Elizabeth Holtzman and Margaret Heckler convinced Holt to join the caucus in 1979 by assuring her that Members would

Holt called the busing system, which often placed middle-class and primarily white students in poorer schools, "the new racism," saying, "We should get back on the track and start making every school a good school in providing education for the children."

be allowed to ally with or distance themselves from the caucus as they saw politically fit. Moreover, the caucus would not publicly endorse any issue that was not agreed to unanimously.[27] Holt resigned her membership in 1981, when the caucus altered some of the rules that persuaded her to join.[28]

Citing a desire to spend more time with her family, Holt retired from Congress in 1986, at the age of 66, and returned to practicing law at a firm in Baltimore, Maryland. Holt remained active in the Republican Party. She was nominated by President Ronald W. Reagan as a member of the General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament in July 1987. In 2000, Holt served as the Maryland state co-chair for the George W. Bush and Richard Cheney presidential campaign and was named a member of the Maryland campaign leadership team seeking to re-elect the Bush ticket in 2004.[29]

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19 *Almanac of American Politics, 1984*: 521; *Politics in America, 1986*: 671; Mary Russell, "House Defeats GOP Proposals to Cut Budget," 10 May 1979, *Washington Post*: A24.
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23 "Holt: 'Inefficiency' Rife," 10 September 1972, *Washington Post*: D1.
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25 Paul Hodge, " Md. Congressmen's Voting Records on Consumer Issues," 28 October 1974, *Washington Post*: MD2.
26 Martin Weil and Victor Cohn, "Anti-Abortionists In House Attack Insurance Plans," 22 August 1980, *Washington Post*: A1.
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28 Ibid., 208.
29 "Bush–Cheney '04 Announces Maryland Campaign Leadership Team," 6 March 2004, PR Newswire Association.

Elizabeth Holtzman

1941-

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK
1973–1981

A self-proclaimed political outsider, Elizabeth "Liz" Holtzman defeated a 50-year House veteran and powerful chairman to win a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. During her four terms in the House, Holtzman earned national prominence as an active member of the Judiciary Committee during the Richard M. Nixon impeachment inquiry and as a cofounder of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues.

Elizabeth Holtzman and her twin brother, Robert, were born on August 11, 1941, in Brooklyn, New York, to Russian immigrants Sidney Holtzman, a lawyer, and Filia Holtzman, a faculty member in the Hunter College Russian Department. Elizabeth Holtzman graduated *magna cum laude* from Radcliffe College in 1962 as a member of Phi Beta Kappa and received her J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1965, one of 15 women in her class of more than 500. After graduation, she returned to New York to practice law and became active in state Democratic politics. From 1967 to 1970, Holtzman managed parks and recreation as an assistant to New York City Mayor John Lindsay. From 1970 to 1972, she served as a New York state Democratic committee member and as a district leader from Flatbush. She also cofounded the Brooklyn Women's Political Caucus.

In 1972, Holtzman mounted a long-shot campaign to unseat incumbent Congressman Emanuel Celler, who had represented central Brooklyn for half a century and was chairman of the powerful House Judiciary Committee.[1] Though she lacked the funding that Celler mustered for the Democratic primary, Holtzman mounted an energetic grass-roots campaign by canvassing the urban district. "If I had known how little money we could raise, I would never have gotten into it," Holtzman recalled. "But it was possible to use shoe leather and win a race."[2] She often introduced herself to patrons in lines outside movie theaters, emphasizing her commitment to constituent needs. "There was no hostility to the fact that I was a woman. I remember truck drivers leaning out of their trucks and saying, 'I think it's great . . . it's fantastic that a woman is running,'" she recalled. "I found mothers taking their daughters up to me. They wanted their daughters to have a different conception of the possibilities for them."[3] Holtzman noted that the 84-year-old Celler had become increasingly distant from local affairs and had no Brooklyn district office. She further played on her substantive policy disagreements with the incumbent, who had for years bottled up the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the Judiciary Committee and had been an unwavering supporter of the war in Vietnam, an unpopular stance in the Democratic district. Holtzman won the nomination by a narrow margin of 635 votes, whereupon *Time* magazine dubbed her "Liz the Lion Killer."[4] In the general election, Holtzman was the sound winner, with 66 percent to Republican Nicholas R. Macchio, Jr.'s 23 percent. Running as a Liberal Party candidate, Celler left the race in September, endorsing Holtzman; however, he still received 7 percent of the vote.[5] "My victory says that no political figure, no matter how powerful, can forget about the people he was elected to serve," Holtzman declared.[6] In her subsequent three re-election bids, Holtzman never was seriously challenged, winning with margins of 70 percent or more.[7]

When Liz Holtzman took her seat in the 93rd Congress (1973–1975), at the age of 31, she became the youngest woman ever to serve in the House. Immediately after her

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election, Representative Holtzman obtained a seat on the powerful Judiciary Committee, where she served all four terms of her service. In the 94th Congress (1975–1977), she was assigned to the Budget Committee, where she remained through the 96th Congress (1979–1981). Holtzman also served on the Select Committee on Aging in the 96th Congress.

From her seat on the Judiciary Committee, Holtzman gained notoriety through her participation in the Nixon impeachment hearings as a freshman Representative. Of her role in reaching a verdict, Holtzman said, "It's the most serious decision I'll ever have to make."[8] She later aggressively questioned President Gerald R. Ford about his pardon of Nixon and defended the government's claim over the Nixon tapes and papers.[9] In 1973, Holtzman filed suit to halt American military action in Cambodia, on the grounds that it had never been approved by Congress. A district court ruled the Cambodian invasion unconstitutional, but the court of appeals reversed the decision.

Like many of her Democratic colleagues, Holtzman challenged military spending levels and weapons programs in the post-Vietnam era. Holtzman praised the Jimmy Carter administration's decision not to pursue a neutron bomb. "I think the people of the world have a right not to see life jeopardized by nuclear holocaust, and that means not only Russian life and American life but all life on this earth," she said in a floor speech. "The development of the neutron bomb and the deployment of countless unnecessary nuclear weapons will simply take us further down the road to such a holocaust."[10]

In 1977, Congresswomen Holtzman and Margaret Heckler of Massachusetts cofounded the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. As co-chairs, they persuaded 13 other House women to join (three declined), and the group held its first meeting on April 19, 1978. Though the women Members had met informally since the early 1970s to discuss women's issues, Holtzman had to allay the fears of many colleagues who were reluctant to join a formal caucus because they "felt their constituents wouldn't understand working on women's issues. Some were very worried that they would be embarrassed politically."[11] The organizers agreed that the caucus would be used as a forum to create momentum for legislation on which Members could find consensus rather than as a disciplined unit that spoke with one voice on all issues.[12] One of the group's first battles was for passage of the ERA. In 1978, Holtzman led the fight to secure a seven-year extension of the March 1979 ratification deadline, a move that many Members considered to be on shaky constitutional grounds when it was introduced in committee.[13] Congress eventually added three-and-a-half years to the deadline. Holtzman also helped secure a prohibition on sex discrimination in federal programs during her time in the House. In a *New York Times* interview, Holtzman reflected on her role as a female legislator, "The vast majority of the legislation that's been introduced affecting the status of women was introduced by women."[14]

In 1980, rather than seek re-election for a fifth term in the House, Representative Holtzman entered the Democratic primary for nomination to the Senate. She won the heated contest for the nomination against Bess Myerson, a former Miss America-turned-consumer advocate, and Holtzman's former boss, John Lindsay. The Congresswoman portrayed herself as a candidate who was not beholden to special interests and who stood up to the political machine: "I have never been handpicked by the bosses. I have never been handpicked by anyone." It also marked the first time that a major party had nominated a woman to run for the Senate in New York. Holtzman ran on her record in the House stating that, "While others kept silent, I asked Gerald Ford the hard questions about whether the Nixon pardon was a deal," and that she, "got Congress to pass the bill extending the time limit ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment."[15] In the general election, she ran in a three-way race that included the incumbent Republican Jacob Javits, who had lost the GOP primary but ran on the Liberal ticket, and the man who beat Javits, a little-known Long Island politician named Alfonse D'Amato. Despite her distinguished record in Congress, Holtzman narrowly lost to Republican candidate D'Amato, 44.8 percent to 43.5 percent, with Javits drawing off about 11 percent of the vote.[16]

Recalling her first campaign for the House, Holtzman noted, "I found mothers taking their daughters up to me. They wanted their daughters to have a different conception of the possibilities for them."

A year after the loss of the Senate seat, Holtzman was elected district attorney of Brooklyn and served in that office until she was elected comptroller of New York City in 1989.[17] In 1992, she entered the Democratic Senate primary against former House colleague Geraldine Ferraro and State Attorney General Robert Abrams for the nomination to challenge Senator D'Amato in the general election. In an internecine primary squabble, Holtzman accused Ferraro of ethics violations during her House career and of ties to the mafia.[18] Abrams eventually won the Democratic nomination. Many observers believed that Holtzman's campaign tactics had effectively ended her political career. In 1993, she failed in her bid for the Democratic nomination for city comptroller. Holtzman entered private law practice in New York City and published her memoirs in 1996.

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MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), Schlesinger Library, http://www.radcliff.edu/schles. *Papers:* 1970–1981, 295 linear feet. Correspondence, speeches, financial records, scheduling books, telephone logs, campaign literature, awards, clippings, photographs, records of casework, community work, and the Judiciary Committee, and administrative and legislative files cover primarily Holtzman's election to and service in the U.S. House of Representatives and her unsuccessful campaign for election to the U.S. Senate. Subject files pertain to abortion, Cambodia, employment, environment, energy, housing and urban development, national security and the Central Intelligence Agency, New York City, rape privacy, social security, public welfare, transportation, and the Congressional Women's Caucus. Included are questionnaire responses from constituents on Watergate, the energy crisis, wage and price controls, Nixon's pardon, Rockefeller's vice presidency, amnesty, and mail services; material on Nixon's impeachment hearings; and testimony from hearings on immigration and refugee policy. Finding aid in repository. The bulk of the papers are restricted. *Video tapes:* 1987—1993, 20 video tapes. Consists mainly of media coverage of Holtzman. Included are news reports, talk show interviews, and press conferences. Also contains several speeches by Holtzman and a debate among U.S. Senate candidates. A finding aid is available in the repository. Appointment required for viewing video tapes. *Oral History:* 1973. 63 pages. Interview with Holtzman, by Marilyn Shapiro, sponsored by the William E. Wiener Oral History Library of the American Jewish Committee.

NOTES

1 In 1972, reapportionment changed Celler's district, extending the boundaries farther south. His constituency did not change dramatically. See Kenneth Martis, *The Historical Atlas of Political Parties in the United States Congress: 1789–1989* (New York: MacMillan, 1989); *Congressional Directory*, 92nd Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972); *Congressional Directory*, 93rd Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973).

2 Howard Kurtz, "The Private Public Prosecutor: Elizabeth Holtzman, Tough and Guarded as Brooklyn's DA," 27 October 1987, *Washington Post*: D1.

3 Susan Tolchin, *Women in Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976): 95.

4 "Liz the Lion Killer," *Time*, 3 July 1972, *Time*; see also, Hope Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members: Women in the U.S. Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1973): 353.

5 Lucia Johnson Leith, "In Congressional Races—'At Least 10 May Be Winners,'" 3 November 1972, *Christian Science Monitor*: 14; "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/index.html.

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9 "Miss Holtzman Will Seek to Set Up Panel on Tapes," 7 November 1974, *New York Times*: 26.

10 *Congressional Record*, House 95th Cong., 2nd sess. (11 April 1978): 9668–9669.

11 "The Women's Caucus, 20 and Roaring," 20 October 1997, *Washington Post*: C3.

12 Irwin N. Gertzog, *Congressional Women: Their Recruitment, Integration, and Behavior* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995): 185–187; and generally chapters 9 through 11.

13 Larry Steinberg, "The Long Haul for ERA—And Now, Division in the Ranks," 31 December 1977, *National Journal* 9(no.52–53): 2006.

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15 "Miss Holtzman Announces Bid for Javits's Senate Seat" 9 January 1980, *New York Times*: B1.

16 "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html.

17 Selwyn Raab and Dennis Hevesi, "Holtzman's 6 Years: Innovations and Antagonism," 5 January 1998, *New York Times*: B1; Kurtz, "The Private Public Prosecutor: Elizabeth Holtzman, Tough and Guarded as Brooklyn's DA."

18 Helen Dewar, "Political Sisterhood Sours in N.Y. Race: Bitter Rivalry of Ferraro, Holtzman Seen Benefiting Male Opponent," 13 September 1992, *Washington Post*: A21.

Barbara Jordan
1936–1996

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM TEXAS
1973–1979

During the Watergate impeachment investigation, a time when many Americans despaired about the Constitution and the country, Barbara Jordan emerged as an eloquent and powerful interpreter of the crisis. Her very presence on the House Judiciary Committee, as one of the first African Americans elected from the Deep South since 1898 and the first black woman ever from that region, lent added weight to her message.

