

Gwendolyn Mink

Daughter of the Honorable Patsy Takemoto Mink of Hawaii

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Representative Mink's Opposition to the Vietnam War

Gwendolyn Mink describes her mother's decision to oppose the Vietnam War.

Interview recorded March 14, 2016

Well, I don't—I'm not sure that it was just a decision to say she was against the war. In Congress, you have to vote on funding for the war. So, every time LBJ wanted an additional appropriation to pay for some aspect of the war, one had to make a decision. You know, are you going to do it? Are you going to say, okay? Or are you going to say, not okay? And, so in a way, the—that sort of aspect of the legislative involvement in the war was the, was the timetable for coming out publically, because once you decide you're going to be voting against the supplemental military authorization for, you know, dropping bombs on Hanoi, you have to say why. And that then becomes your statement and, and explanation of your anti-war position. So, I guess that's just to sort of rephrase your question away from making it a decision to come out against the wars, into a decision to vote against her President, right? Her Democratic President. And that was hard. I think that was hard for her to do. On the other hand, you know, we got to Washington in 1960—December of '64. In April of '65, the first national anti-war march was, transpired on the Washington Mall, and my mother encouraged my father and I to go, so, you know—and we did. So, I think, there was, you know, she already brought with her to Congress a, certainly a critical view of escalation in Vietnam.