



POWERFUL WOMEN

The 25 Most Influential Women in Congress

**CQ
ROLL
CALL**

BY EMILY ETHRIDGE
AND CQ ROLL CALL STAFF



**POWERFUL WOMEN:
THE 25 MOST INFLUENTIAL
WOMEN IN CONGRESS**

By Emily Ethridge and CQ Roll Call

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We applaud the 25 Most Influential Women recognized in this eBook for their accomplishments. In the spirit of the groundbreaking campaign from P&G's Always brand, we congratulate you for leading #LikeAGirl.



Chapter 1

THE LONG ROAD

Men had a 128-year head start on women in Congress, and in an institution that rewards seniority and tenure, women are still playing catch-up.

As the longest-serving woman on Capitol Hill, Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski knows well what female lawmakers face. “But the challenges have changed because when we came, there were so few of us and we were considered a novelty,” the Maryland Democrat, first elected in 1976, has said.

Although women have expanded their ranks – a record 104 serve in the 114th Congress – Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., remains the only woman elected Speaker, and no woman has been Senate majority leader. Many committees have never been led by a woman. And with a few notable exceptions, female lawmakers as a group aren’t as prominent on major issues such as defense, immigration and taxes.

Still, along with their growing ranks, women have increased their influence on the legislative agenda over their nearly 100 years in Congress.

In their first few decades of service, women often became lawmakers through the so-called widow’s mandate, an unofficial tradition to appoint or elect a widow to directly succeed her husband in office. Of the 20 women who served in Congress from 1917 to 1934, eight were widows who replaced their husbands. The longest-serving woman in the House, Edith Nourse Rogers, began her 35-year career in 1925 after filling the vacancy left by her husband’s death. Others came from political families or had husbands who served years before they ran for office.

Women then had individual projects, and a few became sought-after speakers, but they rarely had the opportunity to set the legislative agenda or be power players. Part of this was due to a lack of seniority. Nearly half of the 36 women elected or appointed from 1935 to 1954 served one term or less, according to the House historian’s office. It was not until the 1970s that women began coming to Congress in larger numbers, with more advanced education and professional experience, giving their presence added heft.

They began to breach the top ranks the same way men did — by logging hours, building alliances, developing areas of expertise and being forceful when necessary.

They also were more likely than men to forge bipartisan alliances and at times worked together to set an agenda on so-called women’s issues.

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Today, women lawmakers are leveraging other ways to gain and exert influence. They now include skilled deal-makers, masters of the media and lawmakers with extensive policy expertise.

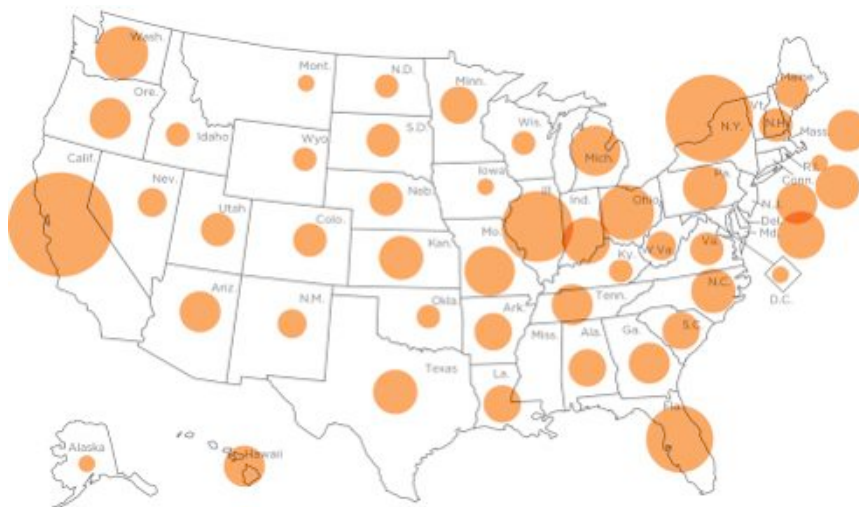
They work behind the scenes crafting legislation and often force others to tailor bills to their liking with crucial swing votes. Some women speak out and set policy markers in debates that others can navigate from. Others seek out overlooked issues and elevate them.

Female lawmakers no longer band together to work solely on so-called women's issues, such as when several were involved in talks that helped end a 2013 government shutdown. But they realize, too, that they can draw attention to certain issues by combining their strengths even if they disagree on a solution. They have helped bring new emphasis to pay equity, military sexual assaults and equal coverage of health care services. They also have incorporated a focus on women within larger issues, including the economy and education.

Although women still make up only about 20 percent of Congress, they continue to clear new paths.

STATE TRACK RECORDS

In 1917, three years before the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote, Montana made history by electing the first woman, Republican suffragist Jeannette Rankin, to Congress. In the nearly 100 years since, Montana has not elected another woman to the House or Senate. California leads all states, having sent 39 women to Congress and by having 21 of its 55 seats filled by women in the 114th Congress. The map below shows (via dot size) which states have supported women the most.



Chapter 2

PATHS TO POWER

After nearly 100 years in Congress, women have made themselves essential players, using seniority, experience, legislative know-how and toughness to gain power. But in the current hyperpartisan atmosphere, they have begun seeking different ways to influence.

With unity in Congress all but impossible, there's a premium on party loyalty. Female lawmakers now come from the most conservative and most liberal regions of the country, and they vote accordingly. Both parties are quick to reward lawmakers who maintain the party line, speak with authority on legislative issues and rally others to the cause.

Democrats rely on New York Rep. Louise Slaughter, who has served for nearly two decades, to hold the party line on contentious issues. From her spot on the Rules Committee, she tackles nearly every tough topic before it comes to the House floor, voicing the party's position and pushing to incorporate Democrats' input. Her tough words belie a sense of humor and warm personality that, along with her knowledge of the issues, has earned her the respect of her colleagues.

On the GOP side, Reps. Diane Black of Tennessee and Kay Granger of Texas have become significant voices on a number of issues. Republicans turn to Black on health care and spending and to Granger on foreign aid, defense and immigration.

A former nurse, Black uses a direct, no-nonsense style when questioning witnesses at hearings. She often appears with House Republican leaders at news conferences to promote a bill or criticize Democrats' policies.

Granger, who has spent nearly two decades in the House, has a reputation for being steely but fair. She is chairwoman of the Appropriations subcommittee that funds the State Department and foreign aid. Rock star Bono of U2 has described her approach to aid programs as "tough love."

To help shape and deliver their messages, Republicans have tapped Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers of Washington. She has a good sense of what messages appeal to both the GOP base and other voters. When delivering the party's response to Obama's 2014 State of the Union address, McMorris Rodgers described "a more hopeful Republican vision, one that empowers you, not the government."

McMorris Rodgers also struck an emotional note by emphasizing her family. She mentioned her newborn, who had arrived just eight weeks before the State of the Union address, and her oldest child, who has Down syndrome.

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Part of McMorris Rodgers' power comes from her leadership role. As the Republican Party tries to counter claims that it is out of touch with women, it can point to McMorris Rodgers, the chairwoman of the House Republican Conference.

She does not have a lot of competition, though. Of the 23 current House Republican women, only one leads a committee.

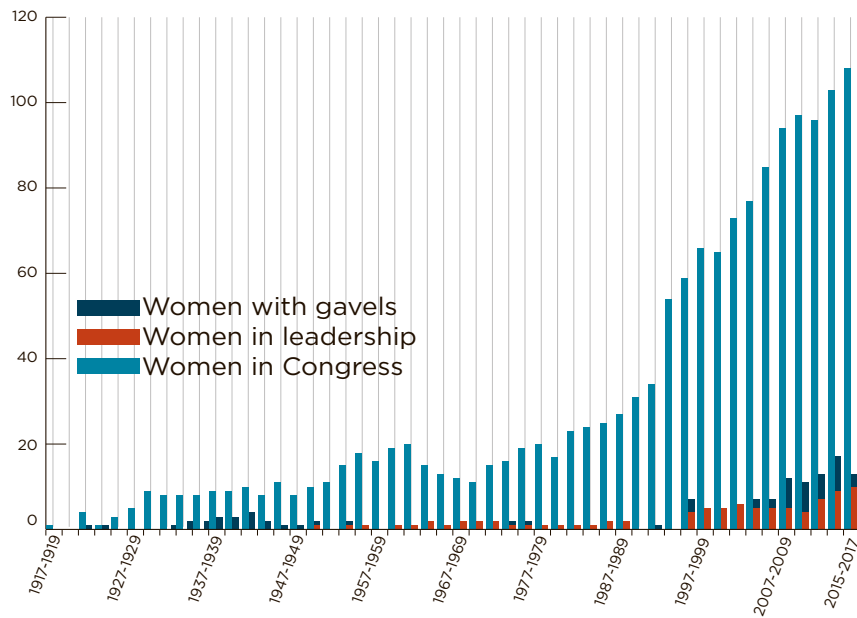
Other women take advantage of the 24-hour media cycle to boost their profiles. Democrat Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, one of the first two female combat veterans to serve in the House, is seen as a rising star in only her second term in Congress.

Articulate and opinionated, she has racked up numerous TV appearances speaking out against sending more troops to the Middle East, problems at the Department of Veterans Affairs and sexual assault in the military.

Gabbard, who had success in enacting a measure to expedite airport screening for veterans, also has talked about her disappointment in being denied military roles because she was a woman and how that experience spurred her run for Congress.

INCHING FORWARD

The first woman was elected to Congress in 1916, taking office in 1917. It was another 32 years until a woman was elevated to a leadership role. And though the 114th Congress has the most female members ever, and the most women in leadership, the Democrats' loss of the Senate led to a big drop in the number of women wielding gavels in congressional committees.



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“I felt I had trained hard, and I was good at what I was trained to do,” Gabbard said on PBS in July 2013, saying that it gave her added impetus “to run for Congress and to be able to bring a lot of these issues – whether it is sexual assault in the military, whether it is women being able to serve in any role that they are capable in serving – to the national conversation to try to effect some change.”

Silver tongues and quick wits have long aided lawmakers, but members now can, with a well-timed speech and motivated supporters, yank attention to their issue of choice and try to shift legislation. Witness how Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren, beloved by progressives, fueled a furious, last-minute campaign to sink a fiscal 2015 spending package over a rollback of the Dodd-Frank financial regulatory law.

Commanding attention with a trademark energetic speech, Warren highlighted a relatively obscure issue that motivated progressives and helped define their priorities. The effort was unsuccessful, but the effects were real – soon after, Warren was added to Senate Democratic leadership in a new position. (And, though she’s said in the past that she won’t run, she’s also talked about as a potential presidential candidate.)

Then there are long-serving members who rose through the ranks and parlayed that into power within their own parties. Pelosi and Mikulski both ascended through the more traditional route: years of work, forging of alliances and numerous battles.

Pelosi, who has been both speaker and minority leader, is a relentless worker who puts the party message above nearly everything else. She keeps her caucus in line and works effectively even with her sometime rivals, including the No. 2 Democrat, Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland. Although she is seen as tough, Pelosi often points to her softer side by referencing her grandchildren and her abiding love for dark chocolate. (She prefers Ghirardelli.)

Mikulski, meanwhile, offers advice to new female members and organizes bipartisan dinners for the Senate women. In public, she speaks directly when promoting her views. Although she announced that she will retire at the end of her term in 2016, Mikulski’s influence will continue to shape women’s roles in Congress.

Mikulski has a reputation for being intimidating, which she says is unfair. “I think that’s sexist. I think men are called ‘boss’ and women are called ‘bossy’ when they both have the same job. I think when women are insistent and persistent and determined, and I am ... it’s often judged by a different standard.”

The pugnacious Baltimorean also is known as a skilled negotiator who can cut a deal with nearly anyone.

Not all members have been able to turn institutional experience into influence. Marcy Kaptur of Ohio is the longest-serving woman in the House and the longest-

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serving Democrat on the powerful Appropriations Committee. But her social conservatism on issues such as abortion has distanced her from party leaders. But the ever industrious Kaptur has found other ways to exert her power, intensely focusing on issues close to her heart and important to her district, including the environment. She also stacks up legislative wins by striking GOP riders and cutting deals on amendments to appropriations bills.

In the Senate, institutional rules give moderates a better chance to influence their parties. Republicans Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Susan Collins of Maine have carved important roles for themselves, using their policy knowledge and sometimes-moderate positions to help bridge the gap between the parties and find compromises. Both women have strong policy chops and lead Appropriations subcommittees, and Murkowski chairs the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Collins is former chairwoman of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee.

Neither is the loudest person in a room, but when they speak, people take notice. And although their independent streaks can lead to clashes with party leadership, both women are beloved in their Northern, low-population states for their unconventionality.

Another way women exercise power is by staking out a marker on one side of the debate, as Rep. Barbara Lee has done over her nine terms in Congress. The California Democrat, the only lawmaker who voted against authorizing military force to respond to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, is a crucial progressive voice for House Democrats and helps shape the party's position against that of the Republicans.

Chapter 3

NEW POLICY ISSUES

Even though they are not always unified on how to solve issues, women have used their collective — and, on the Hill, growing — voice to force Congress to grapple with new policy issues, including women’s health, sexual assault in the military and pay equity.

Female lawmakers use this strategy even when they don’t see eye to eye within their own party. Senate Democrats Kirsten Gillibrand, in her first full term, and Claire McCaskill, in her second term, used it in their battle over how to handle military sexual assault, which divided Democrats, Republicans and other women.

Although the House and Senate Armed Services panels had discussed sex assaults in the military for years, the debate did not really take off until seven women sat on the Senate committee, noted Michele Swers, an associate professor of American government at Georgetown University.

McCaskill and Gillibrand used their individual strengths to promote their own proposals while joining together to highlight the issue. Gillibrand, who practiced corporate law in New York before serving in the House and being appointed to Hillary Rodham Clinton’s former seat, is outspoken and polished before TV cameras. McCaskill, an intense former prosecutor in Missouri, works more behind the scenes and is happy to ask and field tough questions.

After Congress in late 2013 passed a broad defense bill that included changes to how the military handled sexual assault cases, but left out some of the most significant provisions that had been proposed, the pair held dueling news conferences the same day to kick-start the next round of the fight.

Gillibrand took the podium surrounded by TV cameras, fellow senators, advocates, military sexual assault survivors and three American flags. Later, she gave veterans the chance to speak, at one point holding the microphone for a man in a wheelchair who said he was sexually assaulted while in the Marine Corps.

“Nowhere in America would we allow a boss to decide if an employee was sexually assaulted, except in the U.S. military,” Gillibrand said. “We owe them better. We owe them a justice system worthy of their sacrifice.” Gillibrand has pushed for taking the decisions to prosecute such cases out of the hands of the military.

Meanwhile, while Gillibrand’s event continued, McCaskill and New Hampshire Republican Kelly Ayotte, also a former prosecutor, were meeting with a separate group of reporters to promote their own proposal, which would require evaluations of whether commanding officers created a climate in which victims could report criminal

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activity without fear of retaliation, among other items.

“The months between an incident and the time that you have to come in front of your accuser is excruciatingly bad,” McCaskill said. “There is no way that [Gillibrand’s] proposal could be implemented in a way that would allow victims to get through that process more quickly.”

During the debate, Mikulski tried to keep all female senators involved in the discussions. She called a closed-door meeting to keep them updated on the proposals and later said female senators “were speaking with one voice,” even if they had “occasional differences” on the specifics.

Ultimately, in March 2014, and after much public and private debate, the Senate narrowly blocked Gillibrand’s proposal from advancing, with 17 of 20 Senate women in support of proceeding. The Senate then passed, 97-0, an alternative from McCaskill, Ayotte and Nebraska Republican Deb Fischer. Even so, Gillibrand continues to push for her proposal and keep the media spotlight on the issue.

Female lawmakers first used this approach of banding together out of necessity, when their numbers were growing but they lacked seniority and leadership positions. For example, a bipartisan group of women worked to require the National Institutes of Health to include women and minorities in research trials it funded. Another group pushed an “economic equity” package in the 1980s that dealt with pay equity, dependent care, Social Security and tax issues. But the strategy has been most effective on issues related to gender, where voters often seek female perspectives.

“You can only leverage your gender if people think it’s related to gender,” said Swers.

Both parties can benefit from showing engagement on so-called women’s issues — but their motives differ slightly. Democrats often are trying to rally their base, while Republican women can show they put party first.

“Republican women, in particular, today have extra incentives to demonstrate their partisan credentials,” said Kathryn Pearson, an associate professor of political science at the University of Minnesota. If they appear to be working too closely with Democrats, they risk turning off voters who may stereotype women as liberal and interested in building consensus.

At the same time, Republican lawmakers can’t afford to appear disengaged on issues important to women, who have made up the majority of the electorate since the early 1980s. One way for GOP women to navigate such a situation is to join with Democratic women to highlight an issue but then offer a conservative alternative, said Sarah Binder, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and political science professor at George Washington University.

“You have to find a way both to be essentially a loyalty player for Republicans and

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yet ... because of your electoral circumstances, you can't just say no," said Binder.

