

Allyson Y. Schwartz
U.S. Representative of Pennsylvania (2005–2015)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Offering Advice

Representative Schwartz recalls how she sought to help new Members find their way in Congress.
Interview recorded April 12, 2017

I made a point when I, after being a freshman myself, that I would actually take freshman Members out to dinner. And I did that. I did that in little groups, actually, not always one-on-one. But I reached out and would invite them to dinner, and three or four at a time, and say, “Just ask me anything. Tell me how I can be helpful.” They often asked me advice about committee assignments. They asked me advice about legislation that they might introduce. They asked me who they could talk to. They asked me for fundraising advice. They sometimes would ask me to give them money, but—no—but they mostly, it was around how to be a good Member of Congress. And they asked me advice about how to work their districts and how to be visible and engaged in districts. And again, I had come from a swing district. I worked very hard to be visible in my district. I think it’s very important to have good constituent services.