

The Honorable Lois Capps
U.S. Representative of California (1998–2017)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Republican Cosponsors

Representative Capps remembers a shift in bipartisanship during her congressional tenure.
Interview recorded July 16, 2019

I, I watched the House change from being quite bipartisan in the beginning, with more moderates on each side of the aisle. But I noticed particularly in the Republican side, because I had a goal. I didn't state it a lot publicly, but I, every bill I introduced I did with a Republican co-author. And I tried—that was for my sake, as well as for what I believed in, because I wanted to champion bills that were, that, that were bipartisan. And I did things like women and heart disease which, up until then, most of the research was done on men, because they didn't ever realize that women had heart, heart disease as much as, in some cases more, than men. And I had—there was my friend, Mary Bono. She and I cosponsored that bill for many years. And then as I, it became my story, there came a time as the, it was all after Newt Gingrich, after that era started, 1994, that the partisanship reigned more strongly. And she would cosponsor my bills, many Republicans would. And then it became more difficult, they weren't allowed to, or not encouraged to—I don't know. But there was a year that the, the cosponsor had, wasn't a Republican. Mary wouldn't agree to it, or couldn't agree to it. And then fortunately, when we were in the majority again, it became, it was folded into the Affordable Care Act. So I, I ran into many experiences. Now, this didn't mean we couldn't be friends. We worked together on many projects.