For example, Democrats have long fought to address paycheck inequality, often highlighting it in election years. But many business groups, concerned with regulation and litigation, oppose some of these proposals, which complicates the issue for Republicans.

In 2009, the Democrat-led Congress cleared the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act, which changed the statute of limitations for filing wage-discrimination lawsuits. The measure, the first that President Barack Obama signed into law, divided Republican women, with all those in the House voting against it, and those in the Senate supporting it.

"At the end of the day, I believe it is more important to vote for legislation that will improve every American's ability to access full redress for any act of wage discrimination," Murkowski said in a written statement after the vote.

Since then, Republicans have blocked Democrats' pay equity efforts. In 2014, the Senate GOP had Nebraska's Fischer lead opposition to a Democratic bill and offer an alternative she said would involve less new regulation.

Fischer, a no-nonsense former rancher and state legislator, emphasized that she was working on economic priorities, not just a women's issue. "Women want the same thing that men want," she said, "so I don't like being slotted in what's perceived as a women's issue, because I think women's issues are the same important issues that everybody in this country is trying to address."

Women lawmakers have also grouped together to spotlight health care issues, even when the effort to overhaul the health care system in 2009 and 2010 became politically heated. Republican women nonetheless continued to engage and offer alternatives on some smaller issues.

For example, when Mikulski led efforts to require insurers to cover preventive health services for women without copayments, Murkowski offered her own alternative. Mikulski's version eventually won out, but with the support of GOP moderates Collins and then-Senator Olympia J. Snowe of Maine, who retired in 2013.

Democrats also tried to use the health care debate to align themselves with women voters and paint the GOP as out of touch. During a 2009 meeting of the Senate committee that oversees health policy, Arizona Republican Jon Kyl said adding maternity care benefits would make his insurance policy more expensive. "I don't need maternity care," he said.

Michigan Democrat Debbie Stabenow quickly replied, "I think your mom probably did."

Chapter 4

PARTY POWER

*These lawmakers help guide
their parties' caucuses and mold agendas.
Their ability to get others
on board — and keep them there —
makes them powerful allies.*



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Diane Black (R)

6th District/Tennessee

Elected 2010; 3rd term

Committees: Budget; Ways & Means

Residence: Gallatin

Born: Jan. 16, 1951; Baltimore, Md.

Religion: Christian

Family: Husband, David Black; three children

Education: Anne Arundel Community College, A.S.N. 1971;
Belmont University, B.S.N. 1992

Career: Nurse; nonprofit community and
health organization fundraiser; college instructor

Political Highlights: Tennessee House, 1999-2005;
Tennessee Senate, 2005-2010

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Black has become an important figure in the House Republican Conference since her election in the GOP wave of 2010. She has a key role in the party's outreach to women voters and candidates. Her seat on the Ways and Means Committee keeps her in the thick of tax and health care debates, and she is one of three Republicans who are on both the Budget and on Ways and Means panels.

Political discourse comes naturally to Black. She makes more than her share of media appearances for the GOP, and as a freshman in the 112th Congress (2011-12) she led the communications efforts of the National Republican Congressional Committee. In the 113th Congress (2013-14), Black was an active participant in Project GROW, the NRCC's program to find and mentor woman candidates. She also helps that cause as a fundraiser.

Commenting on the program in 2014, Black noted that part of the strategy is long term — there are women with a strong interest in politics who “maybe aren't in a place in their life to run for office. ... We want to make sure that we are cultivating those women and keeping in touch with them.”

Some people were also quick to note Black's inclusion on the conference committee that finalized the fiscal 2014 budget. During a government shutdown a few weeks earlier, Republicans staged a photo op with their eight-person negotiating team at a conference table; critics noted that they were all white males. Black was invited to join the budget conference committee not long after. “I hope that it shows the public that our leadership honors women,” she said.

And as Black herself would point out, she was eminently qualified. She is the highest-ranking Republican woman on the Budget Committee, and she regularly deals with major fiscal issues on Ways and Means. (What's more, she's from Gallatin — a town named after Albert Gallatin, the longest-serving Treasury secretary and a noted hater of federal debt.)

Black is enthusiastic about efforts to overhaul the tax code. In 2013, Ways and Means committee members formed numerous working groups to study different aspects of the code. Black led the team focusing on education provisions, and with Illinois Democrat Danny K. Davis she produced a bill consolidating three existing credits and the tuition deduction into a single, partly refundable credit. It was approved by the full committee in June 2014.

The overall tax code should be fairer, according to Black, a goal that she defines as “everyone pays something as long as they're able. ... If you're an able person and you are working, I think that you should be paying something into the system.”

Black also has a deep interest in health care policy. She worked for decades as an emergency room and long-term-care nurse, and she has said that the implementation of TennCare is what drew her into state government, where she served in both the

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House and Senate. That public insurance program greatly expanded coverage, nearly bankrupted the state and was significantly pared in 2005. Black sees it as a cautionary tale for the implementation of the 2010 health care overhaul.

Black sits on the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, and is vice chairwoman of the GOP Doctors Caucus. She favors what she calls “market-based” approaches to health care, and she is intrigued by value-based insurance design — in general terms, the concept that medical services with the highest value to a patient’s health are provided at low or no cost to the patient. Black (along with Michigan Democrat John D. Dingell) organized a Capitol Hill briefing on V-BID in early 2014, and she has proposed introducing those principles to Medicare Advantage plans.

Black is a social conservative, which has a direct bearing on her health care work. In 2013, she was the lead sponsor of a bill to protect “conscience rights” — it says no employers or religious institutions would have to provide coverage of abortion “or other item or service” if the employer or institution has a moral or religious objection. She was quite pleased by a June 2014 Supreme Court ruling that certain employers with religious objections could not be compelled to provide insurance covering contraceptives that they find offensive.

She is also the lead sponsor of a bill to prevent abortion providers from getting federal grants for family planning and reproductive health services. Black has a harder edge when discussing the bill’s main target, Planned Parenthood. Writing in Politico in early 2013, she said that organization’s “sleight-of-hand accounting and dishonest PR campaign led much of the public to believe that women’s health care is its primary function, which could not be further from reality.”

Black has staked out conservative positions on other major issues, including immigration. She argues that states need to be able to enforce immigration laws if the federal government won’t, and she has written a bill to block funds for a public advocate position that the Obama administration created to represent illegal immigrants. She also speaks out on privacy concerns. Many of her oversight efforts on Ways and Means have dealt with data security on the federal government’s health care websites.

Born in Baltimore, Black is the third of four children. Her mother was a homemaker, and her father was a World War II veteran and an electrician with Kaiser Aluminum. She moved to Tennessee in the 1980s, where along with her husband she started Aegis Sciences Corp., a forensics and drug-testing company. Her stake in the company makes Black one of the wealthiest members of Congress; the most recent calculations from CQ Roll Call (based on financial disclosure forms) show a net worth of at least \$21.24 million.

Black spent 12 years in the Tennessee state legislature, split evenly between the

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House and Senate. She was the first woman to chair the Republican Caucus in the state Senate. She was elected to Congress in 2010 following the retirement of conservative Democratic Rep. Bart Gordon. The district had become increasingly Republican over the years, so the primary was hotly contested; Black prevailed by fewer than 300 votes in a seven-way race. After that, the general election was a cakewalk.

As redrawn for the 2012 election, the 6th District lost its biggest population center — Murfreesboro was moved to the 4th District — but kept a very Republican lean. Black didn't mess around, raising more than \$3.5 million for her campaign. In the primary, she easily defeated Lou Ann Zelenik, the runner-up in the 2010 primary. Democrats didn't field a candidate in November.

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Rep. Kay Granger (R)

12th District/Texas

Elected 1996; 10th term

Committees: Appropriations

(State-Foreign Operations – chairwoman)

Residence: Fort Worth

Born: Jan. 18, 1943; Greenville, Texas

Religion: Methodist

Family: Divorced; three children

Education: Texas Wesleyan University, B.S. 1965

Career: Insurance agency owner; teacher

Political Highlights: Fort Worth Zoning Commission, 1981-1989;
Fort Worth City Council, 1989-1991; mayor of Fort Worth, 1991-1995

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In a boisterous delegation, Granger is a quiet but steely operator. Elected in 1996, she was the first woman to represent the Lone Star state in the House of Representatives. Eighteen years later, she wields both local and international power as chairwoman of an Appropriations subcommittee.

It is not out of the realm of possibilities that Granger could one day chair House Appropriations, thanks in part to GOP committee term limits. But for now, she chairs the State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee, where she supports well-defined aid programs but is sternly skeptical when their benefits are less than fully clear. Bono, the rock star and aid advocate, called her approach “tough love.”

Foreign aid — rarely a very popular spending account in Congress — has become an even more difficult sell under recent fiscal constraints. Some advocates of foreign aid spending see more toughness than love in her approach.

Under her stewardship, the “frontline states” of strategic importance to the United States have continued to receive relatively high levels of assistance, while other nations and regions have fallen behind. The favored nations were Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Israel and Texas’s neighbor, Mexico, where drug violence has spread northward, even to Forth Worth, the city where Granger once was mayor.

When Granger has backed spending for foreign aid programs, she often has insisted on attaching difficult preconditions for disbursing the money.

She is dubious of the returns on spending for the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. “If these institutions were being held to the same standards as our bilateral programs, the ‘bang for the buck’ argument might be credible, but they’re not,” she said at an April 2013 hearing.

She represents the district of former Democratic House Speaker Jim Wright, and her legacy will likely be a public works project back home called the Trinity River Vision. The \$910 million economic development and flood control project to revitalize Fort Worth is in progress and relies on Granger’s capacity to bring federal funding.

On national issues, Granger led a working group to address border control in the summer of 2014.

The group’s recommendations were incorporated into legislation that was to be voted on the eve of August recess. But the deal collapsed at the last minute, and a revamped, more conservative version of the bill passed a day later.

In addition to her job on the State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Granger sits on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. From that position, she has looked out for defense contractors in and around her district, such as Lockheed Martin Corp. and Bell Helicopter Textron. When the Air Force proposed in its fiscal 2013 budget to transfer some C-130 transport planes from her district to Montana, she helped make sure that the Defense spending bill

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included language that barred any such moves. Plans to move the planes were eventually dropped.

Granger came out strongly against automatic cuts to defense accounts put in place by an 2011 law. She wrote in a constituent newsletter that allowing the “sequestration” of more than \$500 billion from defense spending would cause a “devastating blow to our nation’s defense capabilities.” Those cuts started in 2013.

Granger is a member of the conservative Republican Study Committee, but she does have some moderate tendencies.

Granger is friends with the top Democrat on Appropriations, Nita M. Lowey of New York. At a hearing early in the 113th Congress (2013-14), Granger advised witnesses that “when we say this is bipartisan, it is. And when we say we’re friends, we are. And we think that’s important in the way we conduct our business, and we hope it spreads.”

Lowey dubbed them “the odd couple.”

Other Democratic members concur that Granger is a Republican who they can deal with in negotiations.

She calls herself a “pro-choice Republican,” although she supports efforts to ban federal funding of abortion. She was vice chairwoman of the Republican Conference for the 110th Congress (2007-08), and she tried to help her party reach out to moderate voters by de-emphasizing hot-button issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage. She pushed to address family finances, advocating ideas such as full tax-deductibility for most medical expenses.

She expressed optimism in early 2009 regarding President Barack Obama’s pledge of bipartisanship in addressing the economic crisis and tightening spending. But she warned against tax hikes and cuts in the armed forces.

Granger also voted against Obama’s \$787 billion stimulus plan, saying she believed the bill should have focused on tax relief and should have provided more money for transportation and water infrastructure projects. (In 2013, she joined the Transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee.)

As one of his first acts as president, Obama overturned the “Mexico City” policy that prohibited federal funding of groups that perform or promote abortion overseas, a perennial point of contention during consideration of the spending bill for which her subcommittee is responsible. Granger said his decision flouted a consensus that the United States should support family planning abroad, but nothing related to abortion.

Granger was born in Greenville, Texas, to two public school teachers who divorced when she was 13. After working her way through college, she became a teacher in the same Birdville school district near Ft. Worth that named an elementary school after her mother. She taught literature and journalism for a decade, but grew restless. In the late 1970s, she went into the insurance business.

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Shortly after her career change, she and her husband divorced, and she raised three children as a single mother. She later opened her own insurance agency. She is known in political circles for her superior preparation and organization skills.

In 1981, Granger was appointed to the Fort Worth Zoning Commission, where she served until she won a seat on the city council in 1989. Two years later, she won a nonpartisan election to become the first female mayor at a time of economic hardship for the city.

Both parties courted her when Democratic Rep. Pete Geren decided not to seek re-election in 1996. Granger chose to run as a Republican and resigned as mayor. She won the nomination handily, then defeated another former Fort Worth mayor, Hugh Parmer, by nearly 17 points.

Granger has not been in a close contest since then, regularly racking up margins of at least 45 points.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D)

12th District/California

Elected 1987; 14th full term

Residence: San Francisco

Born: March 26, 1940; Baltimore, Md.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Paul Pelosi; five children

Education: Trinity College (D.C.), A.B. 1962

Career: Public relations consultant; senatorial campaign committee finance chairwoman; homemaker

Political Highlights: California Democratic Party chairwoman, 1981-1983

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Pelosi is the most visibly powerful woman in the U.S. Congress.

The only woman ever to be elected speaker of the House, she is a dogged worker who puts the party message above nearly everything else. One of her most impressive traits is her ability to corral her caucus, regardless of its size or internal divisions. She knows just how often to let her caucus members buck the party line so she can call in the chits when she most needs them.

The daughter of a Maryland congressman, Pelosi can deliver a message, work a crowd, and team up with rivals to achieve a shared goal. Although not always quick with a quip, Pelosi is a tough negotiator and skilled at demonstrating her importance to others in charge.

As House minority leader in the 113th Congress (2013-14), Pelosi found herself excluded at times from major negotiations between the White House and the majority leaders in her chamber and in the Senate. But she flexed her muscle when House Republicans repeatedly found themselves on the brink of failing to pass major legislation due to fractures within their own caucus, producing the votes needed to advance the bills – and reminding the GOP just how much it needs her to be able to govern .

“I don’t think anyone is irrelevant. We have leverage if they don’t have the votes,” she said in 2014. “They have leverage because they know we will be responsible. And that allows them to be irresponsible to a certain extent.”

Even though her last big showdown of the 113th Congress was technically a legislative loss for her – passing the fiscal 2015 “cromnibus” to fund every government agency except the Department of Homeland Security through September – Pelosi demonstrated her influence to congressional Republicans and the White House alike. After declining at first to take a position on the spending package, she vociferously opposed it due to policy riders that would alter an important component of the Dodd-Frank financial overhaul law dealing with derivatives and would increase the amount of money individual donors could contribute annually to national political parties.

“I was so really heartbroken ... to see the taint that was placed on this valuable appropriations bill from on high,” Pelosi said on the House floor Dec. 11, 2014.

While Pelosi insisted that Democrats had the leverage to convince Republicans to take the riders out, enough members of her party – 57 – voted to pass the bill after White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough visited the Hill to rally support for the measure. Though Pelosi had stopped short of whipping members against the legislation, her firm opposition to it demonstrated to Republicans and Democrats alike that she still wields influence in the House.

The appropriations drama happened just weeks after Pelosi successfully scuttled a

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deal made by Senate Democrats and House Republicans on a tax extenders package that would have included several business tax credits while axing a number of Democratic priorities. The White House backed her up with a veto threat, and the compromise disintegrated.

Pelosi said in late 2012 that she'd rather be minority leader under a Democratic president than speaker under a Republican one. She also said that a major 2012 campaign theme is what holds her caucus together: "Our unifying principle is that we are here for working families."

Pelosi established herself as a historic figure by breaking through what she has called the "marble ceiling" — in 2002 she became the first woman to lead a party caucus, and in 2007 she became the first female speaker of the House.

A key question facing the liberal Pelosi is whether she'll build up a successor or let the more moderate minority whip, Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland, become the top House Democrat. Had Pelosi stepped down in 2010 or 2012, Hoyer would have been a lock to replace her — he has long aspired to hold the top job. Although he has been fairly effective working with Pelosi, their rivalry goes back at least to 2002, when Pelosi defeated him in a head-to-head contest for the job of minority whip.

Despite her reputation for being insular, Pelosi insists that she is working to build up the next generation of Democratic leaders when it's time for her to step down. In particular, she has concentrated on putting women and minorities in positions of power, choosing New Mexico Democrat Ben Ray Lujan to be the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi to serve as the top Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee.

But sometimes Pelosi's stature isn't enough of an incentive for her peers to elevate her chosen ones. She endorsed Anna G. Eshoo of California for the ranking Democrat slot on the Energy and Commerce Committee early in the race for retiring California Rep. Henry A. Waxman's coveted position. But Frank Pallone Jr. of New Jersey, who had a seniority advantage over Eshoo, ultimately won that contest.