Barbara Charline Jordan was born in Houston, Texas, on February 21, 1936, one of three daughters of Benjamin M. Jordan and Arlyne Patten Jordan. Benjamin Jordan, a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, worked in a local warehouse before becoming pastor of Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church, which his family had long attended. Arlyne Jordan was an accomplished public speaker. Barbara Jordan was educated in the Houston public schools and graduated from Phyllis Wheatley High School in 1952. She earned a B.A. from Texas Southern University in 1956 and a law degree from Boston University in 1959. That same year she was admitted to the Massachusetts and Texas bars, commencing practice in Houston in 1960. To supplement her income (her law office was, for a while, in her parents' home), she worked as an administrative assistant to a county judge.[1]

Barbara Jordan's political turning point came when she worked on the John F. Kennedy presidential campaign in 1960. She eventually helped manage a highly organized get-out-the-vote program that served the 40 African-American precincts in Houston. In 1962 and 1964, Jordan ran for the Texas house of representatives but lost both times. So, in 1966, she ran for the Texas senate when court-enforced redistricting created a district largely consisting of minority voters. Jordan won, defeating a white liberal and becoming the first African-American state senator since 1883 and the first black woman ever elected to that body.[2] The 30 other, male, white senators received her coolly. But Jordan won them over as an effective legislator who pushed through bills establishing the state's first minimum wage law, antidiscrimination clauses in business contracts, and the Texas Fair Employment Practices Commission. On March 28, 1972, Jordan's peers elected her president *pro tempore* of the Texas legislature, making her the first black woman in America to preside over a legislative body. In seconding the nomination, one of her male colleagues stood and singled Jordan out from across the chamber, spread his arms open, and said, "What can I say? Black is beautiful."[3] One of the functions of that job was to serve as acting governor when the governor and lieutenant governor were out of the state. When Jordan filled that largely ceremonial role on June 10, 1972, she became the first black chief executive in the nation.

In 1971, Jordan entered the race for the Texas congressional seat covering downtown Houston. The district had been redrawn after the 1970 Census and was composed of a predominantly African-American and Hispanic-American population. In the 1972 Democratic primary, Jordan faced Curtis Graves, another black state legislator, who attacked her for being too close to the white establishment. Jordan blunted Graves's charges with her legislative credentials. "I'm not going to Washington and turn things upside down in a day," she told supporters at a rally. "I'll only be one of 435. But the 434 will know I am there."[4] Jordan took the primary with 80 percent of the vote. In the general election, against Republican Paul Merritt, she won 81 percent of the vote. Along with Andrew Young of Georgia, Jordan became the first African American elected to

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Congress from the Deep South in the 20th century. In the next two campaign cycles, Jordan simply overwhelmed her opposition, capturing 85 percent of the total vote in both general elections.[5]

Congresswoman Jordan's political philosophy from her days in the state legislature led her to stick closely to local issues. Civil rights and women's rights activists sometimes criticized her when she chose to favor her community interests rather than theirs. She followed this pattern in the House. "I sought the power points," she once said. "I knew if I were going to get anything done, [the congressional and party leaders] would be the ones to help me get it done."[6] Jordan was reluctant to commit herself to any one special interest group or caucus, such as the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), of which she was a member. House women met informally too, but Jordan's attendance at those meetings was irregular, and she was noncommittal on most issues brought before the group. She was especially careful not to attach herself too closely to an agenda over which she had little control and which might impinge on her ability to navigate and compromise within the institutional power structure. "I am neither a black politician nor a woman politician," Jordan said in 1975. "Just a politician, a professional politician."[7]

In both her Texas legislative career and in the U.S. House, Jordan made the conscious decision to pursue power within the established system. One of her first moves in Congress was to establish relations with Members of the Texas delegation which, itself, had strong institutional connections. Her attention to influence inside the House was demonstrated by where she sat in the House Chamber's large, theatre-like arrangement. CBC members traditionally sat to the far left of the chamber. But Jordan chose the center aisle because she could hear better, be seen directly by the presiding officer, and save an open seat for colleagues who wished to stop and chat. Her seating preferences, as well as her loyalty to the Texas delegation, agitated fellow CBC members, but both fit perfectly into Jordan's model of seeking congressional influence.[8]

Jordan also believed that an important committee assignment, one in which she would be unique because of her gender and race, would magnify her influence. She, thus bypassed suggestions that she accept a seat on the Education and Labor Committee and pursued an assignment to the Judiciary Committee. Jordan, who had been a guest of fellow Texan Lyndon Johnson at the White House during her time as a state legislator, used that connection to secure this plum committee assignment. Securing President Johnson's intercession with Wilbur Mills of Arkansas, chairman of the Committee on Committees, she landed a seat on the Judiciary Committee, where she served for her three terms in the House. In the 94th and 95th Congresses (1975–1979), she also was assigned to the Committee on Government Operations.

It was as a freshman Member of the Judiciary Committee, however, that Jordan earned national notoriety. In the summer of 1974, as the committee considered articles of impeachment against President Richard M. Nixon for crimes associated with the Watergate Scandal, Jordan delivered opening remarks that shook the committee room and moved the large television audience tuned into the proceedings. "My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total," Jordan said. "I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution." She then laid out her reasoning behind her support of each of the five articles of impeachment against President Nixon. If her fellow committee members did not find the evidence compelling enough, she concluded, "then perhaps the eighteenth-century Constitution should be abandoned to a twentieth-century paper shredder."[9] Reaction to Jordan's statement was overwhelming. Jordan recalled that people swarmed around her car after the hearings to congratulate her. Impressed by her articulate reasoning and knowledge of the law, many people sent letters of praise to the Texas Congresswoman, with one person even resorting to a series of billboards in Houston declaring, "Thank you, Barbara Jordan, for explaining the Constitution to us."[10] The Watergate impeachment hearings helped transform Jordan into a recognizable and respected national politician.

From her first days in Congress, Jordan encouraged colleagues to extend the federal protection of civil rights to more Americans. She introduced civil rights amendments to legislation authorizing law enforcement assistance grants and joined seven other Members on the Judiciary Committee in opposing Gerald R. Ford's nomination as Vice President, citing what they considered to be a mediocre civil rights record. In 1975, when Congress voted to extend the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Jordan sponsored legislation which broadened the provisions of the act to include Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. Although she voted for busing to enforce racial desegregation in public schools she was one of the few African-American Members of Congress to question the utility of the policy.[11]

Jordan's talent as a speaker contributed more and more to her national profile. In 1976, she became the first woman, as well as the first African American, to keynote a Democratic Party National Convention. Appearing after a subdued speech by Ohio Senator John Glenn, Jordan energized the convention with her oratory. "We are a people in search of a national community," she told the delegates, "attempting to fulfill our national purpose, to create and sustain a society in which all of us are equal. . . . We cannot improve on the system of government, handed down to us by the founders of the Republic, but we can find new ways to implement that system and to realize our destiny."[12] Amidst the historical perspective of the national bicentennial year, and in the wake of the shattering experiences of the Vietnam War and Watergate, Jordan's message, like her commanding voice, resonated with Americans. She campaigned widely for Democratic presidential candidate James Earl "Jimmy" Carter, who defeated President Ford in the general election. Though Carter later interviewed Jordan for a Cabinet position, he was not prepared to give her the one post she said she would accept: U.S. Attorney General.

By 1978, downplaying reports about her poor health, Jordan nevertheless declined to run for what would have been sure re-election to a fourth term. She cited her "internal compass," which she said was pointing her in a direction "away from demands that are all consuming."[13] She also said she wanted to work more directly on behalf of fellow Texans. Jordan was appointed the Lyndon Johnson Chair in National Policy at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin, where she taught into the early 1990s. She continued to speak widely as a lecturer on national affairs. In 1988 and 1992,

"'We the People.' It is a very eloquent beginning. But when [the Constitution] was completed on the seventeenth of September in 1787 I was not included in that 'We the People.' I felt somehow for many years that George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, just left me out by mistake. But through the process of amendment, interpretation, and court decision I have finally been included in 'We the People.'"

—Barbara Jordan, statement to the house judiciary committee on impeachment of richard m. nixon, 25 january 1974

Jordan was especially careful not to attach herself too closely to an agenda over which she had little control and which might impinge on her ability to navigate and compromise within the institutional power structure. "I am neither a black politician nor a woman politician," she said in 1975. "Just a politician, a professional politician."

she delivered speeches at the Democratic National Convention. Her 1992 keynote address took place in the midst of a lengthy battle with multiple sclerosis; she delivered her speech from a wheelchair. And, in 1994, President William J. Clinton appointed her to lead the Commission on Immigration Reform, a bipartisan group that delivered its findings in September of that year. Jordan received nearly two dozen honorary degrees and, in 1990, was named to the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca, New York. She never married and carefully guarded her private life. Jordan died in Austin, Texas, on January 17, 1996, from pneumonia as a complication of leukemia.

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Texas Southern University (Houston, TX). *Papers:* 1966–1996, 462 linear feet. The papers are divided into three major groups: State Senate Papers, U.S. House of Representatives Papers, and Personal Papers. A finding aid is available in the repository and online: http://www.tsu.edu/about/ library/specialCollections.pdf. The processing of the papers has not yet been completed.

NOTES

1 For information on Jordan's early life, see *Barbara Jordan and Shelby Hearon, Barbara Jordan: A Self Portrait* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979) and Mary Beth Rogers, *Barbara Jordan: American Hero* (New York: Bantam Books, 1998).
2 *Current Biography, 1993* (New York: H.W. Wilson and Company, 1993): 291; Rogers, *Barbara Jordan*.
3 Richard Fenno, *Going Home: Black Representatives and Their Constituents* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press): 106–109.
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5 "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html.
6 Susan Tolchin, *Women in Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976): 96–97.
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9 Quotations from Barbara Jordan and Shelby Hearon, "Barbara Jordan: A Self-Portrait," 7 January 1979, *Washington Post*: A1.
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11 *Current Biography, 1993*: 291. See also, Tolchin, *Women in Congress*: 96–97.
12 *Current Biography, 1993*: 292.
13 Ibid.

Patricia S. Schroeder

1940–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM COLORADO

1973–1997

Though political rivals and some male colleagues at first dismissed her as "little Patsy," Pat Schroeder became the forceful doyenne of American liberals on issues ranging from arms control to women's reproductive rights during her 24-year House career. Congresswoman Schroeder's biting wit and political barbs—from her seat on the Armed Services Committee, she once told Pentagon officials that if they were women, they would always be pregnant because they never said "no"—helped to make her a household name and blazed a trail for a new generation of women onto Capitol Hill.[1]

Patricia Scott was born in Portland, Oregon, on July 30, 1940, daughter of Lee Scott, an aviation insurance salesman, and Bernice Scott, a public-school teacher. Her great-grandfather had served alongside William Jennings Bryan in the Nebraska legislature, lending a reform-populist cast to her political heritage. As part of a military family that moved from post to post, she was raised in Texas, Ohio, and Iowa. Pat Scott earned a pilot's license and operated her own flying service to pay her college tuition. She graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1961, a member of Phi Beta Kappa majoring in philosophy, history, and political science. She earned a J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1964, though, as one of just 15 women in a class of more than 500, she felt "submergedin sexism."[2] On August 18, 1962, she married a law school classmate, James Schroeder, and the couple moved to Denver, eventually rearing two children, Scott and Jamie.[3] While in law school, a professor told Schroeder that most corporations shunned women lawyers, so she took a job with the federal government for two years as a field attorney for the National Labor Relations Board. She later moved into private practice, taught law, and volunteered as counsel for Planned Parenthood.

Schroeder, at her husband's encouragement, entered the 1972 race for the predominantly Democratic but conservative congressional district encompassing most of Colorado's capital city of Denver. Running without the support of the state Democratic Party or the Democratic National Committee, Schroeder campaigned as an anti-Vietnam War candidate. When asked to explain the motivation behind her unlikely congressional bid, Schroeder replied, "Among other things the need for honesty in government." She added, "It's an issue that women can speak best to—and more should be given the chance."[4] Schroeder ran a grass-roots campaign that seemed as overmatched as those of her political idol, Adlai Stevenson; she believed she would "talk sense to the American people and lose."[5] Voters, however, embraced her antiwar, women's rights message. She beat out her Democratic primary opponent Clarence Decker by 4,000 votes and, in the general election, defeated first-term incumbent Republican Mike McKevitt with 52 percent of the vote. Schroeder was the first woman elected to Congress from Colorado, a state that had granted women the vote in 1893.[6] In her subsequent 11 elections, she rarely faced serious opposition, typically garnering more than 60 percent of the vote.[7]

Claiming her seat in Congress proved thornier than the campaign. One of only 14 women in the House of Representatives, Schroeder confronted a male-dominated institution that frowned not only on her feminist agenda but on her mere presence. She likened the atmosphere there to that of "an over-aged frat house."[8] One male colleague remarked, "This is about Chivas Regal, thousand-dollar bills, Lear jets and beautiful women. Why are you here?"[9] Another asked how she could be a mother of two small children and a Member of Congress at the same time.

