

**The Honorable Sue W. Kelly**  
U.S. Representative of New York (1995–2007)

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

**Beating the Odds**

Representative Kelly describes the obstacles she faced during her first campaign for Congress in 1994.  
*Interview recorded June 23, 2016*

And it was an interesting group of the men I ran against. I jumped into the primary. It bothered me so much, I couldn't sleep. I kept trying to get my husband, to talk him into running. Finally, at one point he said, "Look, if you care so much, why don't you put your money where your mouth is and run." So I did. My mama and dad—my ma had died, my dad had died before that. I had a small amount of money that I inherited. I had \$150,000. And I thought, "Well, I don't know what my parents would think about it, but I am going to run." I ran against a Congressional Medal of Honor winner, a brigadier general, the state GOP attorney, a sitting state assemblyman, a Vietnam veteran, and a former two-term Congressman that both Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey and "B1" Bob Dornan, actually, they were all backing and putting money into that man's race. And I won.