Even without the same legislative stroke she had as speaker, Pelosi tries to set a liberal tone for her party. In her Nov. 5 "Dear Colleague" letter asking Democrats to continue to support her as minority leader, Pelosi singled out amending the 1965 Voting Rights Act as one of her top priorities for the 114th Congress — though she sought to temper the political tone of her note by calling the effort a "basic and even non-partisan challenge." During deficit reduction negotiations late in the 112th Congress (2011-12), Pelosi indicated that spending cuts shouldn't be part of any deal — the exact opposite demand of most Republicans.

Wheeling and dealing come naturally to Pelosi. Her father was Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., a New Deal Democratic congressman from Baltimore who also

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served three terms as the city's mayor. Politics was a family affair for Pelosi and her five brothers, who grew up in a corner row house in crowded Little Italy.

They took turns staffing a desk in the D'Alesandro home, where constituents stopped in to ask for help finding a job, finding a doctor, getting food or making the rent. It was a constant lesson in retail politics, where favors and constituent services could translate into votes and loyalty. Pelosi notes that her mother, Anunciata (for whom she is named), played a big behind-the-scenes role in D'Alesandro's long political success.

Pelosi attended Catholic schools in Baltimore, then went to Trinity College in Washington. While in college, she met San Franciscan Paul Pelosi, who was a student at Georgetown University. They married in 1963, and Pelosi gave birth to her five children over the next six years while the couple lived in New York City.

The Pelosis moved to Paul's hometown, and she became increasingly active in Democratic Party politics as that city was fashioning itself into a bastion of liberalism. She rose to become state party chairwoman and played a role in hosting the 1984 Democratic National Convention.

She became a close ally of Rep. Phillip Burton, the firebrand Democratic liberal from San Francisco who narrowly lost a race for majority leader and whose brother, former Rep. John Burton, remains a close Pelosi friend.

When Phillip Burton died in 1983, he was succeeded by his widow, Sala Burton, another Pelosi friend who had a reputation as a tough, focused politician. Pelosi's career in elective politics began in 1987, when Sala Burton was diagnosed with cancer and personally summoned Pelosi to her hospital room to ask her to run for the seat. With her youngest child already in high school, Pelosi took the plunge, winning a wild Democratic primary and runoff to score a victory in her first run for public office. Pelosi has since been re-elected overwhelmingly.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D)

25th District/New York

Elected 1986; 15th term

Committees: Rules — ranking member

Residence: Fairport

Born: Aug. 14, 1929, Harlan County, Ky.

Religion: Episcopalian

Family: Widowed; three children

Education: University of Kentucky, B.S. 1951 (microbiology), M.P.H. 1953

Career: State government aide; market researcher; microbiologist

Political Highlights: Monroe County Legislature, 1975-1979;

New York Assembly, 1983-1987

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Slaughter is in her mid-80s, and she remains a vigorous liberal partisan who plans to seek a 16th term in the House in 2016. She frequently characterizes Republicans as unwilling to cooperate on issues such as health care, women's rights and the budget. Even so, colleagues of all political persuasions have been charmed by her warmth and grit.

Slaughter has spent most of her adult life in a suburb of Rochester. But she was brought up in the mountains of Kentucky's Harlan County — her father was a blacksmith in a coal mine — and her Southern accent has survived. She came to Congress in 1987 and was given a seat on the Rules Committee in her second term.

She became the panel's first chairwoman in 2007 and showed unswerving loyalty to her party, helping steer to passage several major Democratic initiatives with little or no Republican support. During the 2010 health care debate, she was accused of bending the rules. Some House Democrats were reluctant to go on the record supporting a Senate version of the overhaul bill. Leaders floated the idea of a rule that would deem the bill passed once the House voted only on some minor corrections. Republicans called it "the Slaughter solution" and blasted it as possibly unconstitutional. It was eventually scrapped.

Slaughter now serves as the ranking member, and she has no qualms about returning the criticism. In 2012, Republicans put forth a bill to create an expedited process for considering a possible tax code overhaul in the 113th Congress (2013-14). "House Republicans want special procedures that allow them to force their right-wing legislative agenda through the Senate," she said on the House floor.

She also said Republicans were "hell-bent" on shutting down the government at the start of fiscal 2014. Just before the shutdown, GOP leaders changed a House rule so that only the majority leader could call up a Senate-passed bill to fund the government. Slaughter called the whole process "one of the worst things I've ever seen."

Rhetoric is Slaughter's primary weapon as ranking member — the lopsided party ratios for the Rules Committee effectively disarm the minority party in decisions about procedure. However, she has policy work that also keeps her going.

Slaughter has a master's degree in public health and is the only microbiologist in Congress, a background that informs her advocacy on national health matters. She has been particularly outspoken about the issue of antibiotics resistance, which she attributes to the use of antibiotics in livestock raised for human consumption.

"We have a finite resource of antibiotics, and we are seeing every day more and more resistant bacteria," she said. "I think it's cataclysmic. I put it up there with climate change as something we better deal with right away." Since 2007, Slaughter has introduced legislation to ban non-therapeutic uses of medically important antibiotics, but the bills have languished without major bipartisan support. She has criticized the

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Food and Drug Administration for falling “woefully short of what is needed to address a public health crisis.” She launched her latest bill in March 2015 at a Capitol Hill rally with groups supporting the legislation.

Also in the health area, President George W. Bush in 2008 signed a version of her bill barring employers and insurers from discriminating against people based on their genetic profile. Slaughter had pressed the legislation for more than a decade and called it the “best thing I ever passed in my life.” She is also very proud of her efforts to establish the Office of Research on Women’s Health at the National Institutes of Health in 1990.

Slaughter is very vocal when Republicans offer legislation regarding abortion — in the 113th Congress, she joined female colleagues and abortion rights advocates for a makeshift protest of a Judiciary Committee markup of a bill to restrict funding for the procedure. “It’s increasingly evident,” she said, “that the only women’s agenda that the Republicans have put forward is to take away your health care rights and then tell you to get lost.”

Some of Slaughter’s policy concerns are tied directly to Rochester, which like much of upstate New York has been shifting out of a manufacturing-heavy economy. “I’ve never seen a trade agreement since I’ve been here that benefitted the American worker,” Slaughter said. She opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership currently under negotiation and in November 2014 she was one of three Democrats in the House who expressed opposition to giving President Barack Obama “fast-track” authority that would expedite the consideration of trade deals by Congress.

Slaughter introduced a bill in 2013 to curb unfair practices by trade partners; it would allow the United States to restore trade barriers against an alleged violator while cases work their way through the World Trade Organization. She also has worked extensively on government ethics. After reading a Wall Street Journal piece about congressional staff members using information gleaned from their official duties to make stock trades, Slaughter introduced legislation in 2006 to tighten restrictions on the practice. She and Democrat Tim Walz of Minnesota kept introducing the bill, but they gained little traction until “60 Minutes” reported on the superior stock market returns of lawmakers in 2011. Slaughter made another effort, and a version of the bill was enacted in 2012. She continues to promote legislation that would hold U.S. Supreme Court justices to the same ethics standards as other federal judges.

Slaughter was traveling as a market researcher for a chemical company in the late 1950s when she met her future husband, Robert — he died in May 2014 at age 82, after 57 years of marriage. They settled in New York when Robert went to work as an executive with a local company.

Her first brush with public policy came in 1971, when she joined with some

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neighbors to try to save a stand of trees from development. “My accent was much worse then, and I go sallying forth with this environmental group that we had set up,” she said. “We went through some awful times. ... A lot of people lost their jobs that were working with us, and there was a lot of harassment.”

But the episode motivated her to get further involved. She was a Monroe County legislator and as an assistant to Mario M. Cuomo, at the time New York’s secretary of state. In 1982, she ousted a Republican incumbent to move to the state Assembly, where she served four years before winning her seat in the House with 51 percent of the vote against first-term Republican Fred J. Eckert.

Republicans hoped for a redistricting-assisted upset in 2012, and Slaughter had some health woes — she tripped and broke her leg while crossing a New York City street in April. Campaigning from a wheelchair, she bested Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks by almost 15 points.

Slaughter is the second-oldest member of Congress, about three months younger than fellow House Democratic John Conyers Jr. of Michigan.

Chapter 5

MEDIA SAVVY

These legislators force an issue to the forefront of debate. They are skilled at delivering a party message in a way that connects with voters.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D)

California

Elected 1992; 4th full term

Committees: Appropriations (Energy-Water — ranking member);
Judiciary; Rules & Administration; Select Intelligence — vice chairwoman

Residence: San Francisco

Born: June 22, 1933; San Francisco, Calif.

Religion: Jewish

Family: Husband, Richard Blum; one child, three stepchildren

Education: Stanford University, A.B. 1955 (history)

Career: Homemaker

Political Highlights: San Francisco Board of Supervisors,
1970-1978 (president, 1970-1971, 1974-1975, 1978); candidate for mayor
of San Francisco, 1971, 1975; mayor of San Francisco, 1978-1988;
Democratic nominee for governor, 1990

Feinstein holds many positions that put her in the left wing of her party, but she isn't known as a "San Francisco liberal" — even though she was once the mayor of that famously progressive city.

Instead, she is known for deliberate decisions and measured statements which make her seem less overtly partisan than many of her colleagues.

The biggest showcase for her approach is the Intelligence Committee, which she chaired between 2009 and 2014 and where she now is the ranking Democrat and vice chairman. Feinstein (FINE-stine) tries to satisfy growing demands for privacy protections, while also maintaining a vigorous national security apparatus. Walking that line can put her at odds with conservatives or liberals, and she doesn't shy from conflicts with either group.

Feinstein was particularly busy in the 113th Congress (2013-2014), as public concerns about government surveillance reached a level not seen in decades. Edward Snowden, a former contractor for the National Security Agency, leaked reams of information about NSA surveillance activities, such as the bulk collection of domestic telephone records.

Hard-line civil libertarians were outraged at the NSA, and some praised Snowden as a whistleblower. Feinstein, on the other hand, called the leaks an "act of treason." She stood by the NSA and its tactics on numerous occasions; she also defended James R. Clapper Jr., the director of national intelligence, who was accused of lying to Congress about the extent of NSA activity.

Feinstein was joined by the Intelligence Committee's top Republican at the time, Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, who has since retired. The current chairman is Republican Richard M. Burr of North Carolina. And she butted heads with fellow Democrat Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the 113th Congress, who called for greater restrictions on NSA activities. Feinstein, the No. 2 Democrat on Judiciary, said it was "about the national security of our country and whether we have the ability to disrupt plots in a world where terrorism is expanding exponentially."

She produced her own bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, largely by codifying certain NSA practices. Critics called it a toothless measure, and it fell flat. "I'm the first one to say it made limited changes," Feinstein said. For months, she expressed skepticism about proposals to strip the NSA's ability to collect and store metadata; she started considering them only after White House and intelligence community officials indicated that some limitations would not be too burdensome. That work is still in progress.

Feinstein had other priorities as Intelligence chairwoman. After months of negotiations, the committee approved a bill in July 2014 aimed at improving voluntary sharing of information on cybersecurity threats between the government and the private sector. The bill, which included liability protections for companies,

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followed similar House efforts and faced similar criticism from privacy advocates. Feinstein, who has processed classified briefings on security around the world, said in 2014 that the group known as Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, was “the most worrisome advance of terrorism that I’ve ever seen.”

In addition to the Intelligence Committee, Feinstein is the ranking Democrat and former chairman of the Energy-Water Appropriations Subcommittee, which is a platform to discuss nuclear power, research laboratories and water projects — all critical components of California’s economy.

Her work on water infrastructure has been substantial; she and Republican Rep. Ken Calvert wrote the 2004 law that reauthorized and restructured the California Federal Bay-Delta Program, which provides irrigation and drinking water for two-thirds of the state’s population. She pushed hard in 2014 for plans to address drought conditions and their effect on California’s agriculture yields. The Senate passed her bill loosening some federal edicts regarding California’s water distribution, but it has languished in the House, where Republicans favor even greater regulatory freedom. Environmentalists also panned Feinstein’s bill, but such activists have “never been helpful to me in producing good water policy,” she told the San Francisco Chronicle.

She also tries to spur new plans for the disposal of nuclear waste. For three decades, lawmakers have battled over a plan to bury spent fuel under Nevada’s Yucca Mountain. As that conflict drags on, waste is kept near reactors, and the government pays court-ordered damages to the companies that own those facilities. At the very least, Feinstein argues, temporary storage facilities are needed. The Energy Department in early 2013 announced a pilot program for interim nuclear-waste storage — similar to a plan Feinstein outlined in a spending bill she prepared the year before. “It makes no sense to not have a policy in place,” she said, as the court-ordered damages could soon reach \$20 billion.

While Feinstein is more than capable of bipartisan work, she is closely associated with one issue dear to liberals: gun control. She was drawn to the cause by tragic firsthand experience. In November 1978, while president of San Francisco’s Board of Supervisors, she discovered the body of Mayor George Moscone in his office. Moscone and Harvey Milk, the city’s first openly gay supervisor, were gunned down by Dan White, a former supervisor. Feinstein replaced Moscone as mayor.

During the Clinton administration, she was the author of a federal ban on certain semi-automatic weapons. It expired in 2004. Feinstein has sought its renewal, and her quest became more urgent after a gunman killed 26 people, most of them children, at Connecticut’s Sandy Hook Elementary School in late 2012.

A few weeks into the 113th Congress she introduced an expanded version of her earlier law. It would ban the future sale, transfer, manufacture and importation

of 157 specific kinds of semi-automatic guns, as well as some kinds of ammunition magazines. It beefs up background checks for the sale or transfer of existing weapons. Feinstein admitted in March 2013 that her plan had virtually no chance of passage — it was resoundingly defeated in an April vote — but she added — “I don’t give up.”

Feinstein was born in San Francisco. Her mother was a former model, and her father was a surgeon. Her affinity for politics began in college — she built on volunteer work to become Stanford’s student body vice president. In 1960, Gov. Pat Brown named her to the women’s parole board. She started her service on the Board of Supervisors in 1970 and made several unsuccessful runs for mayor. But after succeeding Moscone, she held the job for a decade.

Feinstein left City Hall in 1989 to prepare for a 1990 gubernatorial campaign against GOP Sen. Pete Wilson. She lost that battle, but two years later she ran for the Senate and defeated Republican incumbent John Seymour, whom Wilson had appointed as his successor. She squeaked past Republican Rep. Michael Huffington in 1994 to earn a full term, and since then her re-elections have been much less stressful. She beat Republican challenger Elizabeth Emken by 25 points in 2012.

Her career includes a series of firsts: She was the first woman to head the Board of Supervisors, the city’s first female mayor and the state’s first female U.S. senator. She was the first woman on the Judiciary Committee, then the first female head of the Intelligence Committee.

At 81, Feinstein is the oldest sitting senator, but her office has rejected the inference that her age has led her to consider retirement. She’s also one of the richest members of Congress, thanks in large part to the wealth of her husband Richard Blum, an investment banker.



DOUGLAS GRAHAM/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D)

New York

Elected 2012; 1st full term, appointed 2009

Committees: Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry
(Livestock Marketing & Agriculture Security — ranking member);
Armed Services (Personnel — ranking member);
Environment & Public Works, Special Aging

Residence: Brunswick

Born: Dec. 9, 1966; Albany, N.Y.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Jonathan Gillibrand; two children

Education: Dartmouth College, A.B. 1988 (Asian studies);
University of California, Los Angeles, J.D. 1991

Career: Lawyer; U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department aide

Political Highlights: U.S. House, 2007-2009

Gillibrand was almost unknown in her own state when she was appointed to the Senate in 2009. A few years later, her admirers started touting her as a future presidential candidate. Her politics have been relentlessly pragmatic — she appeals to conservative or liberal voters as needed — and she has ties to big-time campaign networks.

One of her former bosses, Republican ex-Sen. Alfonse D’Amato, sang her praises in *Time* in 2014. “Don’t ever underestimate her,” he wrote of his former intern. “If Kirsten Gillibrand wants to be a rock star, she’ll be a rock star. But she’d make a great president. When she draws a line in the sand, everyone knows not to cross it.”

Gillibrand (full name: KEER-sten JILL-uh-brand) started her political career in the House, winning a competitive district near her hometown of Albany in 2006. She had been practicing corporate law in New York City, but she moved upstate a few years before her campaign with a run for Congress in mind, she told *New York Magazine*. She toppled a four-term Republican incumbent through a combination of aggressive campaigning, fundraising and appeals to conservative elements in the region — she touted her support of gun rights and fiscal restraint. Gillibrand joined the Blue Dog Coalition of fiscally conservative Democrats in the 110th Congress (2007-08) and easily won re-election.

When Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton resigned to become secretary of State in early 2009, Gillibrand was chosen by Democratic Gov. David A. Paterson as Clinton’s replacement. “She is dynamic, she is articulate, she is perceptive, she is courageous, she is outspoken,” Paterson said at the time. Democratic critics looked at Gillibrand’s House record and fretted she would be too conservative for the statewide constituency. Her opposition to gun control was a major sticking point, and she didn’t do herself any favors when, weeks after her appointment, she disclosed in a *Newsday* interview that she and her husband stored two rifles under their bed.