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She replied, "I have a brain and a uterus and I use both."[10] Still another male colleague sneered, "I hope you aren't going to be a skinny Bella Abzug!"[11]

As the second-youngest woman ever elected to Congress (her Harvard Law School classmate Elizabeth Holtzman was the youngest, at 31) and the 32-year-old mother of a six- and a two-year-old, Schroeder received considerable attention from the media, her congressional colleagues, and the general public. Few other women had served in Congress while caring for such young children, and Schroeder did little to hide the fact that she was juggling two occupations, politician and mother. Known to keep diapers in her bag while on the floor of the House and crayons on her office coffee table, she bristled when criticized about her choice to undertake two careers. "One of the problems with being a working mother, whether you're a Congresswoman or a stenographer or whatever, is that everybody feels perfectly free to come and tell you what they think: 'I think what you're doing to your children is terrible.' 'I think you should be home.' They don't do that to men."[12] Although Schroeder defended her decision to run for political office while caring for her children, she did harbor some doubts early in her career. She recalled that shortly before beginning her first day on the job, she pondered, "My gosh, what's a mother like me doing here? I'm about to be sworn into Congress and I haven't even potty-trained my daughter."[13]

Schroeder received a rude introduction to the power of entrenched committee chairmen. She sought and earned a seat on the all-male Armed Services Committee because, according to the newly elected Congresswoman, "When men talk about defense, they always claim to be protecting women and children, but they never ask the women and children what they think."[14] Eager to identify and curb defense appropriations which, at the time, totaled nearly 40 percent of the national budget, Schroeder represented a minority viewpoint on the conservative Armed Services Committee.[15] Infuriated that a young woman sat on his committee, Chairman F. Edward Hébert of Louisiana, a Dixiecrat and 30-year veteran of Congress, made Schroeder share a chair with Ron Dellums, an African-American Democrat from California, during the organizational meeting for the committee. As Schroeder recalled, she and Dellums sat "cheek to cheek" because the chairman declared "that women and blacks were worth only half of one regular Member" and thus deserved only half a seat.[16] Dellums later commented that he and Schroeder acted as if sharing a chair was "the most normal thing in the world," in an effort to undermine Hébert's obvious attempt to make them uncomfortable. When Schroeder sought a spot on a delegation to a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty disarmament conference on chemical warfare, Hébert declined her request noting, "I wouldn't send you to represent this committee in a dogfight."[17] Undeterred, Schroeder and her Democratic Caucus colleagues managed to oust Hébert in 1975, during the height of congressional reform efforts which included rules changes that weakened the power of long-standing committee leaders. Schroeder remained on the panel throughout her congressional career.

Representative Schroeder quickly became a driving force in the 1970s and 1980s as Democrats sought to rein in Cold War expenditures. In unison with a more like-minded chairman, Les Aspin of Wisconsin, she fostered an era of Democratic defense budgets that, in Schroeder's estimate, supported "reasonable strength" rather than "unreasonable redundancy."[18] She also asserted herself as a major advocate for arms control, opposing, among other programs, the MX ("Missile Experimental") program. Arguing against the philosophy that the U.S. Air Force's mobile MX rockets would serve as a deterrent to nuclear war, Schroeder suggested instead that "everyone in the world would be more impressed if we didn't deploy the weapon and showed common sense."[19] Schroeder worked to improve benefits, health care, and living conditions for military personnel, crafting the 1985 Military Family Act and eventually chairing the Subcommittee on Military Installations. Toward the end of her career, she convinced the Armed Services Committee to recommend that women be allowed to fly combat missions. In 1991, Schroeder spearheaded demands for reform in the military after two highly publicized sexual harassment scandals:

Schroeder sought and earned a seat on the all-male Armed Services Committee because, according to the newly elected Congresswoman, "When men talk about defense, they always claim to be protecting women and children, but they never ask the women and children what they think."

the navy "Tailhook" and a later case involving an army sergeant's abuse of female recruits. Schroeder also served as spokesperson for those in Congress who believed that American allies should bear more of the global defense burden.

The area in which Schroeder specialized, however, was women's rights and reforms affecting the family. In many respects, she made these issues, shared by many middle-class Americans, the blueprint for her work: women's health care, child rearing, expansion of Social Security benefits, and gender equity in the workplace. She was a vocal pro-choice advocate and a supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1977, Schroeder cofounded the Congressional Women's Caucus, subsequently co-chairing it for 10 years. She helped pass the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act, which mandated that employers could not dismiss women employees simply because they were pregnant or deny them disability and maternity benefits. Later she created and chaired the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families (which was dismantled in 1995). She also served on the Judiciary Committee and the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, where she eventually chaired the Subcommittee on Civil Service. In 1993, Schroeder scored her biggest legislative successes with the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act and the National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act. For nearly a decade, she had toiled on the Family and Medical Leave Act, which in its final form provided job protection of up to 18 weeks of unpaid leave for the care of a newborn, sick child, or parent.

By the late 1980s, Schroeder was one of the most recognizable faces on Capitol Hill, battling Republicans on military spending, reproductive rights, or workplace reform measures. She became a master at using the media to publicize an issue, often in staunchly partisan terms. Schroeder dubbed President Ronald Reagan the "Teflon President," a reference to his popularity despite high-profile scandals such as the Iran-Contra Affair. She chaired Senator Gary Hart's presidential campaign in 1987 before it fell apart because of revelations of his marital infidelities. Incensed at Hart's behavior, Schroeder decided for a brief time to seek the Democratic nomination for President, promising a "rendezvous with reality" that would bring to center the issues of underrepresented Americans.[20] She broke down while announcing her withdrawal, however, spurring many feminists to charge her with undermining women's political advances with her emotional display. Those criticisms proved spurious, since in 1992 Schroeder, as the House's elder stateswoman, welcomed a record number of women elected in the "Year of the Woman." She described the event as an "American perestroika."[21]

Despite being the longest-serving woman in the House at the time of her retirement, Schroeder never chaired a full committee. In line to become chair of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, Schroeder lost the opportunity at a leadership position when Republicans eliminated the panel once they gained control of the House after a 40-year hiatus. As a Member of the minority party, Schroeder lost much of her institutional power base when the switch in power occurred in the 104th Congress (1995–1997). No longer the chair of any subcommittees, she also failed to earn the distinction of Ranking Democrat on any House committees.[22]

Though she held less political influence than in previous terms, Schroeder remained in the spotlight due to her public disputes with newly elected Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich of Georgia. On opposite ends of the political spectrum, both politicians looked to the media to promote the interests of their respective parties and clashed on an array of issues. Schroeder blamed Gingrich for impairing the clout of the Congressional Women's Caucus by dismantling its staff, and she was one of the key players in the ethics investigation against the Speaker during the mid-1990s. Apparently frustrated by the growing partisan nature of the House, Schroeder ignored the pleas of her husband and liberal colleagues to seek re-election for a 13th term, commenting, "I always said I wasn't going to be here for life, and life was ticking by."[23] Shortly before leaving office, Schroeder revealed her dissatisfaction with the progression of gender equality in Congress. "I think women still should never kid themselves that they're going to come [to Congress] and be part of the team.

And you ought to come here with a very clear definition of what it is you want to do, and that you will not be deterred. There's a whole group of little harpies out there every day trying to talk you out of it. They really don't want you pushing the envelope, because then it becomes choose-up-sides time for everybody."[24]

After a brief teaching stint at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Schroeder was appointed president and CEO of the Association of American Publishers in June 1997. She also was selected to lead a multi-year study for the Institute on Civil Society to identify and promote social programs to encourage social cohesion and restore a sense of community for Americans.

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Corinne Claiborne (Lindy) Boggs
1916-

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM LOUISIANA
1973–1991

When 14-term Representative and House Majority Leader Hale Boggs's airplane vanished without a trace over the vast Alaska landscape, Democratic leaders in Louisiana immediately turned to his wife, Corrine "Lindy" Boggs. After three decades of serving as her husband's political confidante, strategist, and surrogate campaigner, Lindy Boggs possessed more political acumen than any conceivable challenger. After winning a special election to succeed her husband, Congresswoman Boggs went on to serve 18 years in the House, becoming an advocate for women's equality, economic opportunity for minorities, and the preservation of House heritage.

Marie Corinne Morrison Claiborne was born in Pointe Coupee Roads, Louisiana, on March 13, 1916. Her father Roland Claiborne, a prominent lawyer, died when she was only two years old. She so resembled her father that she was nicknamed "Lindy," short for Rolinde, the French feminine version of Roland. Her mother, Corinne Morrison Claiborne, remarried several years later to George Keller, a cotton plantation owner. Lindy Claiborne's stepfather saw to it that she was educated by a series of private tutors. At age 15, Lindy Claiborne attended Newcomb College of Tulane University in New Orleans. A history and education major, she was an editor of the student newspaper, and in that capacity met her future husband, Hale Boggs, who was then the paper's general editor. She married her college sweetheart on January 22, 1938, a short time before he graduated from law school. After their wedding, Lindy Boggs focused her energy on supporting her husband's political career and raising three children: Barbara, Tommy, and Corrine ("Cokie").

Hale Boggs won election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1940. Lindy moved with her husband to become a member of his Washington, D.C., staff. Hale Boggs lost his 1942 re-election bid but later returned to the seat representing Jefferson Parish (including New Orleans), where he served continually from 1947 until his death in 1973. Lindy Boggs was his chief political adviser. She set up her husband's district office in New Orleans, orchestrated his re-election campaigns, canvassed voters, arranged for her husband's many social gatherings, and often acted as his political surrogate as demands on his time became greater the further he climbed in the House leadership.

By 1971, Hale Boggs had ascended to the House Majority Leader position and was widely expected to one day become Speaker. As the Majority Leader, he campaigned on behalf of other Democrats. On an October 1972 campaign trip in Alaska, Boggs's plane disappeared; the wreckage was never found. Hale Boggs won the re-election three weeks later, but the House was forced to declare the seat vacant on January 3, 1973. On January 12, Lindy Boggs announced her candidacy for the March 20 special election to fill the vacancy. At the time she noted, "I know the job and am humbled by its proportions."[1] In the February 3 Democratic primary, Boggs easily outpolled her nearest competitor by a nearly 4–1 margin.[2] Boggs received strong support from her late husband's colleagues. "She's the only widow I know who is really qualified—damn qualified—to take over," said the cantankerous Armed Services Chairman F. Edward Hébert of Louisiana.[3] In the special election, Boggs easily defeated Republican challenger Robert E. Lee, a lawyer from the

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Shortly after her first election to the House, when asked if she ever had doubts about running for her husband's seat, Boggs replied, "The only thing that almost stopped me was that I didn't know how I could do it without a wife."

New Orleans suburb of Gretna, by a count of 42,583 to 10,352 votes (an 80 percent margin).[4] Boggs's victory made her the first woman ever to represent Louisiana in the House (Rose Long and Elaine Edwards had previously served in the Senate). Shortly after the election, when asked if she ever had doubts about running for her husband's seat, Boggs replied, "The only thing that almost stopped me was that I didn't know how I could do it without a wife."[5]

Unlike most freshman Members, Lindy Boggs came to Congress thoroughly prepared for the challenge. Not only did she know Capitol Hill, she enjoyed long-standing personal relationships with virtually every committee chairman, some of whom owed their positions to her late husband. Knowing that most of committee assignments had already been made in January, shortly after her election, she asked Speaker Carl Albert of Oklahoma, which panels still had vacancies. Albert countered, "What committees do you want to be on?" She asked for a spot on the Committee on Banking and Currency, the same panel that Hale Boggs had served on in his freshman term. The House leadership created an extra seat on the committee to accommodate her request.[6] In the 94th Congress (1975–1977), Boggs also received an assignment to the Committee on House Administration. Beginning with the 95th Congress (1977–1979), she gave up both of those standing committee assignments for a seat on the Committee on Appropriations, becoming one of just a handful of women ever to serve on that powerful panel. She held that post until her retirement at the end of the 101st Congress (1989–1991). During her House career, Boggs was instrumental in creating the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families on which she served from the 99th through the 101st Congresses (1985–1991). As part of her duties on the select committee, she chaired the Crisis Intervention Task Force, which examined social and economic issues concerning American families.[7]

As a former history teacher, Lindy Boggs used her educational background to great effect as a lead member of other non-standing committees. She chaired two commemorative panels: the Joint Bicentennial Arrangements Committee (94th Congress, 1975–1977) and the Commission on the Bicentenary of the U.S. House (99th through the 100th Congresses, 1985–1989). In July 1987, she presided over a congressional meeting at Independence Hall in Philadelphia in commemoration of the Great Compromise of the Federal Convention.[8] Boggs's persistence eventually led to the creation of the House Historian's Office in the early 1980s. She also was instrumental in securing funding for the repair and upkeep of the historic Congressional Cemetery in Southeast Washington, D.C.

In 1977, Representative Boggs helped cofound the Congressional Woman's Caucus and later served as its secretary. As she perceived it, a Caucus was necessary to concentrate Congresswomen on common issues. "If we met regularly there would be mutual concerns that would be revealed that we may not think of as compelling now," she said.[9] Unlike other colleagues, she did not view the Caucus as a mechanism for battling discriminatory institutional practices; in fact, Boggs later claimed that she had never experienced discrimination as a woman in the House.

Nevertheless, Boggs considered herself a champion of women's issues and always maintained that the most important of these were economic rather than the more divisive and sensational social issues. "Almost all women's issues are economic issues, a stunning idea to those persons who want to hear about 'Great Women's Issues' and expect us to be preoccupied with the ERA or abortion or sexual harassment," she observed. "The major issues of importance that I've worked for are economic ones: equal rights for women in business, banking, and home ownership; the promotion of women in the workplace; better jobs in government contracts; and equal opportunities for higher education, especially in science and medicine. Women vote their pocketbooks . . . it boils down to that."[10] When the Banking and Currency Committee began to mark up the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974, Boggs noted it secured people from discrimination on the basis of "race and age, and their status as veterans." Her experience as a newly widowed woman seeking credit and managing her own finances convinced her that the words "or sex or mar-

ital status" should be added to that provision. Without informing the other Members, she inserted those words, walked to the photocopying machine, and made copies for her colleagues. "Knowing the Members composing this committee as well as I do, I'm sure it was just an oversight that we didn't have 'sex' or 'marital status' included," Boggs said after distributing the revisions. "I've taken care of that, and I trust it meets with the committee's approval." It did, passing unanimously 47–0.[11] A Roman Catholic, Boggs parted company with her women colleagues in 1977 to vote for the so-called Hyde Amendment, which barred Medicaid funding for abortions; Boggs was one of six House women out of a total of 18 who voted "Aye."[12] While this position opened her to criticism from reproductive rights groups, Boggs did support family planning legislation.

