

The Honorable Sue Myrick
U.S. Representative of North Carolina (1995–2013)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Challenges Facing Women Candidates

Representative Myrick encourages women to run for national office and explains the importance of fundraising.

Interview recorded March 14, 2016

Well, I think, I think that they need to understand that, that you can get here. They need to understand that you can take risks and still survive, and if you fail it's not the end of the world. You know, you pick up and you start over again. It's a matter of, of this mentoring going on at the local levels, and the state levels. And, and I think that is where we've dropped the ball in trying to mentor some of the women. Like women will run for city council, or they'll run for state legislature but then they don't want to run for a national office because, first, they think they can't raise the money. It's harder for women to raise money. It was always hard for me to raise money. I mean, it's interesting because I have a son who's now in politics, and he raises a lot more money than I ever did, from some of the same people. And I say that because I just sit back and watch. He's, he's good at what he does, not because I wanted him to be in politics, I tried to discourage him every way I could. But my point, in saying that, is there is a difference in, in—and I think, if you talk to other women, you'll find men are more apt—because more men give than women do—they're more apt to give to a man. They're more apt to give him more money than they'll give to a woman. It just kind of falls that way. And so, it's up to women to, you know, get more involved in the process. If they do, then, you know, and keep moving up the ladder, in effect, have a little bit of experience behind them, they can get elected. But we've got to encourage that, and I think the political parties, on both sides, need to do a better job of encouraging women to run, and, again, move up from local level to state level, you know, or either way. But, I mean, move so they can run for a congressional seat or a Senate seat, whatever it may be.