She easily won a 2010 special election to complete Clinton’s term, then cruised to victory in 2012 to earn a full term.

Gillibrand’s voting record as a senator silenced Democrat critics. She still opposes some gun control measures, but in April 2013 she voted for a ban on assault weapons that was defeated by a wide margin. Two months earlier, she introduced a bill aimed at preventing gun trafficking. She supported civil unions for same-sex couples while in the House, but she shifted as a senator to back gay marriage. In the 111th Congress (2009-2010) she helped lead the successful effort to repeal the ban on openly gay military service members.

In March 2015, she joined fellow Democrat Cory Booker, the former mayor of Newark, N.J., and Republican Rand Paul of Kentucky, who has since launched a presidential campaign, introducing legislation to legalize medical marijuana in states

where it is allowed.

Gillibrand hasn't ruled out or confirmed presidential aspirations, but there has been speculation that the 2014 publication of her memoir, "Off the Sidelines," was part of a larger strategy. In the 113th Congress (2013-2014) she raised her national profile with a highly publicized campaign to address sexual assaults in the military.

Assault cases have been on the rise, spurring lawmakers to debate the Pentagon's methods for processing and prosecuting allegations. Gillibrand, when she chaired the Armed Services subcommittee on military personnel in the 113th Congress — she's now the ranking Democrat — proposed a sweeping change that would take the decision to prosecute sexual assaults and most other major crimes out of the chain of command and put it in the hands of trained lawyers.

Backers hailed it as professionalizing the military's justice system.

Gillibrand hosted a series of press conferences flanked by victims who argued that the military's justice system had failed them. Her effort got a lengthy write-up in *The New Yorker*, and more than half the Senate indicated its support. But it was opposed by military leaders, as well as Democratic leaders on the Armed Services Committee, and it never cleared the procedural hurdles to get an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor.

Gillibrand voted in support of other legislation designed to protect victims and encourage them to report sexual assaults, but she continues to insist that her more dramatic change is the only solution. "I think there will be many more senators who will side with us," she said. Meanwhile, she has branched out to sexual assault on college campuses. Missouri Democratic Claire McCaskill helped block Gillibrand's military bill, but Gillibrand has worked with her and others on a measure meant to spur more reporting of crimes, prosecution of crimes, and school cooperation with law enforcement entities.

Gillibrand's other committee assignments are friendly to the upstate region, making her a good complement to fellow Democratic Sen. Charles E. Schumer, who has New York City's financial sector covered.

Her seat on the Environment and Public Works Committee became more valuable to the state in late 2012, when Superstorm Sandy caused tremendous amounts of damage. Schumer and Gillibrand helped lead the preparation of a \$60 billion aid package, which included money for infrastructure programs. Republicans criticized the bill as containing too much spending for projects unrelated to Sandy, but \$60 billion in aid was enacted in January 2013.

She is the first New York senator in 40 years to sit on the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, and she is the ranking Democrat on the Livestock and Dairy Subcommittee. A five-year authorization of farm programs was enacted in 2014, and it included many provisions favored by dairy farmers. But Gillibrand voted against the final version, citing the bill's \$8 billion in cuts to the

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program over a decade. “This bill will result in less food on the table for children, seniors and veterans who deserve better from this Congress, while corporations continue to receive guaranteed federal handouts,” she said.

Gillibrand comes from a political family. Her father is prominent attorney and lobbyist Doug Rutnik, who despite being a registered Democrat has close ties to a pair of leading New York Republicans, former Gov. George Pataki and D’Amato. Her grandmother, Polly Noonan, founded the Albany Democratic Women’s Club and was active in local politics for decades.

Gillibrand went to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, where she got a degree in Asian studies. She is fluent in Mandarin Chinese; she studied abroad in China and Taiwan and spent a month in India on a fellowship, during which she interviewed the Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees for a senior project. While earning a law degree at UCLA, she worked one summer for D’Amato.

As a lawyer for Davis, Polk & Wardwell during the 1990s, Gillibrand spent five years representing tobacco giant Philip Morris USA as it endured civil lawsuits and criminal investigations. She told the Albany Times-Union that her work focused on assembling information sought by federal investigators checking out claims that the company was involved in crimes against consumers. She also concentrated on securities litigation.

Near the end of the Clinton administration, she was a special counsel to Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew M. Cuomo, who is now governor of New York. Gillibrand returned to corporate law after that job, then transferred upstate. In 2006, she took 53 percent of the vote to topple Republican Rep. John E. Sweeney and help Democrats take control of the House.

At the time of her 2009 appointment to the Senate, Gillibrand shared a significant political network with her predecessor. Many of Hillary Rodham Clinton’s top advisers, including her political, financial and state directors, joined Gillibrand’s 2010 special-election campaign almost immediately after she was appointed. Early in Gillibrand’s Senate tenure, Democratic Reps. Carolyn McCarthy, who is now retired, and Carolyn B. Maloney each vowed to challenge her due to conflicting views on gun control, immigration and the economy, but they ultimately backed off. Gillibrand coasted to victory over former Republican Rep. Joseph DioGuardi with 63 percent of the vote.

In 2012, she won a full term in a romp. She took more than 72 percent of the vote against Republican Wendy Long, a lawyer and activist.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R)

5th District/Washington

Elected 2004; 6th term

Committees: Energy & Commerce

Residence: Spokane

Born: May 22, 1969; Salem, Ore.

Religion: Christian non-denominational

Family: Husband, Brian Rodgers; three children

Education: Pensacola Christian College, B.A. 1990 (pre-law);

University of Washington, M.B.A. 2002

Career: Fruit orchard worker; state legislative aide

Political Highlights: Washington House, 1994-2004

(minority leader, 2002-2003)

McMorris Rodgers was elected chairwoman of the House Republican Conference after the party's disappointing showing in the 2012 elections, and her subsequent public relations work and campaign travel leading up to the GOP's strong gains in 2014 no doubt strengthened her hand, as did the \$3.5 million she said she raised or contributed to the National Republican Congressional Committee.

The 2012 results suggested that the GOP had made few, if any, inroads among Hispanics, women and a number of other voting blocs. Speaker John A. Boehner subsequently endorsed McMorris Rodgers over Tom Price of Georgia, a far more conservative politician, to lead the conference, and, as McMorris Rodgers later wrote her colleagues, he had made an effort to "reinvent the House Republican Conference," expand its appeal, embrace new media and unify members behind shared messages and values.

She has served as a messenger, presenting a family-friendly image to contrast with negative stereotypes about Republicans. In 2014, she delivered the nationally televised Republican response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union address. "I'd like to share a more hopeful, Republican vision," she told viewers. "One that empowers you, not the government. It's one that champions free markets — and trusts people to make their own decisions, not a government that decides for you. It helps working families rise above the limits of poverty and protects our most vulnerable."

Her job isn't easy, given the ideological fissures within her party and the country. The social conservatism of many Republicans and comments made by some GOP candidates in recent years have been seized on by Democrats who claim the GOP is waging a "war on women."

Part of McMorris Rodgers' task has been to counter such claims, in part by being herself and a party leader.

"Tone matters," she told CNN at a Conservative Political Action Conference in February. "I'm a mom. I have three kids, and I really do think that it's a perspective that is valuable and needed in politics."

For herself, McMorris Rodgers has tried to find a balance within the conference; she belongs to both the conservative Republican Study Committee and the moderate Main Street Partnership. Some votes, such as the 2013 vote to end the government shutdown, find her siding with Boehner. Others, such as the 2014 vote to suspend the federal debt limit for a year, place her among fiscal conservatives. She supports the idea of a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.

McMorris Rodgers is not new to leadership jobs. She was the conference vice chairwoman during the 111th and 112th Congresses (2009-2012). She also spent a decade in the State House — starting at age 24 — and served two years as the

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minority leader of that chamber.

Leadership duties are naturally time consuming, but McMorris Rodgers has also been a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee since 2011. Hydropower is a key industry in her district. In 2008, she launched the Congressional Hydropower Caucus, and in April 2014 she was named the National Hydropower Association's "legislator of the year."

That award was spurred in part by a legislative victory. In 2012, McMorris Rodgers and Colorado Democrat Diana DeGette produced a bill to streamline the permitting process for smaller hydropower projects, including those along irrigation canals. They reintroduced it in 2013, and it passed both chambers with no dissenting votes. Obama signed it into law.

Most of her legislative output, however, has to do with health care. She is the mother of a child with Down syndrome, and she helped start the Congressional Down Syndrome Caucus; she also is a leader, with Oregon Democrat Earl Blumenauer, of the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus. She is the lead Republican co-sponsor of a bill by California Democrat Lois Capps that would help create research consortia focusing on pediatric diseases. It was passed by the House in 2012 and 2013.

She had been part of a small group of Republican members developing a bill meant to replace Democrats' 2010 health care law. That effort stalled when its chief architect, Majority Leader Eric Cantor of Virginia, was defeated in a June 2014 primary.

Locally, she looks out for Fairchild Air Force Base, home to much of the Air Force's West Coast tanker fleet. She co-chairs the Congressional Military Families Caucus, which she helped start to address the needs of military spouses and children — her husband is a retired Navy officer.

McMorris Rodgers is a descendant of pioneers who traveled the Oregon Trail to the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s. Born in Salem, Oregon, she lived in British Columbia as a small child. Her family moved to Kettle Falls, Washington, on the Columbia River, 30 miles south of the Canadian border, as she and her brother were preparing to enter high school. Her father bought an orchard and opened a fruit stand, where she pruned, thinned, picked and sold produce.

Her father also chaired the Stevens County Republican Party and was the president of the local Chamber of Commerce. She was the first in her family to attend college. She worked her way through Pensacola Christian College in Florida in several jobs, including stints at McDonald's and as a housekeeper.

When she graduated, family friend Bob Morton asked her to manage his campaign for the state house. He won, and she became a legislative assistant in his office. When Morton was appointed to the state senate in 1993, she was appointed to replace him in the state House, at age 24. She won the seat in her own right the

next year and was elected minority leader in 2002.

Two years later, while Republican George Nethercutt was unsuccessfully attempting to unseat Democratic Sen. Patty Murray, McMorris Rodgers won a three-way primary in the quest for his House seat. She then trounced the Democratic candidate, Spokane businessman Don Barbieri, by 19 points.

In 2005, while she was home over the August recess, a campaign volunteer brought her brother to the congresswoman's "pink flamingo" fundraiser. The two talked only briefly, but Brian Rodgers followed up with a letter. They married a year later, in the midst of her first re-election campaign. She won that race with 56 percent of the vote, even in a climate that had turned hostile to the GOP. She hasn't dipped below 60 percent of the vote since then.

McMorris Rodgers can claim a few maternal firsts in Congress. She was the first congresswoman to have two children while in office, and she broke her own record with the birth of her third child in late 2013. Her family lives full-time in Washington, D.C.; her husband who is a stay-at-home dad.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D)

Massachusetts

Elected 2012; 1st term

Committees: Banking; Housing & Urban Affairs

(Economic Policy — ranking member); Health, Education,
Labor & Pensions; Special Aging; Energy and Natural Resources

Residence: Cambridge

Born: June 22, 1949; Oklahoma City, Okla.

Religion: Methodist

Family: Husband, Bruce Mann; two children

Education: George Washington University, attended 1966-68; University of Houston,
B.S. 1970 (speech pathology & audiology); Rutgers University, J.D. 1976

Career: Law professor; White House consumer protection adviser;
financial markets oversight panel chairwoman; bankruptcy analyst;
lawyer; homemaker; elementary school speech pathologist

Warren’s popularity among progressives — galvanized in part by Republican disdain — has fueled a grass-roots campaign to draft her for the 2016 presidential race. Warren denies interest, and in August 2014 she publicly asked her supporters to knock it off. But she sticks to populist talking points in the disciplined way of a candidate, even though her Senate term won’t expire until 2018, and she is raising money all over the country.

The Boston Globe in March urged her to enter the race and challenge former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

“Democrats would be making a big mistake if they let Hillary Clinton coast to the presidential nomination without real opposition,” the Globe’s editorial board wrote. “As a national leader, Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren can make sure that doesn’t happen.”

If Warren still refuses to get in the race, the Globe wrote, “she should make it her responsibility to help recruit candidates to provide voters with a vigorous debate on her signature cause, reducing income inequality, over the next year.”

Warren poses a potential threat to Clinton, even if she doesn’t challenge her. Many grass-roots Democrats think Clinton is too centrist, too close to Wall Street. It was notable that Warren declined to say whether she thought Clinton would be a “progressive warrior” in the White House. “I want to hear what she wants to run on and what she says she wants to do,” Warren told MSNBC in February. “That’s what campaigns are supposed to be about.”

Just the presence of the former Harvard law professor on the periphery of the race may be enough to affect the debate. “The prospect of Elizabeth Warren running for president is actually more powerful than if she actually decided to run,” says Adam Green, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee.

Warren has already moved the dial on Capitol Hill. In January, she sank Obama’s nominee for a Treasury post because of his Wall Street ties. Last year, she mobilized opposition to an omnibus spending bill because it loosened regulations under the Dodd-Frank financial regulatory law. Her rebellion was quashed, but financial industry lobbyists say lawmakers fear inciting another high-profile clash, creating hurdles to further Dodd-Frank changes.

After Democrats’ drubbing in the 2014 midterm elections, Warren was elevated to the Senate Democratic leadership with the title of strategic policy adviser to the Democratic Policy Committee. When the party’s Senate leader, Harry Reid of Nevada, was asked what he expected Warren to do in that role, he said simply, “I expect her to be Elizabeth Warren.”

Warren is a big fan of Theodore Roosevelt, and she has called herself an “intrepid girl policy-maker” who read too many Nancy Drew novels. Although she is relatively new to legislating, her enthusiasm for liberal causes and consumer protection has won her a devoted following.

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She is, in fact, one of the rare senators who was nationally known before serving a single day in the chamber. She was a tenured law professor at Harvard, specializing in bankruptcy. Her research focused on economic challenges facing the middle class. She also co-wrote “The Two-Income Trap” with her daughter, and that book made her a regular on the daytime talk show circuit.

In late 2008, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid appointed Warren to chair a five-person panel overseeing the Troubled Asset Relief Program, a \$700 billion rescue package meant to prevent a collapse of the finance industry. Warren’s expertise in bankruptcy law gave her the background to become a crusader for consumer protections while she served in that capacity. “I went to Washington in the middle of the financial crisis to try to put some accountability into the bank bailout system,” Warren said. “While I was there I had the chance to work on another idea I had.”

That idea was realized in the form of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which was created by the 2010 financial regulatory overhaul — a bill that was enacted with practically no Republican support. The CFPB is meant to serve as a watchdog for borrowers seeking mortgages, credit cards and other financial products. “The way I saw it, there was nobody in Washington who was really looking out for consumers,” Warren said.

Republicans and the banking industry did not like the bureau from the start; they describe it as being unaccountable to Congress and having too much power to meddle with the private sector. They were livid at the thought of Warren running it, believing her to be biased against Wall Street and prone to creating regulatory sclerosis in the marketplace. Republicans threatened to filibuster her nomination, and Warren hadn’t helped her cause with some key Democrats — her work on the oversight panel had alienated insiders such as ex-Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner.

President Barack Obama never nominated Warren to become the first director of the CFPB. Instead, she was named as an adviser to oversee its creation. But her travails propelled her to stardom in the Democratic Party and a victory in her first run for public office, the 2012 Massachusetts Senate race. In her most recent book, “A Fighting Chance,” she describes herself as an almost accidental senator, and her rhetoric usually positions her as an outsider or an advocate for the little guy. “We’ve got a Washington now that works for anyone who can hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers, and it doesn’t work for regular families,” she told Yahoo News in 2014.

Warren sits on the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. Wall Street may regard her as a nemesis, but she aims some of her hardest jabs at regulators tasked with keeping watch over the sector. Just months into her Senate career, she grilled Federal Reserve and other officials for declining to disclose

statistics on illegal foreclosures by banks during the 2008 mortgage crisis. “People want to know that their regulators are watching out for the American public — not for the banks,” she said at the April 2013 hearing. The video went viral.

Even before that, Warren attacked the Securities and Exchange Commission’s “no admit, no deny” settlements with financial institutions. “If they can break the law and drag in billions in profits, and then turn around and settle, paying out of those profits, they don’t have much incentive to follow the law,” Warren said at her first Banking hearing.

She also sits on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Democrats in the 113th Congress (2013-2014) talked up plans to raise the minimum wage; Warren set off a round of derisive commentary from conservatives in March 2013 when she said that, had hourly wages grown with productivity, the minimum would be \$22. She sponsored 2014 legislation to overhaul interest rates on student loans. It would allow borrowers with older student loans to refinance them at rates established in 2013, with the lost federal revenue being covered by collecting more taxes from millionaires.

