

The Honorable Constance A. Morella
U.S. Representative of Maryland (1987–2003)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

"Strong Women"

Representative Morella shares memories of the Lindy Claiborne Boggs Room, a retiring space for women Members.

Interview recorded June 16, 2015

And as a matter of fact, it's interesting because we have that little Congresswomen's Room, which, which is the room where John Quincy Adams, sixth President, died on the sofa in that room. And there is a bust of him in the room, "Hereineth dieth. Last breath cast. John Quincy Adams." And I remember 1991, when Lindy Boggs was—we named the room for her. And so, she spoke there and she looked up at the statue of John Quincy Adams and she said, "Well, John." She said, "Now, your father never listened to your mother Abigail when she said, 'Remember the ladies.' But now I think she might find some comfort in knowing that you are here in this room surrounded by strong women." And I always thought of—sweet Lindy, and what she said and what the whole thing kind of meant and sort of symbolized. But, yes, it became a room where we could meet and just plain relax. And they even had a couple of little beds where if there was an overnigher, someone could come and rest for a while. But we also did some strategizing. And when women came out of that room onto Statuary Hall and if you had maybe three of them coming out at one time, the guys around would say, "Well, what are they cooking up? What have they just decided to do?" So, it became a pretty good symbol. And yes, it, there were issues we disagreed with, in terms of pro-life issues. We just didn't discuss them. Those were done at other caucuses, separate caucuses, yes. So, I think getting together, particularly if you're in a minority, is very helpful.