

The Honorable Susan Molinari
U.S. Representative of New York (1990–1997)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

A Collaborative Relationship

Representative Molinari describes working with her father to gain resources for New York while he was borough president of Staten Island.

Interview recorded January 8, 2016

My dad and I worked together a lot, less on advice than coordinating, because again, so starting off, he was in Congress. I was in the city council. We would, you know, talk about, you know, needing a new ferry. And I would be able to say, "Look, I just talked to the appropriators. I think I can get such-and-such, can you match it?" When we switched, I was in the midst of building a senior citizen club in the basement of a church, which I was getting a hard time for, but, you know, I made dad promise that he was going to take that up. My dad always fought for the Staten Island homeport. Then it became sort of my job, before the base closure commissions. And so, we—yes, my father would give me advice. He would—my father has an amazing political acumen. He's 87 years old and he is still one of the smartest political people that I know, and so it would not be unusual for him to call me and say, "Hey, I think this is a great issue for you to jump on." Or, "I just heard that the mayor said this, why don't you offer to do this?" Most of the time, though, it was more of a collaborative relationship that we had, in trying to work together to bring the resources of the federal and the city together, for Staten Island and Brooklyn.