In 1976, Boggs became the first woman to preside over a national political convention when she chaired the Democratic National Convention that nominated James Earl "Jimmy" Carter for the presidency. In 1984, when Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale sought a vice presidential running mate, his party encouraged him to select a woman.[13] Boggs's name was added to a high-profile list of current, former, and future Members of Congress, including Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, future Senator Dianne Feinstein of California, Representative Pat Schroeder of Colorado, and former Representative Martha Griffiths of Michigan. Mondale eventually picked Boggs's House colleague, rising Democratic star Representative Geraldine Ferraro of New York. Observers believed that the choice of Ferraro had as much to do with her pro-abortion position (in contrast with Boggs), as it did her potential for delivering a larger electoral college state.[14] "[The party's] confidence was pleasing, but I knew that my age and my feelings regarding abortion . . . would preclude any serious consideration of me," Boggs later recalled. "I stayed within the mainstream of the consideration and talked to various groups, never about myself but always about the fact that a woman could be President or Vice President. I wanted people to remain interested in the possibility."[15] The possibility passed in 1984, however, when the Mondale–Ferraro ticket was handily defeated by the Ronald Reagan–George H.W. Bush team in November.

Representative Boggs had relatively few challenges in her eight re-election bids. Only three times, in 1974, 1976, and 1982, was she even opposed in the general election, winning each with margins of 61 to 93 percent of the vote.[16] The toughest challenge to Boggs's House career came in 1984, when her district was reapportioned in response to a federal court order to create the state's first majority-black congressional district. The redrawn district was 56 percent black and, in the primary, she faced Judge Israel M. Augustine, Jr., a longtime Boggs family friend. (In 1969, with the help of Hale Boggs, Augustine became the first African American to receive a state district judgeship in Louisiana history.) The candidates agreed on virtually every issue. Though the contest was friendly, it was animated largely by race, with Augustine framing the election as an opportunity for voters to elect the first black to Congress in state history. But the Boggs family had developed a loyal African-American constituency during its 40-year tenure in the House and, of great significance, New Orleans' first black mayor, Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial, refused to support either candidate; political observers noted that his neutrality benefited Boggs.[17] The incumbent won by a margin of 60 to 39 percent of the vote, polling more than one-third of the African-American vote. "I hope we've all laid to rest that the people in this city are ever divided about what's right . . . or what's good for this city," Boggs declared.[18] She was re-elected two more times in the district, defying conventional political wisdom. "She is the only white Congress Member representing a black voter majority in the United States," one political observer noted. "And she is more popular among blacks than among whites in that district, but she's also extremely popular among whites."[19]

In July 1990, at age 74, Lindy Boggs announced that she would not be a candidate for re-election to the 102nd Congress (1991–1993). Her daughter, Barbara, mayor of Princeton, New Jersey, was dying of cancer, and Boggs

hoped to spend more time with her. Barbara succumbed to the disease in November 1990. After leaving Congress in January 1991, Lindy Boggs did not retire from the political spotlight. She maintained homes in Washington, D.C., and New Orleans, and wrote her autobiography. The House named a room off the Rotunda for her, the Lindy Claiborne Boggs Congressional Women's Reading Room, in July 1991.[20] In 1997, President William J. Clinton appointed the 81-year-old as U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, where she served until 2001. In July 2002, Congress honored Boggs for "her extraordinary service" to Louisiana and the country. The occasion marked the 25th anniversary of the Congressional Women's Caucus.

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Cardiss Collins

1931-

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM ILLINOIS
1973–1997

By the end of her congressional career, Cardiss Collins was the longest-serving black woman in the history of Congress. She served 12 consecutive terms, a decade of which she was the only African-American woman in Congress. After succeeding her late husband, George Collins, in the House of Representatives after his death in 1972, Cardiss Collins continued his legacy as a loyal politician in the Chicago Democratic organization under the direction of Mayor Richard Daley. As one of a handful of women to serve in Congress for more than 20 years, Representative Collins evolved into a dedicated legislator who focused on the economic and social needs of her urban district.

Cardiss Hortense Robertson was born on September 24, 1931, in Saint Louis, Missouri, to Finley, a laborer, and Rosia Mae Robertson, a nurse. Upon graduating from the Detroit High School of Commerce in Michigan, she began work in a factory tying mattress springs, while living with her maternal grandmother in Chicago. She later found employment as a stenographer at a carnival equipment company. Her drive for advancement pushed her to attend night classes at Northwestern University, where she earned a business certificate in 1966 and a diploma in professional accounting one year later.[1] After graduation, Cardiss Robertson remained in Chicago, where she worked for the Illinois department of labor as a secretary and later with the Illinois department of revenue. She worked for the latter office as an auditor until her election to Congress.

Robertson gained her first political experience in the party organization of Chicago, when she served as a committeewoman for the ward regular Democratic organization. In 1958 she married George Washington Collins and participated in his various campaigns for alderman, committeeman, and U.S. Representative, while raising their son Kevin.[2] On November 3, 1970, George Collins won a special election to fill a U.S. House seat representing Chicago, which became vacant after the death of Illinois Representative Daniel J. Ronan. In his one term in Congress, he served on the House Government Operations and Public Works committees. As a World War II veteran, the Democratic Congressman worked to improve the conditions of African Americans serving in the military. Known as a diligent but quiet Member who rarely spoke on the House Floor, Collins had close political ties to Richard Daley.[3]

In December 1972, shortly after George Collins won election to his second term in Congress, he died in an airplane crash near Chicago's Midway Airport. His widow later recalled, "I never gave politics a thought for myself. When people started proposing my candidacy right after the crash, I was in too much of a daze to think seriously about running."[4] Collins overcame her initial reluctance, however, and announced her candidacy for the special election to fill the vacant congressional seat that encompassed the predominantly African-American west side of Chicago.[5] Created in the apportionment of 1947, the inner-city district was one of five congressional seats located in Chicago, each of which was a product of the local political machine.[6] With the solid backing of Mayor Daley's Cook County Democratic organization, Collins handily defeated her opponents Otis Collins, a former state representative, and Milton Gardner, a Columbia University law student, in the Democratic primary, winning 84 percent of the vote.[7] On June 5, 1973, she became the first African-American woman to represent the state

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of Illinois in Congress by defeating Republican contender Lar Daly and Angel Moreno, an Independent, in convincing fashion, with 92 percent of the vote.[8]

Although anxious to continue the work begun by her husband in Congress, Collins admittedly had much to learn about her new job. Her lack of political experience, made worse by entering office midterm, led to unfamiliarity with congressional procedures. During her early tenure, Collins often relied upon her colleagues in the House to assist her in learning more about the basic rules of Congress. Collins also had to overcome her reserved demeanor. A few years after taking office, she noted that "once people learned I had something to say, I gained confidence."[9]

During her first term in Congress, Collins served on the Committee on Government Operations (later Government Reform and Oversight). As a member of the panel throughout her tenure in Congress, Collins chaired two Government Operations subcommittees: Manpower and Housing and Government Activities and Transportation. As chair of the latter subcommittee from 1983 to 1991, Collins worked to improve air travel safety and fought for stricter controls on the transportation of toxic materials. She eventually rose to the position of Ranking Democrat of the full committee during the 104th Congress (1995–1997). Collins also served on the Committee on International Relations (later Foreign Affairs) from 1975 to 1980, the District of Columbia Committee during the 95th Congress (1977–1979), and the influential Committee on Energy and Commerce (later Commerce) from the 97th through the 104th Congresses (1981–1997). Collins also earned distinction as the first African American and woman selected as a Democratic Whip At-Large.

Four years after taking office in 1973, Collins commented that her primary objective as a Congresswoman was to "provide better living and working conditions for people [on Chicago's west side] and other low and moderate income people throughout the country." Known for her commitment to the issues directly affecting her constituents, Collins spent eight days each month in her district to ensure she stayed abreast of the concerns of her voters.[10] The close attention she paid to her district reaped benefits at the polls. For more than two decades, Collins won by comfortable margins in the strongly Democratic district, typically defeating her Republican opponents by more than 80 percent.[11] Collins did, however, experience some difficult primary races during the mid-1980s—a consequence of the declining power of the Cook County Democratic organization that accelerated with the death of Daley in 1976.[12] She proved resilient without the influential machine that helped launch her congressional career; devoid of such strict local party control, Collins had the ability to develop as a politician and pursue her own legislative interests.

Collins increased both her presence and notoriety in the House when she assumed the role of chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) during the 96th Congress (1979–1981). As the second woman to hold the leadership position in the CBC and as the fourth black woman ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives, Collins found herself in the spotlight. The high visibility encouraged her to become more outspoken. At one fundraiser, for instance, Collins voiced the growing disillusionment of the CBC when she declared, "We will no longer wait for political power to be shared with us, we will take it."[13] Members of the CBC praised Collins, citing her ability to lead with fairness and to create an atmosphere that encouraged unity through debates rather than arguments.[14] As leader of the CBC, Collins voiced disapproval with President James Earl "Jimmy" Carter's record on civil rights. She criticized the President for not gathering enough congressional support to pass legislation making the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., a federal holiday. Collins also disparaged the House for its failure to pass the bill, alleging that "racism had a part in it."[15]

Throughout her 24 years in Congress, Collins dedicated herself to the advancement of African Americans and other minorities. According to Collins, some federal agencies, such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Federal Trade Commission, and the U.S. Justice Department, were not upholding the provisions of the Civil Rights Act requiring agencies that received federal funding to provide

Collins commented that her primary objective as a Congresswoman was to "provide better living and working conditions for people [on Chicago's west side] and other low and moderate income people throughout the country."

information on the scheduling of their affirmative action programs. As the result of her 1985 findings as the chair of the House's Subcommittee on Government Activities and Transportation, she called for Congress to curb funding to the specific agencies, arguing, "Laws that have been debated and passed by the courts cannot arbitrarily be negated by individuals." In the 1980s, she continued her defense of affirmative action by drawing attention to the hiring practices of U.S. airlines, which rarely placed African Americans in professional positions.[16] Congresswoman Collins's push for equality in the aviation industry helped pave the way for an amendment to the Airport and Airway Safety, Capacity, and Expansion Act of 1987, requiring that 10 percent of all concession stands in airports be run by minority- and women-owned businesses.

Collins also worked to prevent federal tax write-offs for advertising firms that discriminated against minority-owned media companies. Hoping to "provide black and other minority station owners with a mechanism for redress," Collins argued that financial penalties for offending agencies would help combat discrimination and level the playing field for all media organizations. She crusaded against gender and racial inequality in broadcast licensing as well. On several occasions, Collins introduced legislation to preserve Federal Communications Commission policies designed to increase the number of women and minorities owning media companies.[17]

In an effort to promote equal opportunities for women in sports at colleges and universities, Collins introduced the Equality in Athletic Disclosure Act on February 17, 1993. The amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965 directed colleges and universities to publicize the rate of program participation by gender. In recognition of her commitment to gender equity in athletics, Collins was inducted into the Women's Sports Hall of Fame in 1994.[18] Collins also cosponsored the Universal Health Care Act and the Health Security Act in 1993 and urged the National Institutes of Health to focus on the health issues that concern minorities, since "little use has been made of studies on minority prone diseases despite the significant disproportionate array of health conditions."[19] A longtime advocate of increasing breast cancer awareness, Collins drafted legislation to help elderly and disabled women receive Medicare coverage for mammograms and introduced a law designating October as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Collins declined to run for re-election to the 105th Congress (1997–1999). Vowing to remain active in Democratic politics, she nonetheless decided that the time had come to end her career in elective office. Collins cited age as a principal motivation for leaving office, telling reporters, "I'm going to be 65 next year, and that's the time many people retire."[20] After the completion of her last term, she returned to Chicago, Illinois, and, later, moved to Alexandria, Virginia.

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Millicent Fenwick

1910–1992

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEW JERSEY
1975–1983

Millicent Fenwick, an outspoken patrician who served four terms in the U.S. House, earned the epithet "Conscience of Congress" with her fiscal conservatism, human right's advocacy, and dedication to campaign finance reform. Fenwick's blueblood mannerisms, which were inspiration for a popular comic strip character, belied her lifelong commitment to liberal activism on behalf of consumers, racial minorities, and women's rights. Representative Fenwick's humor and independence—she voted against her House GOP colleagues 48 percent of the time—made her one of the most colorful Members of Congress during the 1970s.[1]

Millicent Vernon Hammond was born in New York City, on February 25, 1910. Her father, Ogden Haggerty Hammond, was a wealthy financier and New Jersey state legislator; her mother, Mary Picton Stevens Hammond, died aboard the U.S.S. *Lusitania* in 1915 after a German U-boat torpedoed the ship.[2] Millicent Hammond attended the elite Foxcroft School in Middleburg, Virginia, from 1923 until 1925. She then accompanied her father to Madrid when President Calvin Coolidge appointed him U.S. Ambassador to Spain. In 1929, she attended Columbia University and later studied with the philosopher Bertrand Russell at the New School for Social Research. In 1934, Hammond married businessman Hugh Fenwick, and they raised two children, Mary and Hugh. The Fenwicks separated four years later, however; they eventually divorced in 1945. Millicent Fenwick refused financial assistance from her family and, instead, found a job to support her children. She modeled briefly for *Harper's Bazaar* and then took a job as associate editor on the staff of Condé Nast's *Vogue* magazine. From 1938 to 1952, Fenwick worked on several Nast publications.[3] In 1948, she wrote *Vogue's Book of Etiquette*, a 600-page "treatise in proper behavior." It sold more than a million copies. Fenwick left *Vogue* in 1952 and inherited a fortune when her father passed away a few years later.

