

**The Honorable Martha Elizabeth Keys**  
U.S. Representative of Kansas (1975–1979)

**Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress**

**Rough Start**

Representative Keys remembers the initial obstacle when forming a caucus for women.  
*Interview recorded June 14, 2016*

We were unable to start a women's caucus the first term I was there, to my shock. We met, they wouldn't agree to it. There weren't very many Republicans. They were mostly Democrats. But I think the chasm was a little too wide between Leonor Sullivan, who was the very old conservative Democrat, and dean of Democrats—the Democratic women—and Bella Abzug. I think that chasm was a little bit too wide. And they wouldn't agree to it. The second term we finally got it started.