

Nicola S. (Niki) Tsongas
U.S. Representative of Massachusetts (2007–2019)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Evolving Campaigns

Representative Tsongas compares campaigning when her husband served in Congress with her own House tenure.

Interview recorded January 18, 2018

I think campaigns have become much more of an industry, at least in 2007, which was not the case when my husband first ran for Congress. We did our own polling. We wrote our own brochures. TV wasn't the issue it is now, in a House race. In the Senate race, yes, but we didn't have to raise a lot of money for that. You, you had smaller staffs—you had larger, you had fewer people, too. Actually, that's the other thing that has changed, is that as our country has grown, I now represent about 725,000, 730,000 people, Paul represented 425,000 people. So, we've almost doubled the population of our districts, which tells you, you have, why funding becomes so much more important, to reach people. But even as I'm saying that, the times are changing. So now you have Facebook and Twitter, and ways in which you can reach voters that, on a daily basis, that didn't exist to the degree they do now, in 2007, didn't, didn't exist back then.