Warren has made no secret of her family’s financial struggles, and she typically infuses her advocacy with references to that economic insecurity. She was raised in Oklahoma, the youngest of four children. Her working-class parents fell behind on their bills after her father suffered a heart attack. Warren graduated high school at 16 and got a debate scholarship to George Washington University. In “The Two-Income Trap,” she wrote that both parents kept working to help pay for her education.

She married at age 19 and moved to Texas with her first husband, a NASA engineer. Warren completed a degree in speech pathology at the University of Houston and worked in that field briefly before becoming a homemaker, a job she could not embrace. “I gave us all food poisoning twice and set the kitchen on fire maybe four or five times,” she recalls in “A Fighting Chance.”

When the family moved to New Jersey, she got a law degree at Rutgers, spending the summer between her second and third years at the Wall Street law firm Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft. According to Warren, she interviewed at law firms during her third year, but as a visibly pregnant woman in the late 1970s, she received no job offers. She practiced law on her own.

Her husband’s job took her back to Texas, and she got a non-tenured position at the law school at her alma mater. Warren divorced, remarried and worked at several other schools before landing at Harvard. According to the Boston Globe, Warren spent a long time as an anomaly at Harvard, having public school credentials rather than a degree from an Ivy League school.

In 2012, Democrats were particularly invested in capturing the Senate seat up for grabs in Massachusetts. It had been held by iconic Democrat Edward M.

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Kennedy, who died in 2009. The party was stunned in early 2010 when voters chose a Republican state legislator, Scott P. Brown, to complete Kennedy's term. Brown spent two years establishing himself as one of the most moderate members of the Senate.

When Warren decided to run, Massachusetts Democrats got behind her. She was unopposed in the primary. The contest with Brown proved to be the most expensive congressional race in the country during the 2012 cycle, with a total cost of more than \$85 million, according to CQ Roll Call calculations.

Brown promoted his moderate stances and blue-collar appeal, while Warren worked to spread her name recognition outside of Boston. The polls showed an even race for much of the campaign, and Warren was damaged by questions regarding her job at Harvard — Brown questioned whether Warren had gotten a tenured position because she claimed to have Native American heritage, based on family lore that has not been verified. Academics knowledgeable of her hiring at Harvard insisted to the Boston Globe that Warren's claim did not help her get the tenure-track job.

Warren ultimately didn't leave Brown enough openings to overcome the state's clearly Democratic lean. She won by nearly 8 points.

Chapter 6

**DEBATE SHAPERS
AND SWING VOTES**

Leadership looks to the swing votes to gauge support and may modify legislation to make it more palatable. Debate shapers often serve as boundary stones on issues.



CHRIS MADDALONI/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Susan Collins (R)

Maine

Elected 1996; 4th term

Committees: Appropriations (Transportation-HUD-chairwoman);
Select Intelligence; Special Aging — chairwoman; Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions

Residence: Bangor

Born: Dec. 7, 1952; Caribou, Maine

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Thomas Daffron

Education: St. Lawrence University, B.A. 1975 (government)

Career: Business center director; congressional aide

Political Highlights: Maine Department of Professional and Financial
Regulation commissioner, 1987-1991; Small Business
Administration official, 1992-1993; Maine deputy treasurer, 1993;
Republican nominee for governor, 1994

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

Collins is one of the last Republican moderates remaining in Congress.

That status makes her a fascinating political study. It gives her power as a deal maker (or deal breaker) in a Senate where neither party has been able to secure a 60-vote super-majority to overcome dilatory tactics.

As a result, on numerous issues, Senate party leaders must plan their whipping strategies with Collins' view on the matter in mind. And typically her position earns her the enmity of party faithful on one side or the other — and often on both sides.

“We have vigorous debates and think that’s how you get best public policy and how you attract people to your party and your cause,” Collins said in 2013 “So, I think it’s healthy that we are not in lock step on every issue.”

Never was Collins' role as a bridge across the partisan divide more apparent than during the late 2013 government shutdown. At that time, she led a bipartisan “Common Sense Coalition” of senators to forge a budget compromise that ultimately formed the basis of a deal to reopen federal offices.

In Maine, this independent streak is catnip for voters, who rewarded Collins in November 2014 with her fourth term in the Senate. She “has become a political rock star in Maine,” one GOP consultant told Roll Call.

Republican conservatives in the state haven't been able to muster a formidable primary challenger, and Democrats find themselves undercut in the general elections because she has coopted so many of their issues.

But to be clear, Collins is no liberal. She has been a critic of the 2010 health care overhaul; she opposed a minimum wage increase in 2014; and she's a defense hawk.

Collins weighs in on national security matters as a member of the Select Intelligence Committee. She also has previous experience as a senior member of the Armed Services panel and as the former ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Her accomplishments in defense, intelligence and homeland security include helping to rewrite intelligence laws in 2004 to create a more centralized spy infrastructure.

She also led probes of the federal response in 2005 to Hurricane Katrina; of the 2009 shooting at Fort Hood; and of the 2012 attack on U.S. government facilities in Benghazi, Libya. And she helped write a cybersecurity bill that would set standards for critical computer systems, but she was unable to overcome opposition to it from business interests and most of her GOP colleagues.

Collins is a fiscal conservative — but only to a point. As the top Republican on the transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee, she has not hesitated to look out for her state, in particular for Navy spending on destroyers, which are built at the Bath Iron Works shipyard.

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And Collins broke from many in her party on the spending levels in the 2013 transportation appropriations bill.

Voting against the party current is, in fact, more the norm than the exception for Collins. In 2012 and 2013, for example, she voted against her fellow Republicans slightly more often than she backed them, a record of ideological deviance unmatched in the GOP caucus.

It is on social and environmental issues that she is most discordant with the GOP tune. She supported in 2010 a bill that enabled the Pentagon to allow openly gay men and women to serve in the military.

In 2014, she announced her support for gay marriage. She had voted the year before in favor of a measure that would bar discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

In 2010, she worked with Washington Democrat Maria Cantwell on a “cap and dividend” proposal, whereby fossil fuel producers must buy “carbon shares” and the proceeds go to both clean-energy research and taxpayers’ pockets.

She also refused to toe the GOP line on another hot-button domestic issue when she supported in 2013 a requirement for background checks prior to the purchase of firearms, though the measure did not pass.

Collins will be able to pursue her domestic priorities in the 114th Congress (2014-15) not only from the Appropriations Committee, but as chairwoman of the Special Aging Committee and as a new member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

Collins hails from a political family; each of her parents served as Caribou’s mayor. Her father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather served as Maine legislators.

Collins visited the U.S. Capitol as a high school senior and spent two hours talking with a Republican woman trailblazer, late Maine Sen. Margaret Chase Smith. “It really was in some ways a transformational experience,” Collins has said. Inspired by Smith, who showed up for every Senate vote for more than 20 years, Collins has maintained a perfect voting attendance record.

After graduating from St. Lawrence University in 1975, she moved to Washington to work as an aide to William S. Cohen, another moderate Republican senator from Maine who became her mentor. She then returned to Maine to serve as commissioner of the state’s Department of Professional and Financial Regulation.

In 1994, Collins won the Republican nomination for governor but finished as a disappointing third behind Democratic nominee Joseph E. Brennan and independent Angus King, who won the contest. (King is now the state’s junior senator.)

In 1996, when Cohen announced his retirement, Collins regrouped and took that

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

race by 5 percentage points. She won handily in 2002, beating Democratic challenger Chellie Pingree (who is now a House member).

In 2008, Collins faced an experienced opponent in Democratic Rep. Tom Allen, with Barack Obama on the ticket. She still won by more than 22 points. She sailed to her fourth term in 2014.

Collins got married in 2012 to Thomas Daffron, a consultant in his 70s who worked most of his career as a Senate aide. He met Collins four decades earlier when they both worked for Cohen.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Barbara Lee (D)

13th District/California

Elected 1998; 9th full term

Committees: Appropriations; Budget

Residence: Oakland

Born: July 16, 1946; El Paso, Texas

Religion: Baptist

Family: Divorced; two children

Education: Mills College, B.A. 1973 (psychology);

University of California, Berkeley, M.S.W. 1975

Career: Congressional aide

Political Highlights: California Assembly, 1990-1996;

California Senate, 1996-1998

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

As a child, Lee was an Army brat, but in Congress, she may be the most anti-war representative in the House.

Her father spent his career in the military, serving in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, where he rose to become lieutenant colonel. Her mother worked at Ft. Bliss in El Paso, Texas, handling administrative and personnel tasks. Barbara Lee later married an Air Force officer. She says she's no pacifist but that her experience with military life is a key reason why she's unusually reluctant to support the use of force.

Four days after terrorists took down the World Trade Center and crashed a plane into the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, Lee cast what is surely the most famous vote of her career, against authorizing President George W. Bush to use force to go after the perpetrators.

She was the only member of Congress to vote no.

Lee says her father was the first to call and congratulate her. "We don't know what's going on," she recalls him saying. "There's no way people should be voting for this."

And she's made headway convincing colleagues that Congress should have more of a say when U.S. forces are deployed. Even when operating in the minority, Lee has taken advantage of floor procedure and gained votes on a series of anti-war amendments. Her proposals, many of which would cut or severely restrict the use of funds in defense spending bills, put lawmakers on the record when it comes to military policy. And she has also convened an unusual alliance of progressives and Republican libertarians to pull back on some authorizations of military force.

Lee has only supported U.S. military strikes once since 2001 — when U.S. warplanes bombed the Islamic militants that attacked a religious minority group in the Kurdish section of Iraq last summer. In July 2014, the House approved her resolution demanding that President Barack Obama seek Congress' approval before sending U.S. forces back to Iraq to fight against the militants, who had managed to take over a broad section of Iraqi territory from their base in Syria.

"We must end the culture of endless war," she argued. Obama ultimately stopped short of sending U.S. ground forces to the area.

Lee is a liberal through and through, pushing to increase the minimum wage and enforce equal pay for women, while using her seats on the Budget and Appropriations committees to criticize Republican plans to reduce spending on social welfare programs. Those stances are right in step with her left-leaning constituents in Oakland and Berkeley, Calif.

Unlike many liberal activists who are disappointed with Obama's vigor in pursuing liberal goals, Lee remains an adamant defender of the president. She was chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus during Obama's first two years as president in 2009

and 2010, and worked with him on his signature health care law during that time. The law includes provisions to expand community health clinics that she championed. Those provisions “really spoke to low-income communities and people of color where you have huge health disparities,” she says.

Her biggest legislative successes, though, precede Obama’s presidency and involve HIV/AIDS. Lee founded and co-chairs the Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus. In 2008, President George W. Bush signed an AIDS bill that included her provision to eliminate the administrative ban on HIV-positive visitors to the United States. That allowed San Francisco to host the International AIDS Conference in July 2012.

While many advocacy groups criticize Obama for providing insufficient attention to the issue, Lee disagrees. “Before this administration, we didn’t have a national strategy on HIV and AIDS,” she says. In her opinion, the slowdown in funding for treatment and prevention that has occurred during the Obama administration is the fault of congressional Republicans. “A lot of members of Congress think we’ve conquered AIDS,” she laments.

Lee is especially attuned to the concerns raised about police brutality toward African-Americans following the shooting of an unarmed black man in Ferguson, Mo. in 2014. Lee has pledged to try to work across the aisle to improve police training and the legal process for cases of alleged brutality. In their training, police officers should be made “aware of segregation and institutional racism,” she says. But when protesters in Berkeley looted stores, Lee urged them to stop. “The path 2 justice is thru nonviolent activism,” she tweeted.

Lee says her own life started with an incident of inequality and discrimination. In 1946 in El Paso, Texas, her mother, in labor with Lee, was initially refused treatment at the hospital because she was black. Even after admitted for care, Lee’s mother was left unattended for so long that she became delirious with pain. Lee was delivered at the last minute with forceps, which left a mark on her forehead for years to come.

“My birth put me on the path” of progressive politics, Lee said. “You look at the fact that I almost didn’t get into this world, almost died — almost was not born — because of racism. My whole life has been about trying to make life better for people who were discriminated against, shut out and disenfranchised.”

Lee spent her early years in El Paso, where the public school system was segregated. She and her sister attended a Catholic school where, Lee said, they were the only black students.

In search of better public education, her family moved to Southern California in 1960. Her public high school had never chosen a black cheerleader, so she set about to become the first. With the help of the NAACP, she put pressure on the selection committee to make the audition process more transparent and inclusive, and

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

ultimately won a spot on the team.

Lee first registered to vote in 1972, when a course at Mills College in Oakland required her to work for a political campaign. She was, at first, prepared to flunk the class: “I didn’t feel the two-party system, or politics, was a way to make change,” she said.

But her outlook shifted when Democratic Rep. Shirley Chisholm of New York came to Mills to speak before the Black Student Union, which Lee headed. Chisholm, the first African-American woman to be elected to Congress, was readying herself to become the first black female candidate for president.

“I went up to her and talked to her about this class I was getting ready to flunk,” Lee said, “and she took me to task and said, she’s running for president, so why didn’t I help her?”

Lee was inspired by Chisholm’s progressive agenda and social consciousness. She registered to vote and went on to run the Chisholm for President Northern California campaign. Lee ended up with an “A” in the course, a passion for politics and a new belief in the potential for enacting change within the two-party system. It was reinforced by her experiences with another liberal Democrat, Rep. Ronald V. Dellums of California.

In 1975, after earning a master’s degree in social work, Lee went to work for Dellums in California and Washington. She then ran for the state legislature and served for six years in the Assembly and 17 months in the Senate.

When Dellums decided to leave Congress in 1998, he endorsed Lee to succeed him. She easily won the special election and has never received less than 80 percent of the vote in a re-election campaign.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski (D)

Maryland

Elected 1986; 5th term

Committees: Appropriations — ranking member
(Commerce-Justice-Science — ranking member);
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions; Select Intelligence

Residence: Baltimore

Born: July 20, 1936; Baltimore, Md.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Single

Education: Mount Saint Agnes College, B.A.
1958 (sociology); University of Maryland, M.S.W. 1965

Career: Social worker

Political Highlights: Baltimore City Council, 1971-1977;
Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate, 1974; U.S. House, 1977-1987

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

Mikulski, the ranking Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, has a reputation as a fighter. She is passionate and partisan in defending her socially progressive priorities, reflecting the blunt manner of her hometown of Baltimore. All that in a 4-foot-11-inch frame.

“There’s a lot of power packed in that person,” said a former colleague, Nebraska Republican Mike Johanns.

But Mikulski, who will retire at the end of her fifth term in 2016, is also a veteran dealmaker, having won the respect of Republicans in both chambers of Congress for her straightforward negotiating. “I’m a believer in coalitions,” she says.

Her skills were on display in January 2014, when she surprised even her staunchest allies by finalizing a \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending package. Her House counterpart, Republican Harold Rogers of Kentucky, is her opposite in ideology and demeanor. Regardless, they worked quickly and quietly over three weeks, hashing out fresh spending and policy directives for every corner of the federal government. Some agencies received their first new guidance from Congress in years.

To some people, the omnibus was a near-miraculous achievement. Months before, the government endured a two-week shutdown; the appropriations process collapsed as conservative Republicans tried to block funding for the implementation of the 2010 health care law. “I was determined to get this job done,” Mikulski said in February 2014. “I was going to do everything I could to move to regular order.”

Achieving regular order, the textbook process of moving individual bills through Congress without shortcuts, has been a continuing challenge, however. Mikulski is a confidant of also retiring Minority Leader Harry Reid, who kept regular spending bills off the Senate floor in recent years. Mikulski and Rogers replicated their omnibus strategy for fiscal 2015, with a \$1.1 trillion package passed in December 2014.

The longest-serving woman in congressional history, Mikulski relishes her role as dean of the Senate women. She can claim many distinctions: first woman elevated to a leadership post in the Senate; first female Democrat to serve in both chambers; first woman in either chamber to serve as top appropriator; only current member of Congress in the National Women’s Hall of Fame; and one of the first women to wear pants on the Senate floor.

Mikulski offers new women in Congress introductory seminars and dispenses advice on everything from organizing offices to setting long-range goals. She also rallies Senate women around various causes. When the militant Islamist group Boko Haram kidnapped 300 school girls in Nigeria, Mikulski and Maine Republican Susan Collins organized all 20 women senators in a letter to President Barack Obama, asking him to press for further international sanctions against the group.

She resents that many in Washington view her as intimidating. (In *Washingtonian*

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magazine's surveys of congressional aides, she has won the title of "meanest senator" several times.) "I think that's sexist," she said. "I think men are called 'boss' and women are called 'bossy' when they both have the same job."

Mikulski became the Appropriations chairwoman in December 2012, after the previous chairman, Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii, died. Also, she serves as ranking Democrat on the Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee. Mikulski loved science as a girl, idolizing Nobel winner Marie Sktodowska-Curie, and she looks to protect the research assets in her state — particularly NASA, whose Goddard Space Flight Center is headquartered in Greenbelt.

She panned the Obama administration's 2010 decision to end the moon-bound Constellation program, and when considering the NASA budget for fiscal 2015, her subcommittee produced a bill with \$439 million more than requested by the White House.

