

Women in U.S. Congress

2019 Ben Elrod Scholar
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A YOUNG PATRIOT

WOMEN IN U.S. CONGRESS

Review

Review what literature has been written about Women serving in Congress and their campaign finances, bill sponsorship, and electoral history.

Survey

Survey current women serving in Congress at various levels to learn about their personal experience as a women in their field.

Test

Dive deep into the finances of women currently serving in Congress to analyze their ability to raise money.

THESIS STATEMENT

An analysis of women in U.S. Congress studying their campaign finances, bill sponsorships, electoral history, and personal testaments to attempt to draw conclusions about the ability of a woman to fairly participate in the legislative process.

LITERATURE REVIEW RESULTS

BILL

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

There are distinct differences in analyzing individual contributions and total contributions.

Male candidates are raising more money than their female counterparts.

Donor networks are used to increase campaign contributions to female candidates.

SPONSORSHIP

Women have a tendency to sponsor bills related to women's and children's issues.

Bills that tackle "women's issues" are no more or less likely to become law than a bill of any other subject matter.

Women introduce bills over a wider range of subjects than their male counterparts.

ELECTORAL HISTORY

Women winning elected office is a combination of a number of factors, not just gender.

To male voters, gender is not important when determining who to vote for.

The electoral history of women is build upon the successes and failures of women who have come before.

PERSONAL TESTAMENTS

THE WOMEN BEHIND THE
OFFICE

WHO did I pick to interview?

HOW did I get an interview?

WHAT did I ask them?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Describe yourself in three words.

What sparked your desire to serve in public office?

Have you ever worked on a campaign for a female candidate?

Do you believe gender posed challenges for the campaign when raising funds?

If you answered 'yes' to question four, how did you overcome those challenges?

While in office, what have you learned about being a woman in Congress?

Do you have any advice for young women who dream of serving in public office?

Madeline Bryant

Madeline believes she is driven, a team-player, and a perfectionist.

An internship with Senator Boozeman, her senior thesis, and love for government brought her to D.C.

She worked on a small city council campaign for a female candidate who was running against another female.

“I never really found there to be any gender challenging aspects there – I just showed up to work every day and did it.”

“What I think is interesting about it is that, I’m fortunate to be in an office where my role as scheduler is very valued and I feel very valued. I’ve just never felt unvalued as a female in my work environment – ever. I am very fortunate to feel that way and I know that there are several women out there who may not feel that. But, I have always felt equally valued and as an equal part of the team as everyone else.”

“I would say ‘go for it’ first of all. The bigger thing I would say to anyone, not just women, is stay open minded about what you do.”



Scheduler for Congressman Bruce Westerman
(AR-04)

Emily Mace

Emily believes she can describe herself in a variety of words that fall under three categories: caring, focused, reflective.

A desire to be happy in her career brought her to Congress.

“It’s not just about being a woman, it’s about all the factors that come along with being a woman. It’s a lot of little things that, I believe, aren’t intentional but affect the overall perception of me as a woman, and sometimes negatively or inferior. I’ve learned that I need to make an extra effort to adopt some characteristics that don’t come naturally to me, personally.”

“My advice is to, first of all, take advantage of every opportunity that you have. If you think it’s an opportunity for you, take it - from small to big things. Also, work hard at the thing you are doing at that moment instead of trying to climb a ladder. If you are working hard where you’re at, that’s going to go a long way in demonstrating to others who you are and what you’re about.”



Legislative Director for Congressman Morgan Griffith (VA-09)

Representative Virginia Foxx

Representative Foxx believes she is hard-worker, principled, and a perfectionist.

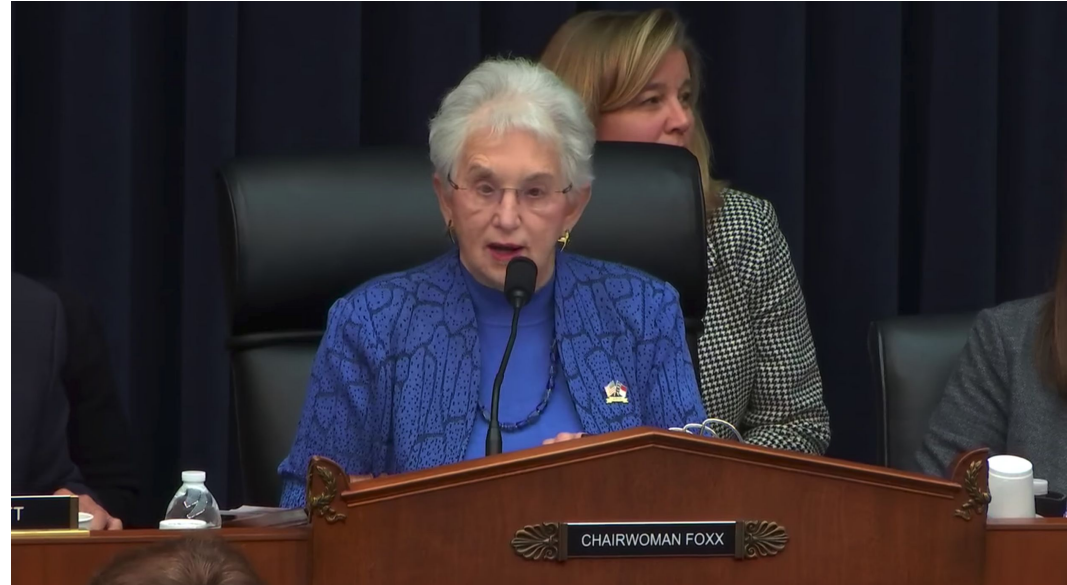
Sitting on a local school board in an effort to bring about change, and her continuing desire to serve the members of her community brought her to serve in Congress.

She believes her gender has posed immense challenges for her when raising campaign funds, among challenges in other areas. “Women don’t know a lot of people who have a lot of money,” Foxx claims.

In an effort to overcome her challenges in raising money, she “works hard,” as she claims women always do when faced with obstacles.

“It’s like any other profession where women are in the minority, you have to work harder to be recognized. Or, you have to have unique qualifications or characteristics. Until women are a critical mass in any group, they are not given the attention or privileges that come with being in the majority.”

“I tell any young person, male or female, do your best to be



Representative for the 5th Congressional District
of North Carolina.

MY DISCOVERIES

1. Gender should not be viewed as a limiting factor.
2. All women have different and unique experiences in Congress.
3. There is a place for everyone in Congress.



WHAT'S NEXT?

I have begun testing a number of hypothesis in my dataset that includes 40 current members of the U.S. House and their challengers in the 2018 general election.

Some factors I am testing include: age, gender, electoral status, region, and party.

**Thank you for
coming!**