Fenwick's earliest encounter with political issues came during the 1930s with the rise of fascism in Europe. "Hitler started me in politics; when I became aware of what he was doing to people, I fired up," she recalled.[4] She joined the National Conference of Christians and Jews in an attempt to counter anti-Semitic propaganda in the United States, speaking out in public for the first time in her life. Fenwick served on the Bernardsville, New Jersey, board of education from 1938 to 1947. She supported Wendell Willkie for President in 1940 and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1946. She worked on the 1954 campaign of Republican Senate candidate Clifford Case. She also chaired the Somerset County Legal Aid Society and the Bernardsville Recreation Commission. From 1958 to 1964, she was a member of the Bernardsville borough council and served on the New Jersey committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1958 to 1972. Her first campaign for state office was in 1970 when she won a seat in the New Jersey assembly at the age of 59. Fenwick served several years in the assembly before New Jersey Governor William Cahill appointed her the state's first director of consumer affairs. She sought to restrict auto dealers' misleading advertising and to require funeral homes to offer advance itemization of bills.

In 1974, when her friend Peter Frelinghuysen decided to retire from the affluent congressional district in north central New Jersey which he had held for 22 years, Fenwick entered the race for his open seat. In the June GOP primary

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Elegant and patrician, speaking in a raspy voice, Fenwick nevertheless connected with average people. A longtime aide described her as "the Katharine Hepburn of politics. With her dignity and elegance, she could get away with saying things others couldn't."

for the most solidly Republican district in New Jersey, Fenwick narrowly defeated another friend and close ideological counterpart, Assemblyman Thomas Kean, the future governor of New Jersey, polling a margin of 76 votes out of nearly 25,000 cast.[5] In the general election, she campaigned on a liberal platform: civil rights, consumer rights, campaign finance, and public housing assistance.[6] Fenwick handily defeated her Democratic opponent, Frederick Bohen, by a 53 percent to 43 percent margin. At the age of 64, Fenwick became one of a handful of women elected to Congress past their 60th birthdays; the press dubbed her victory a "geriatric triumph."[7] Subsequently, Fenwick won increasingly large majorities, making her one of New Jersey's most popular officials.[8]

Fenwick's wry humor and idiosyncrasies quickly made her one of the most recognizable faces in American politics. Once, during a debate in the New Jersey assembly over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), a colleague told her: "I just don't like this amendment. I've always thought of women as kissable, cuddly and smelling good." Fenwick retorted, "That's the way I feel about men, too. I only hope for your sake that you haven't been disappointed as often as I have."[9] Elegant and patrician, speaking in a raspy voice, she nevertheless connected with average people. One of her trademark habits was pipe smoking, which she adopted when her doctor warned her to curb her cigarette intake. Her refined mannerisms, coupled with her outspokenness and wit, made her both appealing and the object of public curiosity. Garry Trudeau, the creator of the socially satirical *Doonesbury* cartoon, drew inspiration from Fenwick for one of the strip's most popular characters, Lacey Davenport. A longtime aide described Fenwick as "the Katharine Hepburn of politics. With her dignity and elegance, she could get away with saying things others couldn't."[10] In Congress, she counted among her close friends the equally colorful Bella Abzug of New York; both were drawn to their shared commitment to women's rights.[11] Subsequently, supporters and detractors alike nicknamed Fenwick the "Bella Abzug of Somerset County."

During four terms in the House, Fenwick served on several committees. She was first assigned to the Committee on Banking, Currency, and Housing and the Committee on Small Business. She also served on the Committee on the District of Columbia, the Committee on Education and Labor, and the Select Committee on Aging. Though she was fluent in three languages and more cosmopolitan than the vast majority of her colleagues, it took her years to convince House leaders to let her onto the Committee on Foreign Affairs. But she persisted in her efforts, and they relented, giving her a seat in 1979. Though committee work engaged her, Fenwick also was renowned for the amount of time she spent on the House Floor listening to debate, always from her perch in the third row back on the Republican side of the center aisle. She once explained her rationale to a woman colleague: "Get to know [your colleagues], not only in committee, but on the floor when debates are going on. It is then you can learn to judge those whose opinions you can trust, and whose opinions you must be skeptical of. Be able to evaluate them."[12]

Fiscal conservatism, for Fenwick an extension of civic responsibility and her personal frugality, shaped a large portion of her House agenda. She was an early and consistent advocate for ending the so-called "marriage-tax penalty," a higher income tax that occurred when two wage earners married and filed a joint return instead of separate returns. "Under the present law, if the wife decides to work to help support the family, her first dollar of income will be taxed at the same rate as the last dollar earned by her husband. In effect, her income will be taxed at a much higher rate," Fenwick explained.[13] During her four terms in the House, Fenwick returned more than $450,000 in unspent office allowances to the U.S. Treasury. Likewise, she returned $35,000 in congressional pay raises that made her feel uncomfortable.[14]

Although she was a fiscal conservative, on other matters Fenwick differed from many of her Republican colleagues. She supported women's issues such as the ERA, federal funding for abortions, and the food stamp program. At the 1976 Republican National Convention in Kansas City, Fenwick successfully fought to keep the ERA plank in the party's platform.[15] In 1980, when the GOP dropped its 40-year support for ERA, a reporter asked Fenwick to

describe her feelings. "Absurd is the only word," she scoffed.[16] Fenwick, a founding member of the Congressional Women's Caucus, eventually withdrew from the group because of its increasing partisanship. "I don't like to act only on behalf of women," she explained. "Wherever injustice occurs, we all need to be concerned."[17]

A champion of human rights, Fenwick worked vigorously to create the 1975 Helsinki Agreement on Human Rights, which investigated human rights abuses behind the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In particular, she wrote the bill that established the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which monitored implementation of the Helsinki Accords. She later described that work as her proudest achievement in Congress. She also questioned American foreign aid policy to authoritarian regimes during the Cold War and was particularly disturbed by Iraqi ties to Middle East terrorist groups, Zambia's military arms trade with the Soviets, and repressive practices and human rights violations in Mozambique.[18]

Fenwick extended her promise to pursue campaign finance reform into a sustained appeal to House colleagues to dedicate themselves to rehabilitating the image of Washington politics, damaged in the mid-1970s by the Watergate Crisis and congressional scandals. In 1976, she demanded the overhaul of the campaign finance system, having become alarmed at the influence of powerful donors on voting patterns. "When every candidate is asked—repeatedly—which organizations he or she had accepted money from, and how much, I think we will begin to see some changes," Fenwick wrote. "Candidates will see that voters care. . . . We have a sturdy governmental system—Thomas Jefferson called it 'the strongest government on earth.' But no system can withstand this kind of abuse forever."[19] She also spoke out against the widespread practice of Members using their franking privileges to send out campaign mailings.[20] Fenwick served on the Ethics Committee during the investigation of Tongsun Park's attempts to influence Members of Congress, the so-called "Koreagate" affair. For her independence and determination to speak her mind, the CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite soon took to calling Fenwick the "Conscience of Congress."[21] "I suppose the hope of furthering justice is really my main thing," Fenwick said during an introspective moment. "I think about my town, my district, my state, my country, my planet, and then I think we're all in this together and somehow we've got to try to work out a just and a peaceful society."[22]

In 1982, the 72-year-old Fenwick chose to forgo certain re-election to her House seat to seek a U.S. Senate seat vacated when longtime Senator Harrison Williams of New Jersey resigned his office in the wake of his conviction on bribery charges related to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Abscam sting.[23] When she was not appointed to the post to fill out the remainder of Williams's term, Fenwick chose to run for the full term in the next Congress. She faced millionaire businessman Frank Lautenberg, who portrayed Fenwick as an "eccentric," out of touch with New Jersey voters. Fenwick remained unruffled and true to her style, scolding her opponent: "How can you be so awfully naughty?"[24] Early on, Fenwick was favored to win, but Lautenberg outspent her by a wide margin.[25] Refusing to accept money from any political action committees or corporate donors because it might stymie her independence, Fenwick noted, "Nobody pressures me! And nobody has the right to . . . say, 'We supported you, didn't we? You'd better vote for this.'"[26] But high unemployment and dissatisfaction with the Ronald W. Reagan administration's economic policies worked against the GOP candidate; Lautenberg won 51 to 48 percent.[27] The day after her defeat, the *Washington Post* took note of Fenwick's protest about the cost of the campaign. She spent nearly $3 million to Lautenberg's $5.5 million. "She fought the good fight," the *Post* editors wrote, "and she went out the same way she came in: with class."[28]

After Fenwick left office in January 1983, President Reagan appointed her to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, where she served as United States Representative with rank of ambassador from 1983 to 1985. Millicent Fenwick retired to Bernardsville, where she lived until her death on September 16, 1992.

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Martha Elizabeth Keys

1930–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM KANSAS

1975–1979

In many respects, Kansas Representative Martha Keys's two-term House career provides a window on a transitional moment in the story of women in Congress. As a freshman in 1975, Keys benefited from significant institutional changes that helped land her a plum assignment on one of the House's most powerful committees. Simultaneously, however, her divorce from her husband of 25 years (and marriage to a House colleague) tested the limits of public aversion to turmoil in the personal lives of their elected officials and highlighted long-standing social double standards to which women were held.

On August 10, 1930, Martha Elizabeth Ludwig was born to S.T. and Clara Krey Ludwig in Hutchinson, Kansas. Martha Ludwig graduated from Paseo High School in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1945. She attended Olivet College in Kankakee, Illinois, from 1946 to 1948. Ludwig received her A.B. in music from the University of Missouri in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1951. In 1949, Martha Ludwig married Sam Keys, a university professor and later the dean of education at Kansas State University, and they raised four children: Carol, Bryan, Dana, and Scott. In 1973, Keys served as co-chair of the Manhattan–Riley (Kansas) County United Way campaign and also was appointed to a special committee that examined the city's recreational needs. Keys's brother-in-law, Gary Hart, a campaign aide to presidential candidate George McGovern, persuaded her to join the McGovern campaign in 1972. Then a 42-year-old housewife with limited political experience—as a volunteer coordinator in the 1964 and 1968 presidential campaigns—Martha Keys eventually ran the McGovern campaign in Kansas. Though McGovern lost the state by a wide margin, Keys's tact and organizational skills left a positive impression with many Democrats.[1]

In 1974, when Gary Hart launched his successful campaign for Colorado senator, Keys announced her intention to seek a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives vacated by Representative William Roy. The two-term Democratic incumbent left the House to challenge incumbent Robert Dole for a U.S. Senate seat. The district was traditionally Republican-leaning, and the GOP considered the seat to be highly competitive. Only once since the Civil War had the district's voters sent a Democrat to Congress for more than one term, and that was Congressman Roy.[2] On a shoestring budget, Keys defeated four men in the Democratic primary. "You have to overcome the woman thing," she told a reporter during the campaign. "I think being a woman is basically beneficial in this campaign. It helps you get the attention you need. It's up to you to keep it."[3] In the general election Keys faced a 26-year-old GOP state legislator, John C. Peterson. The candidates conducted a series of debates on inflation, campaign reform, and government spending. Keys, while supporting social programs, also stressed federal fiscal responsibility. In particular, she tried to connect with ordinary housewives. Both candidates stuck to the issues and avoided personal attacks, and Keys spent only $75,000 total for her operations. One reporter for a national newspaper described the campaign as "a model of what American campaigning could be—but rarely is."[4] Voters chose Keys by a 55 to 44 percent majority.[5]

Keys entered Congress at a time when a series of post-Watergate institutional reforms re-ordered many of the traditions and power structures within the House. When Democrats gathered just before the start of the 94th Congress (1975–1977), they agreed to name two freshmen to the Ways and Means and the Appropriations committees.

CONGRESSIONAL PICTORIAL DIRECTORY, 95TH CONGRESS

Longtime Ways and Means Chairman Wilbur Mills of Arkansas stepped down and the committee lost its role of assigning Democrats to committees to the Steering and Policy Committee. Keys directly benefited from these changes, becoming only the second woman, and one of only a handful of freshman Members in House history, who received an assignment on Ways and Means.[6] Keys served on two of its subcommittees: Health and Unemployment Compensation. Ways and Means was her only assignment, and she retained it for the duration of her House career.

