

The Honorable Susan Molinari
U.S. Representative of New York (1990–1997)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Women and House Leadership

Representative Molinari discusses the importance of having women in leadership positions.
Interview recorded January 8, 2016

I think part of it was my own personal ambition, but also, you know, feeling that I thought that there, there needed to be a woman in leadership. And at that point, it was so interesting, right, because Barbara Vucanovich ran also. And there was this general perception that only one of us could win because there would only be room for one female, even though the rest of the leadership was, was male. In, in, in tribute to, to our colleagues, both of us won, but there really was this—I remember once, I think I came up first and once I won, the guy that was running against Barbara, everybody just thought, shoe in, like, "We only have room for one here." That's funny, I haven't even thought about that in so long. But you know, part of it was, I think it's good for the party. I think it's, you know, great to have additional voices, and, you know, dissent and discussion was, was not only tolerated, it was welcomed. You know, the Republican Party felt it was kind of important to have people out there who had, you know, disagreements. Again, you don't ever get into the motives of why people disagree with you, but understanding, you know, the big tent. And so, you know, the, the people who nominated me were very conservative, from rural areas, again, to show the importance of, of bringing as many people under the tent as possible, in order to have a majority and a successful working majority. And so, those were all the thoughts behind that.