In another technology niche, Mikulski wants to make Maryland the "global epicenter of cybersecurity." Mikulski has a seat on the Intelligence Committee, and the National Security Agency has its headquarters at Fort Meade. The National Institute of Standards and Technology and its cybersecurity center are also in Maryland.

Some civil libertarians have quibbled with Mikulski's votes related to surveillance activities. She agreed to a 2008 update of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which allowed some spying without warrants; the older version of the FISA law "made it nearly impossible for the U.S. to engage in 'techno-hot-pursuit' of terrorists overseas," Mikulski said at the time. She also voted for a 2011 extension of surveillance provisions in the anti-terrorism law known as the Patriot Act and a 2012 extension of FISA.

Revelations about the NSA's bulk data collection angered many lawmakers during the 113th Congress (2013-14). Mikulski penned a defense of the NSA workforce and mission for the Baltimore Sun, but noted her longtime quest to make the NSA director position subject to Senate confirmation.

A social worker by trade, Mikulski resists spending cuts that would lessen assistance from entitlement programs. She blasted the fiscal 2014 budget adopted by House Republicans, calling it "unkind" to women and children and criticizing its proposed changes to Medicare. "I cannot believe that we're going to replace Medicare with a voucher and a promise," she said on the Senate floor. Mikulski is similarly skeptical of deficit reduction proposals that might reduce Social Security benefits. "Social Security did not cause our debt," she said. "It did not cause our deficit."

As the No. 2 Democrat on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, she is often an advocate for programs serving women and children. She worked with North Carolina Republican Richard M. Burr on one of the only open-amendment bills

that made it through the Senate in 2014 — a measure to reauthorize the long-expired Child Care and Development Block Grant, which sends money to states to pay for day care for children in low-income families. Their bill, which established new standards for programs receiving funding, passed 96-2 in March 2014 and an amended version was signed into law in November 2014.

Mikulski's parents ran a grocery store called Willy's Market, across the street from their east Baltimore row house. The store opened early every morning so steelworkers could buy lunch before their morning shift. Nearby, her Polish immigrant grandmother operated a bakery legendary for its jelly doughnuts and raisin bread. (Mikulski herself is known for her crab cake recipe.) She's the Senate sponsor of a bill to extend a visa waiver program to Poland.

She earned a master's degree in social work at the University of Maryland in 1965. When parts of her neighborhood were set ablaze after the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., Mikulski delivered food to families, sometimes by riding atop a tank.

In the early 1970s, she jumped into a neighborhood battle to stop a highway project that would have leveled some Baltimore neighborhoods. At one point, she recalls, she jumped on a table and gave a fiery speech, saying, "The British couldn't take Fells Point, the termites couldn't take Fells Point and goddamn if we'll let the State Roads Commission take Fells Point!" to wild cheers from her audience. The battle against the highway project was successful, and Mikulski went on to win a city council seat in 1971.

She seized on the public backlash against Republicans in the post-Watergate election of 1974 by challenging Sen. Charles McC. Mathias Jr. She lost, but two years later, Democrat Paul S. Sarbanes gave up his seat as Baltimore's representative in the House to run for the Senate. She captured that open seat and served five terms in the House, becoming a champion of consumer causes. When Mathias retired in 1987, Mikulski won the race to succeed him, besting Republican Linda Chavez by 22 points. She has not been seriously challenged since.

Mikulski served for a decade as caucus secretary, the No. 3 Democratic leadership post, before stepping down in 2004.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R)

Alaska

Elected 2004; 2nd full term, appointed 2002

Committees: Appropriations (Interior-Environment – chairwoman);
Energy & Natural Resources – chairwoman;
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions; Indian Affairs

Residence: Girdwood

Born: May 22, 1957; Ketchikan, Alaska

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Verne Martell; two children

Education: Willamette University, attended 1975-1977; Georgetown University,
B.A. 1980 (economics); Willamette University, J.D. 1985

Career: Lawyer; state legislative aide

Political Highlights: Anchorage district attorney, 1987-1989;
Alaska House, 1999-2002

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

Murkowski got her chairmanship of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee off to a good start early in 2015 by shepherding the Keystone XL pipeline bill to passage, a priority for Republicans even though they knew President Barack Obama would veto it and they lacked the votes to override his veto.

Murkowski won praise from ranking Democrat Maria Cantwell for managing the bill on the floor in an accommodating manner that allowed votes on dozens of amendments offered by senators from both parties.

Among her other priorities in the 114th Congress is ending the 1975 ban on the export of U.S. crude oil and speeding regulatory approval of liquefied natural gas exports.

She argues that the United States could miss a “window of opportunity” to benefit from its newfound fossil fuel largesse if regulators make it difficult for companies to sell to energy-hungry countries.

Her biggest regulatory beefs, however, are with the Environmental Protection Agency. The Obama administration has proposed and rolled out a number of rules meant to curb emissions of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Murkowski says the rules would cut Americans off from their cheapest energy resource when the economy is still shaky, and she wonders whether the rules could have a devastating impact on the reliability of the electric grid at home.

A proposed EPA rule on emissions from existing power plants is particularly problematic. Alaska gets a fourth of its power from hydroelectric dams and hosts several renewable-energy projects. By Murkowski’s reckoning, the emissions cuts outlined in the June 2014 plan would have to come from five plants in the state. Only one of those plants is coal-fired, and it already uses clean-coal technology, so reductions will be tough. “EPA recommends that states work together to make cuts, but that is more difficult when you are not connected to an interstate electric grid. Alaska is, in many ways, on its own,” she said on the Senate floor. “Because of our constant need for federal approvals or, at best, federal cooperation that is too often slow to come, we are not even able to develop our clean hydropower.”

Because Alaska is on its own, Murkowski actively cultivates allies that can advance her agenda. She joined forces with Democrat Mary L. Landrieu of Louisiana, for instance, to promote energy exports and try to increase the share of federal offshore oil revenue allotted to coastal states. Landrieu chaired Energy and Natural Resources in 2014 but lost her seat in November when Democrats lost their Senate majority. Murkowski also was on good terms with Oregon Democrat Ron Wyden, (Landrieu’s predecessor as chairman), and she has studied wind farms and oil shale deposits with West Virginia Democrat Joe Manchin III, and founded the Oceans Caucus with Rhode Island Democrat Sheldon Whitehouse.

CQ ROLL CALL

Murkowski also enjoys good relationships with executive branch officials in energy policy, with one exception. She and Interior Secretary Sally Jewell are at loggerheads over Jewell's decision — issued two days before Christmas 2013 — to reject a land exchange that would allow construction of a road through an Alaskan wildlife refuge. Murkowski called the verdict “heartless and ill-informed.” She has generally viewed the Obama administration Interior Department with suspicion when it comes to conservation and oil and gas issues in her state. Murkowski has further oversight of the department as chairwoman of the Appropriations subcommittee on the interior, environment and related agencies.

When Alaska's direct interests aren't at stake, Murkowski has proved to be a moderate with little taste for political brinkmanship. She and Wyden have teamed up to propose new disclosure requirements for political donations to super PACs, and she has routinely been one of the five or so Republicans that Democrats courted when they were in the majority and were trying to reach the 60 votes needed to overcome procedural hurdles.

In 2012 and 2013, on votes where majorities of the two parties differed, Murkowski voted with Republicans only half the time. She was one of 10 Republicans to back legislation in 2013 to prohibit employers from discriminating against workers based on their sexual orientation. She also supported a Senate proposal to overhaul the nation's immigration system and create an incremental path to citizenship for people already in the country illegally.

Considering all that, it's easy to forget Murkowski was once a part of the GOP's Senate leadership team. First welcomed to Washington in 2002 — her father, Frank H. Murkowski, appointed her to his old seat after he was elected governor — Lisa won her first full term in 2004 with 49 percent of the vote. As she neared the end of that term, she had amassed some clout. Murkowski got the top Republican spot on the Energy panel in 2009 and was named a counsel to then-Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky. A few months later she was elected Republican Conference vice chairwoman.

But her 2010 campaign was a dramatic affair involving a battle with tea party conservatives. Murkowski lost the Republican primary to challenger Joe Miller by 2,006 votes, then re-entered the race as a write-in candidate. Because she was challenging the nominated Republican, she resigned from her leadership post. Murkowski claimed victory two weeks after Election Day but had to wait until the final day of the year before Miller threw in the towel on his legal challenges. With 39 percent of the vote, she became the first write-in candidate to win a Senate race since Strom Thurmond of South Carolina in 1954.

Murkowski has been more independent of her party since then, but she still sticks

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

with the GOP on some key agenda items. She joined a losing effort on a bill to limit the EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases, and she supported a procedural attempt to force a vote on repeal of the 2010 health care law. (It was rejected.) Murkowski has tried to stave off cuts in defense spending in her state, particularly at Eielson Air Force Base, and from her seat on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, she tries to block funding for plans to move military units away. (The Air Force announced in June 2014 that it had shelved the idea of moving F-16 fighter jets from the base.)

A member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, she has joined Democrats to push proposals to improve prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases in women, and to get junk food out of schools.

The second of six children, Murkowski was born in Ketchikan and raised in the Alaskan Panhandle. She interned for Alaska Republican Sen. Ted Stevens after attending high school in Fairbanks, then went to Willamette University in Oregon. She later transferred to Georgetown University.

Her father launched his first Senate campaign in 1980, the year she graduated, and she and her siblings joined the effort. Later, with a law degree from Willamette, she spent two years as court attorney for the Anchorage District Court. She practiced with a commercial law firm for eight years before opening a solo practice.

She ran successfully for the state House in 1998, was re-elected twice, and was chosen by her peers late in 2002 as majority leader, a post that she never filled because of her appointment to the U.S. Senate.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-Calif.)

46th District/California

Elected 1996; (10th term)

Committees: Armed Services (Strategic Forces; Tactical Air & Land Forces — ranking member);

Homeland Security (Border & Maritime Security; Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection & Security Technologies)

Residence: Santa Ana

Born: Jan. 7, 1960; Lynwood, Calif.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Jack Einwechter

Education: Chapman College, B.S. 1982 (economics);
American University, M.B.A. 1984 (finance)

Career: Financial adviser; strategic management associate

Latest Election: 2014 General (59.7 percent)

Political Highlights: Candidate for Anaheim City Council, 1994

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

As a senior member of her party on the Armed Services and Homeland Security committees, Sanchez is one of the most prominent national security Democrats in the House. Gregarious and opinionated, in contrast with her description of her youth as a “shy, quiet girl,” she fashions herself a moderate who sees a strong role for government programs in some places but not others.

“I don’t like big government and I don’t like small government,” she said. “I want appropriate government.” That means “get out of our bedroom” on social issues and checks on government surveillance, she said, but also investment in health, education and other resources that “make Americans productive.”

Sanchez’s ascent was facilitated by her prodigious fundraising abilities and a close relationship with Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of California. Sanchez is a regular guest on cable TV news talk shows; she can be a hard-edged partisan, but often delivers her message with verve and wit.

Government service runs in the family. A younger sister, Linda T. Sánchez — who uses the accent — represents California’s 38th District. Recently, the elder Sanchez has explored the possibility of a run for the U.S. Senate, where a February poll placed her third in the race to succeed retiring Democrat Barbara Boxer.

Sanchez can be outgoing in quirky ways — many political observers await her annual Christmas card, which in 2014 featured her wearing a baseball uniform and the words, “She’s always an Angel in Congress.” It was an allusion to her hometown ballclub, and besides, she said, “I look good in red.”

After 18 years in the House, she is the second-ranking Democrat on Armed Service and Homeland security. On Armed Services, she is the top Democrat on the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee. There, she said, she plans to closely scrutinize the drawdown of troops from Afghanistan and how that affects the procurement of military equipment, particularly big-ticket, troubled programs like the F-35 fighter jet, which has manufacturing ties in her district. She said her financial background equips her well for that kind of work.

Despite having diametrically opposite views on nuclear weapons, she and subcommittee Chairman Michael R. Turner, R-Ohio, boast of a bipartisan relationship. She tried, but failed, to get an amendment adopted to the fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill allowing the Defense Department to shift money toward nonproliferation; it fell on a 194-227 vote.

His committee position also gives her prominence in the debates over when and how to deploy U.S. military forces.

In 2013, for instance, she was skeptical about President Barack Obama’s request for congressional authorization to use force against the Assad regime in Syria. She asked Secretary of State John Kerry at one hearing, “Is the U.S. or the Obama

CQ ROLL CALL

administration committing itself to military action in every case in the future where civilians are deliberately targeted in internal conflict, or only when chemical weapons are used?” Kerry replied there was no “hard and fast rule” but there were legal justifications under some international treaties.

The following year, Sanchez voted against an amendment to a continuing resolution authorizing the government to arm Syrian rebels. Once the amendment was adopted, though, Sanchez, like 30 other Democrats, voted for the CR with the amendment attached. She voted against the Iraq War in 2002, then in 2014 voted against an amendment to bar any new U.S. combat operations in the country.

Sanchez also has questioned whether taxpayers can continue to afford the entire array of health care and other benefits for active-duty service members and military retirees.

Early in 2015, she told members of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission “you really have to juxtapose” the military benefits package “against what’s happening to the American public at large and that means that many of them have lost higher paying jobs ... or they’ve gone and found other jobs that don’t have benefits.... We’re asking taxpayers to pay for our military when our taxpayers are not in the same position they might have been from a monetary and quality of life perspective of 20 years ago.”

She continues to pursue women’s issues relating to the military. In 2011 she created the Congressional Caucus on Women in the Military to elevate awareness of the roles women play in the modern military, while also highlighting the danger of sexual assault in the service.

On the Homeland Security Committee she was active in amending border security-related bills in the 113th Congress, such as language that would require that Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection develop procedures for searching electronic devices that would protect personal information stored on the devices.

She belongs to both the New Democrat Coalition, a business-friendly caucus, and the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition.

As co-chair of the Hispanic Caucus’ Immigration Task Force, Sanchez was scathing in her criticism of Republicans for trying to stop paying to enforce Obama’s executive orders which allow some illegal immigrants to remain in the United States, particularly those brought to the United States as children.

The Republicans, she said, were “stopping programs that our law enforcement agencies rely on because they want to deport our DREAM Act kids. They’re putting our homeland security, our entire way of life at risk because they want to separate mothers from their children.”

Sanchez credits government with her own success. “I am a Head Start child, a

DEBATE SHAPERS/SWING VOTES

public school kid, a Pell grant recipient,” she said. She opposed the GOP’s unsuccessful effort, in the 108th Congress (2003-04), to restructure Head Start, an early-childhood development program for low-income preschoolers.

She invoked her own experience growing up poor with a speech impediment. She worked her way through college and earned a master’s degree in business administration. Sanchez worked as a finance adviser but felt isolated as a Hispanic woman in the financial world. Her first foray into politics was in 1994, when she lost a race for an Anaheim City Council seat.

Her father had warned her against an interest in politics, after having seen a relative who served as a judge in Mexico have to “run for his life.” He said, “ ‘Don’t do it.’ I said, ‘Why dad?’ He said ‘because the bad politicians are just corrupt and the good politicians get killed.’ ”

In 1996, she took on conservative GOP Rep. Robert K. Dornan. After winning a four-way primary with 35 percent of the vote, she drew attention from liberal groups. Voter turnout linked to a backlash against a ballot initiative to end state affirmative action programs helped Sanchez score a 984-vote upset.

In a 1998 rematch, Sanchez defeated Dornan by 17 points. Her subsequent re-elections were by larger margins until 2010. That year, matched up against Republican Van Tran in a district with a large Vietnamese community, Sanchez caused a stir in September when she said in a Spanish-language interview that “the Vietnamese” were trying to take her seat.

Sanchez has been a vocal advocate for human rights in Vietnam over her House career, but that controversy and a strong Republican year squeezed her margin of victory to less than 14 points.

She easily won both her 2012 and 2014 races.

Chapter 7

DEALMAKERS

Dealmakers' ability to collaborate, hammer out details and get results means they assist in crafting some of the biggest and widest-reaching pieces of legislation that Congress passes.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R)

New Hampshire

Elected 2010; 1st term

Committees: Armed Services; Budget; Commerce;
Science & Transportation; Homeland Security
& Governmental Affairs;
Small Business & Entrepreneurship

Residence: Nashua

Born: June 27, 1968; Nashua, N.H.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Joseph Daley; two children

Education: Pennsylvania State University, B.A. 1990 (political science);
Villanova University, J.D. 1993

Career: State deputy attorney general; gubernatorial aide; state prosecutor; lawyer

Political Highlights: New Hampshire attorney general, 2004-2009

CQ ROLL CALL

New Hampshire will once again be a proving ground for presidential contenders in 2016, but its famously deliberative voters will also render judgment on Ayotte, the state's most prominent Republican. She describes herself as a "mainstream conservative," and she has hustled to establish herself as a prominent voice on national security matters.

