

Deborah D. Pryce
U.S. Representative of Ohio (1993–2009)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

“And That Got My Blood Boiling”

Representative Pryce recalls how she found inspiration to run for public office when she faced resistance to the idea of her candidacy.

Interview recorded August 9, 2018

Well, that's a funny story because I think I was convinced when somebody told me I couldn't do it. As a matter of fact, it was a position before that, our probate court judge was stepping down and at that time I was on the bench as a judge and I wanted to run for that seat. And some of the men in the party had different ideas about who was the candidate was going to be and so they said, "No, you know, you won't, he will." And that got my blood boiling, I guess. I didn't know how much it was boiling though until my predecessor decided to retire earlier than we anticipated. That was back during the Rostenkowski days and there was scandal back then. So there was a very small window of opportunity for our party to find a candidate and that was not long after I'd been told, "No, you can't run for probate judge." So I threw my hat in the ring and after five ballots I won my party's endorsement by one vote. And I know that if I'd had time, more time than the two-week period, to think about it and really examine what it was going to be like and all the reasons I shouldn't do it, I probably wouldn't have. But I still had this in the back of my mind, "No, you won't, no, you can't." And so I did then at the next opportunity.