During her first term, Keys was a strong supporter of the Title IX Amendment to create equal opportunities for female athletes at both the high school and college level. Title IX prohibited institutions that received federal funding from practicing gender discrimination in educational programs or activities. Although Congress had approved the basis for Title IX legislation in 1972 and President Richard M. Nixon signed it into law in 1973, lawmakers needed several more years to hammer out the details. After a trial period in which suggested modifications were incorporated, President Gerald R. Ford submitted revised regulations to Congress in May 1975. When she arrived in Washington in 1975, Keys recalled, there was "the heavy lobbying going on" and "it was very dramatic." She remembered being lobbied by major college sports coaches for a variety of men's teams who opposed the bill on the basis that it would drain money from men's programs.[7] Undeterred, Keys and other women Members worked across party lines to pass the new provisions. In high schools alone, the number of women in sports programs increased dramatically over the next quarter century—from fewer than 300,000 in 1971 to more than 2.4 million in 1996.[8]

Keys used her Ways and Means seat to help broaden women's economic base for equality. Along with Representative Don Fraser of Minnesota, Keys sponsored a measure that provided Social Security coverage for women who had spent their lives working in the home rather than in paying jobs.[9] The bill stipulated that in determining Social Security credits, all earnings should be split between husband and wife and credited to separate old-age pension accounts, specifically seeking special protections for women following a divorce. Keys observed that "the structure of the [Social Security] system was based upon a different time and a different era. It is based upon the idea that most workers are male and most workers support women and children. In today's life that is no longer true . . . these needs should be recognized in a restructuring of our system."[10]

During her first term, Keys's personal life made national headlines when she divorced her husband Sam and married Democratic Congressman Andrew Jacobs, Jr., of Indiana. Keys and Jacobs had met on the Ways and Means Committee. After Keys's divorce became official in July 1975, the couple announced their engagement and were married a year later. Their union marked the first time in history that two Members of Congress married while serving together.[11]

Some observers expected the 1976 election to be a referendum on Keys's divorce and Middle America's attitude toward the personal problems of elected officials. One prominent Kansas Republican openly worried, "I don't think Kansas wants a Representative who lives in Washington and is married to an Indianan."[12] Keys maintained there was a double standard at work: No one expressed similar concerns about her husband's ability to carry out his duties. "Our voting records are very different," she pointed out. "We are both totally committed in our own way to the public interest."[13] Keys spoke frankly with voters: "Marriage isn't a good reason to oppose me politically."[14] The couple maintained separate residences in their respective districts and shared a Washington, D.C., home. Keys's GOP opponent, Ross Freeman, an attorney and insurance company executive, insisted that he would not make a campaign issue of the "tragedy of divorce." Freeman prominently displayed pictures of his family on campaign literature, however, and made frequent indirect references to Keys's marital problems by advertising his "deep family ties to Kansas." He also campaigned on a platform that called for curbing social programs, balancing the federal budget, and boosting defense spending.[15] The incumbent carried the district, but not by much—fewer than

6,000 votes out of 150,000 cast, for a 52 to 48 percent edge.[16]

In the 1978 election Keys was initially favored in her general election race against conservative Republican businessman and World War II veteran Jim Jeffries. But Jeffries ran an aggressive campaign that focused on Keys's liberal voting record and suggested that she was no longer in tune with the district's voters. He also raised and spent more than his Democratic opponent, producing radio ads in which a New York resident offered a "thank you" to Keys for voting with other Democrats to give millions of dollars in loan guarantees to New York City.[17] Keys lost 52 to 48 percent, as House Democrats lost 15 seats in the midterms. Shortly thereafter, she and Jacobs sought a divorce.[18]

After Keys left Congress in January 1979, President Jimmy Carter appointed her as special adviser to the Secretary of Education and Welfare from 1979 to 1980. She served from June 1980 to January 1981 as assistant secretary of education. During the balance of the 1980s and 1990s, Keys remained involved with education issues as a consultant with several Washington-based firms.[19] In 1990, she and several other former Members of Congress created the Council for the National Interest, a nonprofit that sought to highlight issues important to Palestinians. Martha Keys remained invested in the social development of young women. More than two decades after helping to extend Title IX legislation, she observed, "It's exciting to see the opportunities girls and women have now. I see my own granddaughter involved in all kinds of sports."[20]

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6 Mary Russell, "Rep. Mills Gives Up Hill Post," 11 December 1974, *Washington Post*: A1; Richard D. Lyons, "Ways and Means in Liberal Shift," 12 December 1974, *New York Times*: 38; Eileen Shanahan, "Ways and Means Panel Enters a New and Open Era," 11 February 1975, *New York Times*: 1.
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Marilyn Lloyd

1929–

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM TENNESSEE

1975–1995

Personal tragedy brought Marilyn Lloyd into the House of Representatives where, for 20 years, she represented the science and technology interests of her Tennessee district. When her husband, Mort Lloyd, died shortly after winning a Democratic nomination to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1974, local leaders named Marilyn Lloyd to succeed him as the party candidate, despite the fact that she had no elective experience. When she defeated the GOP incumbent, Lloyd won a string of relatively easy re-election campaigns. But her political fortunes were tied to the fate of several large federal projects in the district as well as its shift toward a more competitive makeup in the early 1990s.

Rachel Marilyn Laird was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, on January 3, 1929, daughter of James Edgar Laird and Iva Mae (Higginbotham) Laird. Marilyn Laird attended schools in Texas and Kentucky and studied at Shorter College in Rome, Georgia. She married Mort Lloyd, who eventually became a well-known Chattanooga, Tennessee, television newsman. The couple raised three children: Nancy, Mari, and Mort. Marilyn Lloyd and her husband owned and managed WTTI, a radio station in Dalton, Georgia, and an aviation company in Tennessee.

Mort Lloyd ran for Congress in 1974 as the Democratic candidate in a southern Tennessee district including Chattanooga, but was killed just weeks after securing the nomination when the light airplane he was piloting crashed. The district's Democratic leaders convinced Marilyn Lloyd to run in her husband's place. Her supporters wore buttons from her husband's campaign with a piece of black tape covering "Mort," leaving visible the words "Lloyd for Congress."[1] When her principal competitor, Chattanooga millionaire Franklin Haney, dropped out of contention rather than split the party, Lloyd's nomination was sealed. Though she had no prior political experience and was running in a district that regularly voted Republican in presidential elections, Lloyd benefited from public backlash against the Watergate Scandal. She unseated two-term incumbent Republican Lamar Baker with 51 percent of the vote.

For her entire career, Lloyd served on the Committee on Science, Space and Technology, which had jurisdiction over much of the legislation related to the atomic energy facilities at Oak Ridge in her district. During the 97th Congress (1981–1983), she began chairing the Subcommittee on Energy Research and Development—a post she held until she retired from Congress in 1995, when she was the second-ranking Democrat of the full committee. Lloyd also served on the Committee on Public Works (later Public Works and Transportation) from the 94th through the 99th Congresses (1975–1987). From the 98th Congress through the 103rd Congress (1983–1995), she had a seat on the Armed Services Committee, serving on its Subcommittee on Military Acquisition. Lloyd also served on the House Select Committee on Aging for much of her congressional career, and was appointed chair of its Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests in January 1990. In 1978, Lloyd married engineer Joseph P. Bouquard, and she served for several Congresses under the name Bouquard. In 1983 the couple divorced, and she went back to using the name Marilyn Lloyd. In 1991, she married Robert Fowler, a physician.[2]

Lloyd had a voting record that largely was moderate on social and economic issues but hawkish on defense and foreign policy matters.[3] In 1979, she successfully steered through the House legislation for completion of the con-

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

troversial Tellico Dam in Tennessee, despite President James Earl "Jimmy" Carter's threat to veto the bill because of the danger the dam might pose to the snail darter fish.[4] In 1989 Lloyd was elected as the first woman to chair the Congressional Textile Caucus. She advocated for textile quotas to make American garment makers more competitive against overseas manufacturers. "I think the textile issue is a women's issue," Lloyd said. "Clearly there are more women employed in textile-apparel production than there are men. You have women with only one skill, who do not have the education that allows them to transfer to another occupation. Many of these women are also the breadwinners in their families."[5] However, when the Congressional Women's Caucus was founded in 1977, Lloyd was one of three women Members who did not join, citing the fact that she felt she did not have the time to make the commitment. Patricia Schroeder, a Caucus cofounder, speculated that Lloyd and Republicans Marjorie Holt of Maryland and Virginia Smith of Nebraska might have been hesitant to join because they would be "labeled" as feminists.[6] Yet, relatively late in her congressional career, Lloyd began to advocate women's issues. In 1992, she spoke out about accusations of sexual abuse in the military, noting, "Men must accept women as human beings, not sex objects."[7] Her own experience with breast cancer led her to work for the Breast Cancer Screening Safety Act and to introduce the Breast Implant Informed Decision Act. It was her experience in seeking treatment for her cancer which led her to switch to a pro-choice position on abortion in 1992. "I have had to fight to make decisions about my own options for recovery, which I feel should have been mine alone," she said, "I have made my own choices and have been blessed by a full recovery. This has led me to take a long, hard look at the position I have held so long against access to abortion services."[8]

Lloyd's principal work was to care for and augment the Oak Ridge atomic energy facilities, as well as to support the construction of the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) controversial Clinch River breeder reactor. The breeder reactor created the by-product plutonium, a highly toxic substance used to create atomic weapons. Critics argued that, besides posing an environmental threat, the breeder would increase the risk that terrorists or rogue states could acquire more readily the ingredients for a nuclear bomb.[9] Opponents also complained about the reactor's exorbitant costs. More than $1 billion was spent on project planning, and millions more would be required once construction was scheduled to begin. From 1974 to 1982, Lloyd was one of the Clinch River project's principal advocates, but a coalition of antinuclear environmentalists and fiscal conservatives in Congress eventually killed off the project. Lloyd, who had been elected comfortably in the five prior elections (by as much as 89 percent of the vote in 1978), suddenly found herself in a series of relatively tight races—winning by 52 percent in 1984, 54 percent in 1986, and 53 percent in 1990 and edging out a win in 1992 with one percent of the vote (about 3,000 votes out of roughly 216,000 cast). In 1987, poor health had caused her to announce she would not run in 1988, but she reversed her decision and ran, winning 53 percent of the vote.

In 1990, Lloyd had gained enough seniority to make a bid for the chairmanship of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, but she was defeated easily by George Brown of California, 166 to 33.[10] Following the 1992 elections, Lloyd and New Jersey Congressman William Hughes became the top-ranking Members on the Select Committee on Aging, which held little legislative influence on the House Floor but provided a high-profile position from which to advance issues important to elderly constituents. Lloyd solicited support from her colleagues for a bid to chair the committee in the 103rd Congress (1993–1995); however, Speaker Tom Foley selected Hughes over Lloyd, reasoning that "H" came before "L" in the alphabet. Lloyd expressed her outrage and frustration with the seemingly arbitrary decision, which she attributed to gender discrimination. As a conservative Democrat, however, Lloyd's frequent breaks with the majority had often put her at odds with the leadership. When the House convened in 1993, however, the select committee was abolished.[11]

In October 1993, Lloyd announced she would not run

for re-election, citing a desire to "enjoy my family, friends, and community." She also told reporters, "During my congressional career, I maintained one goal. That goal was to work for the good of Tennesseans with the energy and honesty that all my constituents deserve."[12] At the time, she was the third-ranking woman in the House, behind Democrats Cardiss Collins of Illinois and Patricia Schroeder of Colorado. The following year, in a controversial and surprising political move, she supported the Republican candidate whom she had barely defeated for re-election in 1992, Zach Wamp. Wamp went on to defeat Democrat Randy Button with 52 percent of the vote. Lloyd resides in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Marilyn Laird Lloyd," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Lupton Library. *Papers:* 1974–1994, 130 linear feet. The collection documents the work of Lloyd on the following House panels: Armed Services Committee, Select Committee on Aging, Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests, Science, Space and Technology Committee, Subcommittee on Energy Research and Development, TVA Caucus, and Textile Caucus. The collection also includes press clippings, floor information from each congressional session, voting record, legislative correspondence, subject files, district projects, speeches, and other legislative activities. Additional materials include plaques and artwork, as well as files relating to the Oak Ridge facility and energy legislation. This acquisition supplements her earlier donation of 96 cubic feet of office files from 1975 to 1994, including materials on the TVA, Department of Energy, Oak Ridge and Clinch River Breeder Reactor, the Armed Services Committee, foreign affairs, and childcare.

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Helen Stevenson Meyner

1929–1997

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM NEW JERSEY
1975–1979

Politically connected by both birth and marriage, Helen Stevenson Meyner entered elective politics for the first time to serve New Jersey for two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. Congresswoman Meyner developed a reputation as a thoughtful internationalist and advocate of human rights issues. She also became a well-respected charter member of the Congresswomen's Caucus during her short tenure in the House.

Helen Day Stevenson was born on March 5, 1929, to William E. and Eleanor B. Stevenson. She had one sister, Priscilla. The Stevensons worked for the American Red Cross, establishing units in Europe and Africa during World War I. William Stevenson later served as the president of Oberlin College in Ohio and also as U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines. After graduating from Rosemary Hall High School in Greenwich, Connecticut, in 1946, Helen Stevenson earned her bachelor's degree from Colorado College in 1950. Immediately following graduation, she served as a field worker for the Red Cross in Korea from 1950 to 1952 and then as a tour guide at the United Nations. From 1953 to 1956 she was hired by a major airline to travel around the globe on a promotional tour under the name Mary Gordon. In 1956, Stevenson volunteered for the presidential campaign for her mother's distant cousin, Adlai Stevenson. During the campaign, she met New Jersey Governor Robert Meyner, and they married in 1957. In 1970, Meyner lost a baby in childbirth, and the couple had no other children. After Robert Meyner left office in 1962, Helen Meyner began writing a twice-weekly column for the *Newark Star-Ledger*, which she continued until 1969. She also hosted a New York–New Jersey television interview program from 1965 to 1968. Beginning in 1971, Meyner was appointed to the New Jersey rehabilitation commission.