Senior Republicans have made it clear they want her around, and not just to maintain a majority. "What Kelly brings to our caucus is the diversity of being a mother of two young children, the wife of a small-businessman, she's a woman and she's from the Northeast," said Lamar Alexander of Tennessee. Republican leader Mitch McConnell added Ayotte (EYH-ott) to his informal group of advisers at the start of 2013, touting her insight on "issues that affect American families." She was also named a deputy whip at the start of the 113th Congress (2013-2014).

On occasion, she has been willing to break from most in her party. During a Budget Committee markup on the fiscal 2016 budget resolution, Ayotte was the only Republican to vote for an amendment offered by Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., which would have required producers of tar sands oil to pay into the oil spill liability fund.

During the March 2015 Senate budget vote-a-rama, during which the Senate slogs through budget amendments, Ayotte was one of 11 Republicans to vote for an amendment offered by Sen. Brian Schatz, D-Hawaii, that said all legally married same-sex couples should have equal access to Social Security and veterans' benefits.

Ayotte has received the most notice for her efforts on the Armed Services Committee. She frequently joins forces with Republicans John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, two leading hawks who have helped boost her credibility in national security circles. She has battled the Obama administration on a range of military matters: its approach to the Syrian civil war; its strategy to defeat the Islamic State terrorist group; and its plans for weapons programs.

Ayotte speaks frequently about fiscal restraint — she also sits on the Budget Committee — but like many Republicans, she also argues that the defense budget is not optimized to handle the threats facing the United States. In 2012, Ayotte, Graham and McCain campaigned against "sequestration" reductions in the defense budget, more than \$500 billion in automatic cuts put in place by an August 2011 deficit reduction law.

She looks for money that can be reassigned for purposes she considers more useful. Ayotte has aggressively tried to zero out the Medium Extended Air Defense System, missile defense technology that the military is not planning to procure. Its advocates argue that development should be completed to satisfy international partners and advance overall research. The fiscal 2012 defense policy law included a provision by Ayotte and Rhode Island Democrat Jack Reed to allow the Air Force to reduce its fleet of strategic airlift aircraft — military leaders said they didn't need

all the planes that the law had required them to maintain.

But she also aggressively guards her priorities, including the A-10 Warthog, an aircraft her husband flew in missions in Iraq. Ayotte briefly held up the nomination of Deborah Lee James to be Air Force secretary amid concerns about the service's plans for the A-10 fleet. Ayotte ultimately lifted her hold and supported James' nomination. But months later, the two found themselves at odds over the proposal to retire the fleet. "I was recently in Afghanistan, and I was really struck by the number of people on the ground ... who, unsolicited, came up and asked me to convey and to make sure that people understood how important they believe that the A-10 was to them," she said at an April 2014 hearing.

Ayotte heads the Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, which oversees military installations. The New Hampshire delegation has tried to block the initiation of a new round of base closures — nearby Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine was spared in the 2005 round, but the state doesn't want to chance another base realignment and closure commission.

Ayotte generally has found fault with the Obama administration's foreign policy or military decisions. In fall 2014, she urged the provision of weapons to Ukraine for its fight with Russia. "If the administration ignores [President Petro] Poroshenko's request, it will represent a historic failure of U.S. leadership that will embolden aggressors like [Russian President Vladimir] Putin, risk greater conflict, and undermine U.S. national security interests," she wrote.

Drawing on her authority as a prosecutor, Ayotte has become one of the most vocal Senate critics of the Obama administration's policies for detaining and trying alleged terrorists.

In early 2015, she introduced legislation to put a moratorium on the transfer of these medium and high-risk detainees from Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, to other countries and prohibit for two years the transfer of any Guantánamo detainees to Yemen. She said that almost 30 percent of those who have been released from Guantánamo have returned to the battlefield or to terrorist activities.

"This problem is one that we should not be presenting the world as we see it right now," she said. "We should never have a member of our military or someone who is one of our allies re-confronting one of these individuals who we previously had in custody."

She first joined the Budget Committee in 2011, and near the end of that year she voted for a Republican proposal to add a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution. She also supports the current moratorium on earmarks, the spending set-asides for projects in a member's home state or district.

Ayotte will play a role in the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration and in integrating drones into the nation's airspace as head of the Commerce, Science and Transportation subcommittee on aviation.

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She also has had an interest in e-commerce. A growing number of lawmakers in both parties are interested in requiring the collection of sales taxes when purchases are made online, even when the buyer is in a different state than the seller — states need the money, they say, and it would eliminate a competitive advantage for online retailers. Ayotte is strongly against the idea. New Hampshire has no sales tax, and she says requiring its online retailers to collect taxes for other states would be a “bureaucratic nightmare” that slows business growth.

Ayotte takes conservative stands on most social issues. She opposes abortion and defends gun owners’ rights. A school shooting in Connecticut prompted a flurry of gun-related legislation in early 2013, but Ayotte told the Nashua Telegraph that she preferred to focus on expanding mental health services and training as a way to curb mass shootings.

Ayotte was born in Nashua, but she attended college and law school in Pennsylvania. She earned a bachelor’s degree in political science at Penn State, where she was a competitive skier, and a law degree from Villanova, where she served as executive editor of the Environmental Law Journal. She spent a year clerking for a justice of the New Hampshire Supreme Court before working in private practice.

Ayotte then joined the state attorney general’s office as a prosecutor, where she handled a number of gruesome murder cases. According to a profile in the Manchester Union Leader, “to read accounts of Ayotte’s work over the next couple years is to descend the depths of human depravity.” She briefly served as legal counsel to Republican Gov. Craig Benson before returning to the attorney general’s office as deputy. She was in the No. 2 spot for about a year when her boss resigned. She took over as attorney general.

In her most celebrated case, she defended the state’s parental notification law, which required minors to inform their parents before obtaining an abortion. Having lost in two lower courts, she appealed to the Supreme Court, against the wishes of incoming Democratic Gov. John Lynch. The high court vacated the lower court’s judgment but did not rule on the substance of the challenge to the law’s constitutionality. The law was repealed in 2007.

Republican Sen. Judd Gregg announced in 2009 he would not seek re-election, and Ayotte resigned as attorney general to run for the seat. Her opponent in the primary, Ovide M. Lamontagne, was the favorite among conservatives. She was able to balance the wings of the party just enough, besting Lamontagne by less than 2 points.

Her opponent in the general election was two-term Democratic Rep. Paul W. Hodes. He was swamped by a banner Republican year in New Hampshire — the GOP also captured both U.S. House seats and both chambers of the state legislature. Ayotte defeated Hodes with 60 percent of the vote.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Claire McCaskill (D)

Missouri

Elected 2006; 2nd term

Committees: Armed Services; Commerce; Science & Transportation permanent (Investigations— ranking member); Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs; Special Aging — ranking member

Residence: Kirkwood

Born: July 24, 1953; Rolla, Mo.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Joseph Shepard; seven children

Education: University of Missouri, B.A. 1975 (political science), J.D. 1978

Career: Lawyer; city prosecutor

Political Highlights: Missouri House, 1983-1989; sought Democratic nomination for Jackson County prosecutor, 1988; Jackson County Legislature, 1991-1993; Jackson County prosecutor, 1993-1999; Missouri auditor, 1999-2007; Democratic nominee for governor, 2004

CQ ROLL CALL

With the trained eyes of a state auditor, McCaskill has held her seat in a right-leaning state by promoting bipartisan efforts on fiscal restraint and government oversight at the federal level. A former prosecutor as well, she spends much of her energy rooting out government waste and wrongdoers.

McCaskill comes from a politically active family. Her father served as state insurance director, and her mother was the first woman to serve on the Columbia City Council. She recalls going to political events wearing sashes and “those obnoxious foam little bowler hats” to advertise candidates’ campaigns. She caught the political bug, particularly after a teacher urged her to become a lawyer, noting that she was better at arguing than she was in subjects that had obvious right and wrong answers.

After graduating from the University of Missouri and its law school, she clerked for the Missouri Court of Appeals and soon got a job as an assistant prosecutor in Kansas City. In 1982, she won a seat in the State House, where she wrote the state’s first minimum-sentencing law for repeat offenders. McCaskill was elected Jackson County prosecutor on her second try in 1992. Six years later, she was elected state auditor.

In 2004, McCaskill took on the Democratic Party establishment by defeating the incumbent governor, Bob Holden, in the primary. She lost the general election to Republican Matt Blunt, the son of House Majority Whip Roy Blunt, by 3 points. (Roy Blunt is now her Senate colleague.) Two years later, she scored a 2-point victory over Republican incumbent Jim Talent to join the Senate.

In her 2012 campaign for a second term, McCaskill got some electoral help from her GOP opponent. Conservative Rep. Todd Akin set off an explosion of unfavorable national publicity that August with awkward comments about rape victims and pregnancy. Republicans pleaded with him to step aside for another candidate, but Akin refused. What was expected to be a nail-biter of a race turned into a 15-point win for McCaskill.

But even before that electoral windfall, McCaskill was competitively positioned as a fairly independent Democrat. “There’s a number of times I have parted with [President Barack Obama],” McCaskill said during a 2012 interview on MSNBC, “And I think if the president were asked about me, he’d say I can be a real pain.”

When senators considered a comprehensive immigration overhaul in the 113th Congress (2013-2014), McCaskill was one of the few Senate Democrats who publicly opposed “amnesty” for illegal immigrants. She voted against a 2007 bill to stop the deportation of some illegal immigrants brought to the country as children. (She did support a narrower version of the bill in 2010, however.)

In the 112th Congress (2011-2012), McCaskill urged Obama to support a federal spending cap — she wrote a bill to create one, working with Tennessee Republican Bob Corker. She called for approval of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline from

Canada to Gulf Coast refineries (Obama denied a permit in 2012) and asked Obama to stop pursuing a cap-and-trade system for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. She similarly fought for an end to EPA regulations of some farming operations. She said the rules were costly and redundant.

Such efforts indicate McCaskill is someone who majority Republicans will turn to in the 114th Congress to overcome filibusters. Republicans “need six to 10 votes for just about anything, so the moderates are going to have to participate and hopefully help the Senate find consensus and common ground,” she said in an interview with McClatchy after the 2014 elections.

The government isn’t tremendously popular with voters of either party, and McCaskill makes a point of finding and correcting its inefficiencies.

She introduced a raft of government-focused bills in the 112th Congress, including proposals to cap federal agency expenditures for conferences; to expand whistleblower protections for non-federal workers whose disclosures involve misuse of federal funds; to create an inspector general’s office to audit and investigate Senate programs and operations; and to tighten restrictions on foreign trips lawmakers and aides take for work.

McCaskill also sits on the Armed Services Committee. After reading a report that as much as \$60 billion spent on federal contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan had been wasted, McCaskill began pushing legislation in 2012 that would create a lead inspector general in charge of investigating waste and abuse during each overseas contingency. The fiscal 2013 defense law includes her provisions that overhaul rules for wartime contracting.

McCaskill’s efforts also led to the creation of a Senate panel charged with contracting oversight. While chairwoman of the subcommittee, she launched reviews that turned up nearly 30 instances of misconduct referred to federal investigators during her first Senate term.

For the 113th Congress, the jurisdiction of her panel was expanded to include the finances of every federal agency and department. McCaskill was revved up when she announced the change. “I’m putting every federal agency on notice — any employee or contractor who wastes taxpayer money, or acts inappropriately on the taxpayer dime, will have this committee to answer to,” she said.

In late 2013 to early 2014, McCaskill used her position on the Armed Services Committee and years of experience as a courtroom prosecutor to lead the charge against sexual assault in the military. The fiscal 2014 defense authorization law included provisions she authored that would criminalize retaliation against victims who report sexual assault. The law also created the role of special counsels for victims of sexual assault and rape.

CQ ROLL CALL

McCaskill later sponsored Senate-passed legislation that expanded the special counsel role and required evaluations to determine the extent to which commanding officers have established a command climate in which allegations of sexual assault are properly managed and fairly evaluated.

Further cementing her status as one of the chief watchdogs in the Senate, McCaskill in 2013 began a stint as chairwoman of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety and Insurance. Her panel actively investigated General Motors Co.'s response to defective ignition switches that led to a recall of 2.6 million small cars.

She has broken from the majority of her Democratic peers on the issue of earmarking. McCaskill and Pennsylvania Republican Patrick J. Toomey have tried to pass a legislative ban on that practice. McCaskill succeeded in limiting the practice of senators putting "secret holds" on nominations and bills, which block floor consideration without any public acknowledgement. She co-sponsored legislation requiring holds to be made public within one legislative day, and the Senate changed its rules in the 112th Congress to require that members who place holds be identified.

Even with her independent streak, McCaskill has voted with Democrats on major bills of recent years. She consistently reiterates her position that critics of the 2010 health care law use scare tactics to drive public opposition.

"No matter what is out there that people are upset about, somehow they manage to paint with the Obamacare brush," she said in a September 2013 floor speech. "I think people are going to be pleasantly surprised. It's not going to be as intrusive as some of the talking heads have warned."

When Akin's comments put women's issues in the spotlight, McCaskill defended an Obama administration decision under the health care law to require insurance plans to cover contraception. Republicans protested that entities with religious or moral objections should get exemptions.

In March 2011, the Missouri Republican Party filed two complaints with the Senate Ethics Committee, asking the panel to investigate McCaskill's use of an airplane owned by her family for Senate- and campaign-related activities. McCaskill has since paid the U.S. Treasury \$88,000 to cover her use of the plane for official business, and she and her husband paid \$287,000 in back taxes on the plane.



TOM WOILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Patty Murray (D)

Washington

Elected 1992; 4th term

Committees: Appropriations (Labor-HHS-Education — ranking member),

Budget; Health, Education,

Labor & Pensions — ranking member; Veterans' Affairs

Residence: Seattle

Born: Oct. 11, 1950; Bothell, Wash.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Rob Murray; two children

Education: Washington State University, B.A. 1972

Career: Parenting class instructor; homemaker; secretary

Political Highlights: Candidate for Shoreline School Board, 1983;
Shoreline School Board, 1983-1989; Washington Senate, 1989-1993

CQ ROLL CALL

Murray quietly has become one of the most powerful members of Congress, defying some stereotypes about political leaders. Few if any Democrats have been so prominently enlisted to both defend the party's priorities and work out bipartisan deals, and Murray does it with a low-key approach.

Since 2007, Murray has served as the Democratic Conference secretary, the No. 4 position on the Senate leadership team. She also led the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee in 2012 when her party held on to its majority.

With the retirement of Minority Leader Harry Reid at the end of 2016, Murray seems likely to continue under the next Democratic leader, Charles E. Schumer of New York, to be a leadership voice, especially on education, women's issues, and veterans.

In the Republican-controlled Senate, Murray, as the ranking member on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, was quick to become a dealmaker as she joined forces with Chairman Lamar Alexander of Tennessee on a bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and to try to fix certain flaws in the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act.

The Alexander-Murray bill was one of the first big bipartisan pieces of legislation in the 114th Congress (2015-2016).

She also can claim credit for one of the bipartisan accomplishments of the 113th Congress (2013-14): the fiscal 2014 budget agreement. Acting in her role as Senate Budget chairwoman, she negotiated a compromise spending plan with her House counterpart, Republican Paul D. Ryan of Wisconsin.

Murray had been the top senator on the bicameral "supercommittee" created by a 2011 deficit reduction law. But that panel disbanded without producing any recommendations — and as a consequence, across-the-board sequestration cuts began hitting many federal agencies in 2013. When Murray became the Budget chairwoman at the start of 2013, she invited Ryan to a get-to-know-you breakfast. They continued to talk in the months that followed, and Murray said it built the trust needed to complete the budget deal late in the year: "It's very hard to compromise with somebody that you don't know or don't understand." The enacted budget, the first in several years, softened the immediate impact of sequestration; it also set spending caps for fiscal 2015.

Murray had a hand in other across-the-aisle success stories. For several years, Murray and Georgia Republican Johnny Isakson discussed plans to overhaul federal worker training programs. "We had different ideas about how to get there, but it's a passion that we share that can bring us back together many times over," she said. A reauthorization was enacted in 2014, after several months of negotiations with House leaders.

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All that being said, there are issues on which Murray will not budge, and a few of those issues involve the HELP Committee. She has been a staunch advocate of widening access to contraceptives and protecting access to abortion services. She has described House Republican attempts to cut off funding for Planned Parenthood as “part of the right-wing playbook that’s going nowhere in the Senate.” She is uninterested in any plan to erase the 2010 health care law. “I will welcome the moment when Republicans decide to stop trying to just repeal, and say, ‘How do we make this health care system work?’” she said in 2014.

Murray’s work ethic and support for government social programs — particularly education loans — stem from her childhood. She and her six siblings put in long hours at their father’s dime store. They often made their own clothes and went without health care. When Murray was a teenager, her father was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and stopped working. The family briefly went on food stamps until her mother completed a government-funded program that enabled her to work as a bookkeeper.

When Murray went to college, she worked to help pay her way. She took jobs at a glass shop, as a secretary and, one summer, cleaning bathrooms in a state park. Government loans helped the Murray children complete school. “Because our government was there for us, at a very tough time for us, those seven kids in my family grew up to be a firefighter, a lawyer, a computer programmer, a sports writer, a homemaker, a middle-school teacher and a United States senator — a pretty good investment by our country,” she said in a 2012 floor speech.

