

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

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Welcoming Presence

Representative Schwartz recalls how women Members helped each other in Congress and how the U.S. House included Members from diverse backgrounds and districts.

Interview recorded April 12, 2017

There was a real sense of welcoming from them. There's no question about that. Look, this is a competitive world we are in, but they were enormously welcoming. So I think that that sense of, how can we be helpful? How can we, how will we engage? They were friendly. They were nice. They were completely accessible, which was just terrific, something I did not have at all, except for the two women, you know, before me in the state senate that didn't exist. Even though there was a women's caucus in the House, in the senate we were just too small. So that was really quite fantastic. There were—one thing was, I had not served in the state house, so one of the things that I found that I enjoyed and appreciated is, there were a lot of House Members. There were a lot of affinity groups, if you want to call it that. There were people from cities. There were people from suburbs. There were people who got elected in my class. There were people who had swing districts. There were the New Dems. There were Jews. There were different affinity groups that you could make connections with very readily, particularly if you sought it out, and I, I certainly did. And that was pretty exciting.