Admittedly more comfortable in the role of politician's wife, Meyner began her improbable political career in July 1972.[1] The Democratic nominee for a northeastern New Jersey congressional district, Irish immigrant Joseph O'Dougherty withdrew from the race because he had failed to meet the U.S. Constitution's seven-year citizenship criterion. The state Democratic committee convinced Meyner, who was at the time working on a biography of writer Katherine Mansfield, to enter the race as the new Democratic nominee in the heavily Republican district. Despite her experience in politics, she admitted that, "in the beginning, the adjustment to stand on my own and projecting myself in public was very difficult."[2] Initially overshadowed by accusations that she supported an expensive dam project because it benefited her own investments, Meyner lost to Republican Joseph J. Maraziti by a margin of 56 to 43 percent in the general election.

Two years later, Meyner challenged Maraziti again. In 1974, her GOP opponent was compromised by revelations that he kept a woman who did not work in his office on his congressional payroll.[3] This, coupled with the backlash resulting from the Watergate investigation, gave Meyner the edge. She defeated Maraziti, reversing the 1972 results for a seat in the 94th Congress (1975–1977). Following her victory, Meyner discussed the demands of a grueling campaign: "They [the Democratic Party] package a candidate like they're selling some underarm deodorant. Now I feel like I'm re-entering life after a long stay in a hospital or prison."[4] Nevertheless, Representative Meyner fought another close battle in 1976, barely holding off Republican challenger William F. Schluter in the general election. In a four-way race, Meyner emerged with 50 per-

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

cent of the vote to Schluter's 48 percent. She quickly accustomed herself to her position as politician, rather than politician's wife. "I was always on the back stage like most every other politician's wife. And I was always introduced as 'Bob Meyner's lovely wife, Helen,'" she admitted to reporters. "I am still waiting, incidentally, for someone to introduce my husband and me as 'Helen Meyner and her lovely husband, Bob.'"[5]

During her two terms in the House, Meyner served on the Committee on the District of Columbia, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Select Committee on Aging. She also was appointed to a relatively ceremonial position on the House Beauty Shop Committee. In order to take the seat on the prestigious Foreign Affairs Committee (later International Relations), Meyner turned down an assignment on the powerful Ways and Means Committee, as the latter required Members to resign all other assignments.[6] While serving on the Foreign Affairs Committee, Meyner criticized the nuclear arms race and, most memorably, opposed attempts by nonaligned nations to suspend or expel Israel from the United Nations. She condemned the 1975 U.N. resolution that equated Zionism with racism; however, she argued against using the incident as a pretext for U.S. withdrawal from the world organization.[7] Meyner voted in favor of forming a State Department board to oversee the creation of a center for conflict resolution. She amended an aid bill to the Philippines which cut about $5 million in assistance to punish Ferdinand Marcos's authoritarian regime for human rights abuses. Meyner told House colleagues in a floor speech, "I believe that it is very important that we send a concrete signal, and this would only be a signal, of our concern for the serious human rights situation in the Philippines. Words do not seem to have any effect. We must show our concern in a more substantive way."[8]

Meyner also used her seat on Foreign Affairs to tend to New Jersey's economic needs. She worked with her Garden State colleagues to save her district's Picatinny Arsenal from closure; soon after, it was designated as the headquarters for the Army's Armament Research and Development Command. She also sought to sustain New Jersey's ailing textile industry in the face of competition from foreign imports. In late 1976, Meyner lobbied Democrats in the New Jersey senate, urging them not to rescind the state's endorsement of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. She subsequently participated in the 1978 Select Committee on Aging hearings on poor conditions in boarding homes for senior citizens.

Meyner actively promoted women's rights and their increased involvement in politics. "A woman's viewpoint is different," Meyner said upon her 1974 election, "perhaps more intuitive and sensitive to people's needs in the special areas like day care, environment and education."[9] In her first term, she supported legislation that aided destitute women, including a vote to provide federal funding for abortions through Medicare.[10] As an active member of the newly founded Congresswomen's Caucus, Meyner served as the organization's resident expert on foreign policy. She developed a reputation as an even-tempered, thoughtful, and effective legislator, somewhat overshadowed by her New Jersey colleague, Millicent Fenwick. In what was later dubbed New Jersey's "Year of the Woman," the more flamboyant Fenwick was elected to Congress alongside Meyner in 1974; however, the two had an uneasy relationship.[11] After the caucus traveled to China in 1977, the fiscally conservative Fenwick publicly rebuked Meyner for spending taxpayers' money to bring her husband on the trip. Other Congresswomen, whose family members also accompanied them, defended Meyner.[12]

In 1978, Meyner faced Republican James A. Courter in another close election. High inflation, soaring gas prices, and a lagging economy under the Jimmy Carter administration were prime issues during the midterm elections. Running on a platform to improve economic opportunities, Courter defeated Meyner by fewer than 6,000 votes, winning 52 to 48 percent. After leaving Congress, Meyner returned to Princeton, New Jersey, where she again worked for the state rehabilitation commission. She also served on the boards of several major corporations, where she developed a reputation for pushing women's equality in corporate management. After her husband's death in

1990, she moved to Captiva Island, Florida. Meyner subsequently oversaw the establishment of the Robert B. Meyner and Helen S. Meyner Center for the Study of State and Local Government at her husband's alma mater, Lafayette College, in Easton, Pennsylvania. Helen Meyner died on November 2, 1997, in Captiva Island.

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Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Helen Stevenson Meyner," http://bioguide.congress.gov

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Lafayette College (Easton, PA), David Bishop Skillman Library Special Collections and College Archives, http://ww2.lafayette.edu/filibrary/special/meyner/meyner.html. *Papers:* In the Robert B. and Helen Stevenson Meyner Papers, 1910–1990, 93 linear feet. The collection documents the work of Helen Stevenson Meyner and includes correspondence, committee files, bill files, press files, materials documenting her voting record, special projects, district offices, and her four campaigns (1972–1978). Also includes personal and business papers, photographs, motion picture film, video tape, sound recordings, and memorabilia. Also includes 13 diaries (1955–1977). Some material is restricted.

Princeton University Library (Princeton, NJ). *Papers:* 1974–1978, 86 cubic feet. Consists of legislative correspondence, casework, invitations, requests, and campaign and project material. Also includes references to her services on the Subcommittee on Education, Labor and Social Services (1976) and the Select Committee on Aging (1977–1978).

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12 Irwin N. Gertzog, *Congressional Women: Their Recruitment, Integration, and Behavior* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995): 201.

Virginia Dodd Smith
1911–2006

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM NEBRASKA
1975–1991

Virginia Dodd Smith's House career owed much to her 40 years on a Nebraska farm and experience as a spokesperson for agricultural issues. As the first woman elected to Congress from Nebraska, Smith steered federal money toward farm programs from her seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee. Widely popular in her state, she also exercised a great deal of influence on political developments there, both because of her western Nebraska district's size and her personal connection with constituents, whom she visited regularly.

Virginia Dodd was born in Randolph, Iowa, on June 30, 1911, to Clifton Clark Dodd and Erville (Reeves) Dodd. She graduated from Shenandoah High School in Shenandoah, Iowa. Virginia Dodd met Haven Smith while attending the University of Nebraska. The two wed on August 27, 1931, taking a hiatus from school to earn tuition money. The Smiths settled in Chappell, Nebraska, in the western portion of the state near the Colorado border and worked on Haven's family wheat farm during the depths of the Great Depression. They both returned to school and received their bachelor of arts degrees from the University of Nebraska in 1936. The Smiths eventually expanded their wheat farming business into poultry, seed potatoes, and other crops.[1] From 1950 until 1960, Virginia Smith worked for the Home Economics Research Advisory Committee for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She became involved in a wide variety of farm organizations, such as the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), spending 20 years on its board of directors and serving as the national chair of the AFBF women's bureau from 1955 to 1974. Meanwhile, Smith was active in the state's Republican Party.

Smith's extensive participation in farming organizations and civic affairs in Nebraska provided an invaluable network for her first run for elective office in 1974, when seven-term incumbent Republican Dave Martin retired from the U.S. House of Representatives. Martin represented what was then the nation's largest congressional district, consisting of 61 counties and 307 towns spread over the western three-quarters of the state, an area dominated by the wheat, corn, and cattle businesses. A political observer described it as "one of the most macho districts" in America.[2] It certainly was one of the most historically Republican regions. The farmers and ranchers of western Nebraska had voted for Republican House Members with only one significant interruption—from 1932 to 1942 during the heyday of the New Deal agricultural programs.

Name recognition in the massive district was no problem for Smith. Already a familiar face in many of the district's small farm towns, she defeated eight candidates in the GOP primary. In the general election, Smith faced Democratic candidate Wayne W. Ziebarth, a former state senator. Ziebarth, too, had name recognition, after having run a statewide race in 1972 for the Democratic nomination to the U.S. Senate. Smith was a formidable campaigner who engaged individuals in the crowds in one-on-one conversations and had an "extraordinary" capacity for names, faces, and issues.[3] She relied on the wholehearted support of her husband, Haven. "It was a two-person job," Virginia Smith recalled. "He was just my righthand man all the way."[4] Ziebarth aided Smith's cause when he made a crucial mistake late in his campaign, publicly stating that women were not cut out for politics.[5] Smith defeated her opponent by a margin of just 737 votes out of more than 161,000 cast.[6] When she took her seat in the 94th Congress (1975–1977), she did so as the first Nebraska

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

woman elected to the U.S. House. In her subsequent bids for re-election, voters returned Smith to office for seven more terms by increasingly wide margins, from 73 to 84 percent of the vote.[7]

During Smith's freshman year, she served on the Education and Labor and the Interior and Insular Affairs committees. In her second term in Congress, she managed to get a seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee—an assignment she held until her retirement in 1991. She served on two Appropriations subcommittees: Rural Development, Agriculture, and Related Agencies and Energy and Water Development. She also was assigned to the GOP policy committee in 1977, which advised House Republicans on key issues.

Throughout her tenure, Smith focused on agricultural matters. Fiscally conservative on most issues, she nevertheless routinely favored spending federal money on farm programs. As Ranking Member of the Rural Development, Agriculture, and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, she had a strong position from which to steer federal dollars into that sector, and into her district in particular. In 1984, for instance, more than $162 million dollars in federal payments for corn growers flowed into her district, by far the largest amount of any other congressional district for a region that, in fact, produced more corn than any other in the nation.[8] In 1987, she managed to exempt U.S. agriculture exporters from having to ship a certain percentage of their product on American vessels, which charged higher shipping costs. In 1989, as the United States began to send food aid to Eastern European countries emerging from communist rule, Smith was one of several midwestern Representatives to argue that the U.S. government should continue to allow shipments to be made on foreign vessels—at about one-third of the transportation rates on American-registered ships. The differential could then have been applied to buying more foodstuffs, which would have further benefited American farmers.[9] Smith also supported the creation of more domestic land and air transportation routes, in order to keep rural America connected to urban centers. "The revitalization of rural America cannot and will not occur unless we guarantee mobility."[10] In a 1989 Appropriations Committee vote, her amendment to restore subsidies to airline companies as an incentive to fly to small towns was narrowly defeated, with the vote breaking down not along party lines, but between rural and urban legislators.[11] In 1988, she helped secure federal funding for a bus line that connected remote parts of western Nebraska with South Dakota.[12] That same year she also successfully fended off efforts to cut funding to the Davis Creek Dam which, when completed, would provide irrigation water in her district.[13]

Smith's farming constituents showed their approval for her policies with her overwhelming success at the polls. "I think people know I fight very hard to get a fair share of federal revenues for Nebraska," she once said. "I visit every one of the counties in my district every year and I visit most of them quite a lot of times. I work seven days a week on this job. I do my homework . . . I love this job and I love the people of my district, and I think that when you have the privilege of representing 500,000 of the finest people on earth, you ought to work hard."[14]

Focusing on the needs and traditions of her agricultural constituents, Smith did not embrace feminist issues during her House career. As a new Member of Congress, for instance, she had requested that she be known as "Mrs. Haven Smith."[15] In 1977, though she often encouraged women to enter politics, Smith was one of three Members who did not join the Congressional Women's Caucus during its inaugural meetings.[16]

Smith did not stand for re-election in 1990 and retired the following January. In retirement, she and her husband settled in Sun City West, Arizona. Three years later, the community named Virginia Smith one of its favorite leaders. Haven Smith died on May 12, 1997, after the couple had reached their milestone 65th wedding anniversary. Approaching age 90, Virginia Smith was still active in Nebraska politics. In 2000, she agreed to work on the campaign for a promising Republican candidate in her old district.[17] Virginia Smith died on January 23, 2006, in Sun City West, Arizona.[18]

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Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Virginia Dodd Smith," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

University of Nebraska–Lincoln (Lincoln, NE), University Libraries Archives and Special Collections. *Papers:* 1974–1990, 463 linear feet. Includes correspondence, legislation and congressional committee reports, speeches, office records and schedules, press clippings and releases, photographs, audiotapes, and films. A finding aid is available in the repository.

