

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
U.S. Representative of Florida (1989–2019)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Congressional Softball

Representative Ros-Lehtinen discusses how women Members bond when involved in activities like the Congressional Softball Game.

Interview recorded April 16, 2018

So there was a great deal of being in touch with one another, and I feel that now as well. We have, for example, I play on the congressional softball team, Debbie Wasserman Schultz is the captain. She was the one who formed it and she's a very good friend. Shelley Moore Capito, Martha Roby, Senator Gillibrand, all of us are captains. It's Democrats and Republicans, playing against members of the press. And we do it to raise money for cancer, for breast cancer awareness and treatment, for young women who are, who have breast cancer. And it came about because Debbie Wasserman Schultz was young, but was diagnosed with breast cancer. But when she went to her doctor he said, "You can't have breast cancer, you're too young." And so she had to insist. She says, "I've got a lump. I insist that you do all of the tests." And sure enough, she did have breast cancer. So, this bipartisan, bicameral softball game really brings the best in us. And we've got great, great folks, like Cheri Bustos and Joni Ernst, and whether you're a Senator or, or a House Member, Republicans or Democrats, we really bond together as women. And just think, I mean, I'm 65 years old and the Members, we play against members of the press, their median age is probably about 25, so we're really—nobody is as old as I am on the team, but nobody is a spring chicken either. So, it's just a great time to bond with other women.