

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

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Limited Opportunity

Representative Molinari discusses how men used to build relationships in places women were not allowed, like the gym.

Interview recorded January 8, 2016

I do remember, I was running against a great guy from Florida named Cliff Stearns. And I had people who would come up to me and say—and, you know, who knows if this is true or not, you know—"I'd love to vote for you, but Cliff and I are so, you know, we've become such good friends at the gym." Hmm, the gym I'm not allowed into? You know, back in the day, we, we had our separate gyms, and so there was that little—you know, I don't necessarily need to work out with a bunch of sweaty men, but that was another one of those occasions where you interacted as—not as Members of Congress, but as people who are trying to lose weight, or, you know, just the relationship in another area. Now, of course, they, they do exercise together, scandalous as that sounds. But in the day, I wasn't allowed to be in the House Gym, and I had to overcome that from a relationship standpoint. And so I'd—it's just another, another difference.