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Gladys Noon Spellman
1918–1988

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ DEMOCRAT FROM MARYLAND
1975–1981

Gladys Noon Spellman rose through the ranks of Maryland politics to become an influential advocate for the federal workforce in the U.S. House of Representatives. Elected in 1974 to a large freshman class of Democrats, Spellman joined the front ranks of the "freshman revolt" bent on reforming congressional practices. Very quickly, however, she settled into a role as a Representative dedicated to district work, securing what had been a tenuous first victory.[1] Within a short span of six years she became a widely popular local politician in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C., before suffering a heart attack that left her permanently incapacitated.

She was born Gladys Blossom Noon in New York City on March 1, 1918, daughter of Henry and Bessie Noon, and was educated in the New York City and Washington, D.C., public schools.[2] After attending George Washington University and the graduate school of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Spellman taught in the public schools of Prince George's County, Maryland, a suburban area northeast of Washington, D.C. Gladys Noon married Reuben Spellman, and they raised three children: Stephen, Richard, and Dana. Gladys Spellman made her mark as a crusading Parent Teacher Association leader before winning election to the Prince George's County board of commissioners in 1962. At first, she faced a cool reception from her colleagues. One remarked, "You think just like a man." Spellman took that as a compliment, at first. "Then I got angry and said, 'Well, I guess today was an off-day for me. Tomorrow I'll be myself and do better.'"[3] A county executive recalled years later that his nickname for Spellman—"Madame Tinkerbell"—derived from her ability to use her ebullient personality, her broad smile, and her uncanny ability to recall names to engage voters and work a room.[4] She was re-elected in 1966 and chaired the board for two years, the first woman ever to lead the county. In 1970, when Prince George's County changed to a charter form of government, Spellman won election to the county council as an at-large member, serving from 1971 to 1974.

In 1974, when U.S. Representative Lawrence J. Hogan declined to run for re-election in order to seek the party's nomination as Maryland gubernatorial candidate, Spellman entered the race to succeed the three-term Republican. Historically, the congressional district which wrapped around Washington's northern and eastern suburbs and swung into southern Maryland had been solidly Democratic since the mid-1920s. To the south and east it was composed of farms and rural communities, while on the northern and western side it was made up of suburban communities wedged between the capital and Baltimore. The federal government, which had major installations in the district, employed a large number of workers. Only two Republicans ever had held the seat: a one-termer who rode Dwight D. Eisenhower's presidential coattails in 1952 and Hogan who won in 1968 when Richard Nixon and Maryland native son Spiro Agnew made up the winning GOP presidential ticket (they nearly carried Maryland as well and, in 1972, won it convincingly).

Spellman easily won the September 1974 Democratic primary with 67 percent against Karl H. Matthes, a political unknown, accumulating more total votes than Matthes and the two GOP primary contenders combined, including Prince George's County Councilman John B. Burcham, Jr., the eventual Republican winner.[5] The seat was hotly contested with prominent politicians from both parties campaigning in the district—House Speaker Carl Albert

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

and Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts for Spellman and President Gerald R. Ford and Representative Hogan for Burcham.[6] The candidates divided on some hot-button issues. While both candidates opposed a plan by President Ford to add a five percent federal surtax to bring inflation under control, Spellman attacked the GOP, arguing that the election "ought to be a referendum on the Republican handling of the economy." Instead, it was a referendum on an issue neither of the candidates addressed squarely: the Watergate Scandal that had forced the resignation of President Nixon in August 1974. According to a *Washington Post* poll conducted in late October 1974, nearly a quarter of all suburban Maryland voters said that they would be less likely to cast their vote for a Republican.[7] Nationally, the scandal contributed to a string of GOP losses in five 1974 special elections and the November general elections. Republicans lost a total of 48 seats, creating an even larger Democratic majority in Congress. Nevertheless, Spellman only narrowly defeated Burcham, 53 percent to 47 percent of the vote.[8]

Spellman entered the House as one of seven leaders of the so-called "freshman revolt" of the class of 1974, which sought to extend reforms of congressional procedure to secure better committee assignments for first-term Members and to weaken the power of committee chairmen. Spellman was appointed to the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, a panel reinstituted in 1973 to allow party leaders to assert more control over the committee assignment process and to shape legislative policy.[9] Congresswoman Spellman avowed, "We may be new kids on the block, but we're not stupid"—an allusion to her frustration with chairmen who underestimated the expertise and clout of freshman "Watergate Babies."[10] Many reforms already had been pushed through at the end of the preceding Congress and, in January 1975, the freshmen Members of the 94th Congress (1975–1977) provided momentum to help depose three entrenched southern committee chairmen and appoint new Members to prominent committees.

Yet, within six months, Representative Spellman's focus rested almost entirely on issues pertinent to her district from which her office received hundreds of phone calls and as many letters each day. "You don't always want to stay in kindergarten," Spellman explained about her decision to decline the chairmanship of the freshman caucus. "We accomplished a great deal, and now we've been made a part of the establishment. We don't always have to be just freshmen." But observers noted that political necessity changed Spellman's focus. Vague statements by former Representative Hogan that he would challenge her in 1976, her thin margin of victory in 1974, and the demands of constituent service for a district located astride the capital forced her reconsideration. Spellman hinted that the latter concern more than any other caused her to reorient her attention from institutional reform to district caretaking. "Mine is the kind of district," she said, "that requires a lot of time and attention."[11] She dedicated herself to attending citizen meetings across the district, answering constituent mail personally, developing a newsletter, and distributing "listening post reports" (that included her home phone number) which requested suggestions from local residents.[12]

Over time, Spellman became one of the most popular figures in Maryland politics. In a 1976 rematch against Burcham, the Congresswoman ran on her record as a reformer and as a politician closely attuned to the needs of her constituents. She declared that she had participated in a movement that had "opened the doors wide and pumped fresh air back into the smoke-filled rooms" of the Capitol.[13] In the 1976 election she widened her margin of victory against Burcham to 57 percent. In subsequent campaigns against other GOP opponents, Spellman widened her margins: 77 percent in 1978 and 80 percent in 1980.[14]

During her three terms in Congress, Spellman served on the Committee on Banking, Currency, and Housing (renamed the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee after the 94th Congress) and the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. In 1977 she favored legislation to establish a bank to make loans to cooperatives owned by consumers and legislation to extend the federal revenue-sharing program. She also voted in 1975 for $7 billion in loan guarantees to aid financially troubled New York City.

Nearly 40 percent of the workforce in Spellman's district was employed by the federal government, at the time, the largest percentage of any congressional district in the country. Spellman was carefully attuned to its needs. As chair of the Subcommittee of Compensation and Employee Benefits of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, she frequently used her position to advance the interests of federal employees. She sought to derail President James Earl "Jimmy" Carter's 1978 reform of the civil service, which planned to merge the federal retirement program with Social Security. Spellman also pushed for cost of living adjustments and opposed hiring freezes. She was particularly critical of the proposed Senior Executive Service, which she feared would politicize the civil service. Spellman also favored an amendment to the 1970 Intergovernmental Personnel Act which would have authorized a subsidy to train civil servants in management–labor relations. She was especially sensitive to the morale of the federal workforce which, in the post-Watergate years, became a favorite target for "anti-Washington" candidates. In her newsletter, she often devoted a "Beautiful Bureaucrat" column to praise federal workers and insist that the vast majority of them were people who "far from slowing down the wheels of government are really the people who keep them churning."[15]

On October 31, 1980, two days before the general election in which she was re-elected to a fourth term, Spellman suffered a severe heart attack. She survived but lapsed into a coma from which she never regained consciousness.[16] House Resolution 80, passed on February 24, 1981, declared Spellman's seat vacant, since she was unable to discharge the duties of her office. It marked the first time the House had ever vacated the seat of a Member who had become mentally or physically impaired. The next day the *Washington Post*, while observing that the move "was only right" for representation of her district, celebrated Spellman's "brilliant" career: it "remains a classic for all who would seek public office and serve successfully."[17] Her husband, Reuben, was a Democratic candidate in the April 1981 special primary to choose nominees to succeed her. He finished second out of a field of six candidates; the winner of the primary, Steny Hoyer, also won the general election. Gladys Spellman died in Rockville, Maryland, on June 19, 1988.

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Shirley N. Pettis

1924-

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ★ REPUBLICAN FROM CALIFORNIA

1975–1979

Shirley Pettis, a successful California businesswoman and congressional spouse, won election to the U.S. House of Representatives to succeed her husband, who died in 1975. During two terms in Congress, Pettis sought to continue Jerry L. Pettis's conservative legislative agenda and sponsored an environmental bill that vastly expanded the "wilderness" boundaries of the Joshua Tree National Monument east of Los Angeles.

Shirley Neil McCumber was born in Mountain View, California, on July 12, 1924, to Harold Oliver and Dorothy Susan O'Neil McCumber. Shirley McCumber studied at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and at the University of California at Berkeley. After the death of her first husband, Dr. John McNulty, in World War II, she married Jerry L. Pettis, a World War II flight instructor who would go on to become a self-made millionaire and a professor of economics at Loma Linda University. They raised two children, Peter and Deborah.[1] Along with her husband, Shirley Pettis was a founder and manager of the Audio Digest Foundation, a nonprofit affiliate of the California Medical Association which placed abstracts of medical journals and lectures on audiocassette tapes.[2] The couple also owned Magnetic Tape Duplicators. In addition, Pettis assisted her husband in the operation of their southern California ranch and, when he was elected to Congress, wrote a regular newspaper column for the *San Bernardino Sun-Telegram*. Jerry Pettis was elected as a Republican Representative from California to the 90th Congress (1967–1969) and eventually earned a spot on the influential Ways and Means Committee. He served in the House from 1967 until his death on February 14, 1975, in a private aircraft crash in Banning, California.[3]

Immediately after the accident, friends and associates began encouraging Shirley Pettis to run for her husband's vacant congressional seat, which included vast tracts of desert and mountain areas east of Los Angeles in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. "'Shirley, you have to run,'" she recalled them saying to her. "'You have name recognition and everybody knows you.'" But it was not until her daughter, then 16 years old, and her 19-year-old son encouraged her that Pettis filed for candidacy.[4] Campaigning as her late husband's "working partner," Pettis won more than 60 percent of the vote against a field of 12 other candidates in the April 29, 1975, special election to fill his seat. "I think the people definitely felt that Jerry Pettis' philosophy and mind—that government should serve the people and not that people should serve the government—was the philosophy they wanted to continue to represent them," she said the night of her victory.[5] After taking the oath of office on May 6, 1975, she was appointed to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. In 1976, district voters elected Pettis to a full term in the 95th Congress (1977–1979); she defeated Democrat Douglas C. Nilson, Jr., with 71 percent of the vote.[6] In January 1977, Pettis was assigned to the Committee on Education and Labor and the Committee on International Relations.

During her first term in the House, Pettis used her seat on Interior and Insular Affairs to advance legislation protecting desert lands in her district. She secured wilderness status for nearly half a million acres in the Joshua Tree National Monument, which limited vehicular access and prohibited development. In 1994, Joshua Tree became a national park. Pettis also worked to have the California desert established as a conservation area. During her short tenure in Congress, she took up her late husband's

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fight to win federal funding for a cleanup of the Salton Sea, a large lake in her congressional district that was home to migratory birds. The initial interest that Jerry Pettis had raised in such a project had waned. "It kind of dribbled away," Shirley Pettis recalled. The California Congresswoman also helped to bring the first solar power plant in the nation to her district.[7]

On nonenvironmental issues during her two terms, she voted with her GOP colleagues to oppose federal funding for abortions and the creation of a federal consumer rights agency, and she proposed cuts to America's military and economic assistance to South Korea.[8] As a Representative with 16 Native-American tribes in her district, Pettis remained a consistent advocate of legislation aimed at improving the health and welfare of Native Americans.

Pettis, who helped cofound the Women's Caucus in 1977, recalled that her reception as a woman in Congress was initially somewhat rocky. She recalled one elevator ride in which she was chatting with a senior House committee chairman. When the doors opened and they exited, the Congressman turned to Pettis and asked, "So whose secretary did you say you were?" Such experiences led Pettis to encourage young women to enter politics not only to fight gender discrimination but to fulfill their responsibilities as good citizens. "Politics isn't a far off thing that happens in a state capital or in Washington," she once remarked. "It is the road you drive on, the schools you attend; it's the groceries you buy. It isn't far away from you. It's important that everyone become involved in the issues central to their lives."[9]

Citing difficulty with keeping in touch with her constituents from the sprawling 27,000-square-mile California district, Pettis declined to run for renomination in 1978.[10] From 1980 to 1981, she served as vice president of the Women's Research and Education Institute in Washington, D.C. Following that, Pettis was a member of the Arms Control and Disarmament Commission for two years. President George H.W. Bush appointed her to the Commission on Presidential Scholars, where she served from 1990 to 1992. In 1979, Pettis also began a long term of service on the board of directors of a major insurance company. She married Ben Roberson in February 1988, and resides in Rancho Mirage, California.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Shirley Neil Pettis," http://bioguide.congress.gov

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

Loma Linda University Libraries (Loma Linda, CA). *Papers:* In the Jerry and Shirley Pettis Papers, 1966–1978, 350 feet. Items include nearly 150 archival boxes of official and personal papers of both Representatives, numerous correspondence files, House committee- and bill-related materials, photographs, plaques, and other memorabilia. A finding aid is available in the repository.

NOTES

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