

Jennice Fuentes
Chief of Staff, Representative Luis Gutiérrez of Illinois

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

No Vote on the House Floor

Jennice Fuentes recalls the Resident Commissioner finding ways to remain influential in the legislative process without being able to vote on the House Floor.

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No, I think that one of the issues that we would face would be that, because we didn't vote, that people would not sometimes want to negotiate or take us seriously when we weren't any kind of committee situation heading to the floor. Because you vote in committee, so that, that, you know, that kind of makes you a participant in the process when you have the committee hearings, when you have the committee markups you could amend. But then you lose track and you lose access to all that power when you get to the floor, because you don't really vote on the floor. So it was maintaining those alliances. And you didn't have, you didn't have much to work with, because you, you can't be there at the end of, of the game, right? So that was an issue and yet that's a procedure, it was a process issue. In terms of dealing with my colleagues and dealing with the other offices, you know, outside of partisan differences, I can't tell you that it was a terrible experience. I thought that it was interesting and fascinating to deal with all those offices and try to, you know, figure out how can we be plugged in through the end when we don't have a vote on the floor.