

The Honorable Linda Smith
U.S. Representative of Washington (1995–1999)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Advice for Aspiring Politicians

Representative Smith offers advice to women considering running for public office.
Interview recorded September 18, 2019

We need very good teachers, we need good lawyers, we need everyone with all the experience of life that represents our country and our districts. So don't, "How do I get a political degree and run for office?" Don't, be valuable somehow. Just because you're in politics doesn't mean that you're valuable. Know business, know something well because then you can actually represent at least some of the people with good knowledge. Because most of us don't know everything, we, we just don't. We have to get it from other Members or we have to get it from people in our district. There's no way you can understand something like the chiropractic regulatory law or whatever or what the base is and how much is federal and how much is state. I just made that one up. So obviously I would need to understand that. The best thing for me would be to have a colleague that could help explain that or explain it to the caucus.