

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

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

**Powerful Allies**

Representative Smith explains how her opposition to abortion helped her gain influential allies in the House.

*Interview recorded September 18, 2019*

When I got here and I understood the players and we had leadership elections. I didn't, I had a different candidate than Newt, but, you know, I'm, I'm a team player also. So from the senate level of being the only, the swing vote, the one that gave the Republicans the gavel, I understood how tough it would be and how important it would be for me to have any leverage, even in the majority, with as many old bulls, as many people that always wanted to chair a committee but never could. So there would be a lot of competition. I knew that. You know that I had to get into a position where I could be with certain people of power. The pro-life position helped. Henry Hyde became very close to me as did Frank Wolf. So some of these people that became friends that I knew had power, it was very important for me.