

**The Honorable Patricia Saiki**  
U.S. Representative of Hawaii (1987–1991)

**Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress**

**Running for the Senate**

Representative Saiki discusses her conversation with President George H. W. Bush about running for a vacant Senate seat in 1990.

*Interview recorded September 20, 2018*

And my friends, my loyalists—my loyal supporters and so forth, including President H. W. Bush—called me into the office—Oval Office—and asked me to run for the U.S. Senate—that I was a viable candidate. This was in May and the election is in November. And I said, “You know, it’s a real tough choice because it’s going to be a tough campaign. I’m going to need lots of money, I’m going to need lots of help, but the fact of the matter is, if I can try to be an effective voice, one out of 435, look at what I can do for my state as one of 100. So—and political efforts of being in politics is not my essence in life.” In other words, I was not intending to stay in politics and be a state or Congressional candidate forever. I’m going to do what I have to do and get the heck out when I’ve done my job. So with my husband’s encouragement and my children and everybody I decided okay, it might be something that’s worthwhile, we’ll give it a try. Win-win, lose-lose, you know? Go for it.