Murray looks after a number of home-state interests as a member of the Appropriations Committee. She continually pursues funding for cleanup of the Hanford Site, which was involved with production of atomic weapons materials from World War II through most of the Cold War. She secured about \$1.9 billion for the cause in the 2009 stimulus law.

She is ranking member on the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations subcommittee.

Murray has fought for the Boeing Co., one of Washington’s largest employers, several times. When competitors of Boeing were awarded a \$35 billion contract to build Air Force refueling tankers in 2008, Murray protested the decision. She threatened to withhold funds for the tankers or impose penalties on the Air Force, arguing that U.S. tax dollars should not boost the foreign company, EADS, that won. The deal was scrapped once the Government Accountability Office found that the Air Force had violated its own contracting rules. Bidding was re-opened, and Boeing won the contract in 2011.

Murray also sits on the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, which she chaired

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during the 112th Congress (2011-12). In that time, she worked with Florida Republican Jeff Miller, the House chairman, on an enacted package of proposals meant to promote the hiring of veterans. She was unsuccessful, however, in promoting her plan for a federal jobs corps for veterans.

She warned for years of the long-term strain that the Iraq and Afghanistan wars would put on the veterans' health system — it's another personal cause, as her father was decorated with a Purple Heart in World War II. She also had a college internship at a veterans rehab facility. Years before the 2014 controversy over long wait times at VA medical centers, Murray raised questions about veterans' services. She held a hearing in 2011 on the topic. "The one thing that I just cannot fathom is that Congress never put the resources there to make sure that we had the support for [veterans] when they came home," she said.

Murray got started in politics in the 1980s. As she tells the story, a state legislator dismissed her as a "mom in tennis shoes" after she protested a plan to eliminate a parenting education program that she was teaching. "I drove home as angry as I could be, saying he has no right to tell me I can't make a difference," Murray said. She organized a successful campaign to revive the program. That led Murray to serve six years on a school board and four years in the state Senate.

In her 1992 quest for a seat in the U.S. Senate, she bested better-known moderates with years of congressional experience in both the primary and general elections. That win was dismissed by many as a fluke, but Murray was re-elected in 1998 with 58 percent of the vote. In 2004, she faced George Nethercutt, a Republican House member who had beaten Democratic Speaker Thomas S. Foley in 1994. Murray won by 12 points. Her 2010 race against Republican Dino Rossi, a two-time candidate for governor, was her closest contest. She bested Rossi by less than 5 points.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D)

Michigan

Elected 2000; 3rd term

Committees: Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry — ranking member;
Budget; Energy & Natural Resources; Finance
(Health care — ranking member); Joint Taxation

Residence: Lansing

Born: April 29, 1950; Clare, Mich.

Religion: United Methodist

Family: Divorced; two children

Education: Michigan State University, B.A. 1972 (social science), M.S.W. 1975

Career: Leadership training consultant

Political Highlights: Ingham County Commission, 1975-78 (chairwoman, 1977-1978); Michigan House, 1979-1991; Michigan Senate, 1991-1994;
sought Democratic nomination for governor, 1994;
Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor, 1994; U.S. House, 1997-2001

CQ ROLL CALL

Stabenow has a polished style appreciated by both Republicans and her fellow Democrats. She is relentlessly upbeat about her legislative endeavors in public, willing to strike deals in private, and firm once she sets boundaries. She applies that formula to agriculture and health care, as well as energy and manufacturing policies tailored to Michigan's industrial base.

Stabenow has proved her abilities as a political operator several times. Her 25-year journey to the Senate had stops in county government, the state House, the state Senate and the U.S. House. With the retirement of colleague Carl Levin, Stabenow is Michigan's senior senator.

As a senator, she has deftly worked her way into several positions of influence. She was once the Democratic Conference secretary — the No. 4 leadership post. But she yielded that job in exchange for a seat on the Finance Committee, where she indulges her interests in health care and manufacturing. She still has a connection to the leadership team as vice chairwoman of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee, which dishes out research and policy ideas to lawmakers.

After four years as chairwoman of the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, Stabenow is now ranking member, with Republican Pat Roberts of Kansas as chairman.

Stabenow had already been thinking about an expected battle over reauthorizing the child nutrition law that includes school meal standards unpopular with some lawmakers. At a Farm Journal Forum in December, she called on the broad agriculture coalition that backed the 2014 farm bill to aid her in protecting or expanding nutrition programs for low-income rural and urban children.

When Stabenow took the Agriculture gavel in 2011, she was largely unknown to farm groups beyond her state. She was more associated with Detroit and manufacturing than Michigan's diverse agricultural sector, although she had been on the House Agriculture Committee and on agriculture panels in the Michigan Legislature.

During the nearly three years it took to pass a farm bill, agriculture groups discovered Stabenow had a deep interest in the fine points of farm and food policy. She also had a seemingly inexhaustible willingness to talk with Democratic and Republican colleagues and with interest groups to resolve sticking points.

As Congress considered deficit reduction in the fall of 2011, Stabenow, along with Roberts and their House counterparts put together a package of potential cuts to farm and nutrition programs for negotiators to consider. Stabenow, who supports nutrition programs, showed her pragmatic side by including proposed cuts to win Republican backing in the talks.

When the deficit talks fell apart, the package of recommendations became the

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foundation of a Senate bill that proposed \$23 billion in savings over 10 years. The measure contained \$4.5 billion in 10-year cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as Food Stamps. Stabenow got the bill through committee and the Senate floor in 2012, despite opposition from Southerners who said the end of direct payments to farmers and the creation of insurance-like plans for farmers were more favorable to Midwestern corn and soybean producers.

Although Southern lawmakers fought the legislation, they praised Stabenow for talking out issues with them. In 2012, then-House Agriculture Chairman Frank D. Lucas advanced a bill through his committee, but could not get House leaders to bring it to the floor for a vote. Southerners backed the House price support programs which they considered favorable to them, but House conservatives wanted larger cuts to SNAP, the single largest mandatory spending item in the farm bill.

In 2013, Stabenow and Lucas made another attempt to get their respective farm bills through their chambers. Stabenow revised the committee farm bill to include target price programs favored by her new ranking Republican, Thad Cochran of Mississippi, as well as rice and peanut producers.

She pushed the bill through the Senate, but the House voted down the House Agriculture bill and then split the measure into agriculture-only and nutrition-only bills with nearly \$40 billion in cuts to SNAP over 10 years.

Lucas got those bills through the House. In negotiations with Lucas, Stabenow made it clear a final bill would not have SNAP reductions as large as the House bill required. She won that point, but had to compromise on farmer insurance-like revenue and price protection programs. Stabenow said a good final bill was more important to her than who got credit for it.

Nervous, Stabenow stood on the floor of the chamber with Lucas during the House vote on final passage. President Barack Obama signed the 2014 farm bill at her alma mater, Michigan State University, in February 2014.

While the farm bill dominated much of her time, Stabenow focused on another agricultural issue of concern, the acquisition of Smithfield Foods in Virginia by China's largest meat processor.

Stabenow held a hearing and unsuccessfully pressed an inter-agency panel that reviews foreign purchase of U.S. businesses to consider control of the U.S. food supply a national security issue. Stabenow said she saw an inequity in the situation: A Chinese firm was free to buy a U.S. company but a U.S. company would be unable to buy a company in China.

As a Finance Committee member, Stabenow has focused on eliminating the "sustainable growth rate" that determines Medicare reimbursements for physicians. Congress routinely overrides the formula to prevent steep reimbursement cuts to

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doctors, which in turn puts additional debt on Medicare's balance sheets. Republicans in 2009 blocked her effort to eliminate the formula and adjust accounting rules to eliminate the debt obligation. Stabenow also opposes increasing the eligibility age for Medicare as a way to save the government money.

Stabenow has tried to leverage the tax code to the advantage of people and industries in Michigan. The state is particularly hard hit by home foreclosures and Stabenow wrote a 2007 tax provision that prevents the IRS from treating as income the amounts saved when struggling homeowners get loan modifications. The exclusion expired in December 2013 but Congress retroactively renewed it as part of a tax extenders package as the 113th (2013-2014) Congress ended. She helped create a tax credit for advanced energy manufacturing, such as the production of next-generation car batteries.

She also continues to propose more tax benefits for companies that transfer jobs from overseas locations to the United States.

Her interest in manufacturing runs deep. Stabenow co-chairs the Senate Manufacturing Caucus with South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham and she headed up the Finance subcommittee on energy, natural resources and infrastructure in the 113th Congress.

The daughter of an Oldsmobile dealer, Stabenow blames free-trade agreements for many of the struggles of the automotive industry and Michigan in general. When the Obama administration announced Japan was joining negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, she said she would fight a final agreement unless Japan allowed the importation of more U.S.-made cars and car parts. She voted for a trade agreement with South Korea in 2011 after U.S. automakers received additional protections in the pact. In 2014, Stabenow said that Korea has used non-tariff barriers to remain one of the most closed auto markets in the world.

Stabenow sits on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where she champions an Energy Department loan program for the production of advanced-technology vehicles and components. Her state's manufacturing economy makes her wary of regulating greenhouse gas emissions as well as plans for a cap-and-trade emissions credits system. She has proposed delaying EPA regulation of greenhouse gases.

Stabenow was born in and raised in the small town of Clare, known as the gateway to Michigan's "Up North." The eldest of three children, she says her parents urged her to aim high. "In high school, I would hear 'nurse' or 'teacher' as career actions," she told the Detroit News in 2005. "But dad would say, 'No, doctor or engineer.' He gave me confidence to take risks, to push limits."

After graduating from Michigan State University, she got involved in politics.

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A social worker, she was angered by the proposed closing of a local nursing home. She successfully challenged an incumbent to get a seat on the Ingham County Commission in 1975. She went on to serve 12 years in the Michigan House and a term in the state Senate.

In 1994, she lost the Democratic gubernatorial primary to veteran Democratic Rep. Howard Wolpe. She subsequently lost in the general election as Wolpe's running mate for lieutenant governor. But she made a comeback in 1996, ending Republican Rep. Dick Chrysler's one-term tenure in the politically competitive 8th District. She was easily re-elected to the seat in 1998.

That set up Stabenow's 2000 challenge to Spencer Abraham, a longtime GOP operative and first-term senator. Stabenow had a campaign war chest of \$8 million and was the top recipient of funds from EMILY'S List, a political action committee that backs Democratic female candidates who support abortion rights.

She won by less than 2 percentage points and became the first Michigan woman to be elected to the Senate. In typical Stabenow fashion, one of her first acts as a senator was helping Abraham win confirmation as President George W. Bush's energy secretary.

Stabenow handily defeated Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard in 2006. Republicans thought they might have a shot at unseating her in 2012 given voters' frustrations with the Michigan economy. They underestimated Stabenow, who won a decisive victory over Republican Rep. Peter Hoekstra, garnering more votes statewide than Obama.

Chapter 8

POLICY ACES

Aces know the ins and outs of policy issues, sometimes devoting themselves to a few top issues so they can write policy that will have real effects.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D)

9th District/Ohio

Elected 1982; 17th term

Committees: Appropriations

Residence: Toledo

Born: June 17, 1946; Toledo, Ohio

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Single

Education: University of Wisconsin, B.A. 1968 (history);

University of Michigan, M.U.P. 1974 (urban planning);

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, attended 1981 (urban planning)

Career: White House aide; urban planner

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Kaptur has the most seniority of any woman in the House, plus she's the longest-serving Democrat on the Appropriations Committee. Those distinctions give her clout, which she wields predominantly on behalf of northern Ohio. Her causes "grow out of the people from that region," she says — whether they involve energy, manufacturing, or the Eastern European roots of Kaptur and many of her neighbors.

Kaptur still lives in the Toledo house where she grew up. (A devout Catholic, she also attends Mass at the church where she was baptized.) Redistricting in 2012 expanded her political turf so that it now hugs the coast of Lake Erie all the way to Cleveland. It's a blue-collar area, and Kaptur has a populist bent to her politics.

As top Democrat on the Energy-Water Appropriations Subcommittee, she promotes energy development at home and energy independence for the nation. "Energy is in our DNA," she says — a defensible claim, since Standard Oil once dominated the region — and Kaptur generally encourages domestic production. The district holds numerous refineries, and the eastern end has experienced increased development of natural gas fields thanks to hydraulic fracturing.

But Kaptur describes fossil fuels as a short-term answer, while advocating for solar power assisted by Toledo's glass industry, biofuels produced in Ohio refineries, the potential for wind farms on Lake Erie and the continued use of the Davis Besse nuclear power plant. She also pursues energy goals from the Defense Subcommittee. The Pentagon is a huge energy consumer, and Kaptur has the stated goal of achieving energy independence at all U.S. military installations. Some of the military's current energy programs exist "because we pushed and pushed and pushed," she said in 2014.

After three decades in Congress, Kaptur seems confident in her ability to grind out results, even in the minority. For example, her oversight agenda for the Energy-Water panel includes efforts to stop the spread of invasive Asian carp. "They will completely alter the ecosystem of our freshwater lakes," she said. "It's a real threat, and one that under my jurisdiction, the Army Corps is going to pay attention to." The corps is responsible for physical and electronic barriers on several waterways feeding the Great Lakes.

She really opens up as populist on the Financial Services Subcommittee. Kaptur challenges policies that she says benefit corporations and the rich, and in oversight hearings, she bristles at connections between federal officials and top Wall Street firms, particularly Goldman Sachs. In 2012, she took offense when Gary Gensler, chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, told appropriators that he was not participating in the investigation of the bankruptcy of investment firm MF Global. Former Sen. Jon Corzine of New Jersey, the CEO of MF Global, once worked with Gensler at Goldman Sachs.

Kaptur is also a severe critic of free-trade agreements going back to the 1970s,

blaming them for the flight of manufacturing jobs. “We have a budget deficit because we have a trade deficit, not the reverse,” she said. “We’ve lost some of that production power inside this country, and we’ve paid a heavy price for it, and the middle class is shrinking. ... That’s my big fight.” Her admirers include Ross Perot, who sought to have Kaptur, a fellow critic of the North American Free Trade Agreement, as his vice presidential running mate in 1996.

There are other international issues close to Kaptur’s heart. She is an honorary citizen of Zenin, Poland, and Khmelnytsky Oblast in today’s Ukraine — the homelands of her grandparents. Kaptur co-chairs the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus and was troubled by the Ukrainian government’s violent crackdown on protesters in 2013. But the democracy debate has been overshadowed by a pro-Russian insurgency in the east of Ukraine which has resulted in Russia’s annexation of the Crimea and bitter fighting in several provinces. In December, Kaptur co-sponsored a bill to provide humanitarian, military and energy aid to Ukraine. “My colleagues and I have continued to witness Russia’s aggression towards Ukraine,” she said, “which not only disregards Ukraine’s right to independence and territorial integrity, but destabilizes all of Europe and in turn, creates a grim national security situation for the United States.”

Paying close attention to constituents has made Kaptur immensely popular at home — but even with her seniority, she has never held a major chairmanship or leadership job in Washington. One explanation is her disdain for fundraising; she wants a constitutional amendment to limit contributions and expenditures for congressional campaigns. It’s also possible that her social conservatism (stemming from her Catholicism) puts her out of sync with most House Democratic leaders. In 2008, she lost a bid for vice chairman of the Democratic Caucus to Xavier Becerra of California, and in 2012 she lost a bid to become the top Democrat on the full Appropriations Committee to Nita M. Lowey of New York. Becerra and Lowey are close allies of Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

When Kaptur was a child, her father ran a grocery store in Rossford, Ohio, on the outskirts of Toledo, and later took a job at a Jeep factory. Her mother worked for Champion Spark Plug and helped organize a union at its Toledo plant. After the 1997 death of her mother, Kaptur and her brother founded the nonprofit Anastasia Fund that donates “to projects that advance the cause of liberty at freedom’s edge,” especially in Ukraine and Poland. Kaptur also has established the Kaptur Community Fund, which makes charitable donations in Toledo; she regularly contributes her congressional pay raise to the fund.

Kaptur was the first in her family to attend college. She took a job with a regional planning commission and worked on some Democratic campaigns. After studying urban planning, she took on projects in several cities, including one effort to save a

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Polish neighborhood in Chicago. That led to a job in the Carter administration as an adviser on urban policy.

She was studying for her doctorate in urban planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology when she was recruited to challenge first-term GOP Rep. Ed Weber in 1982. With northwestern Ohio in a deep recession, Weber's support for President Ronald Reagan's economic policies proved politically fatal. Kaptur won by 19 points. Her closest general election was in 1984, when she still won by 12 points.

As a result of redistricting in 2012, Kaptur squared off against Democratic Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich in a primary. Kucinich's antiwar views had won him a national recognition, but the new 9th District favored Kaptur. Receiving 94 percent of the votes from her native Lucas County, she beat Kucinich easily en route to another November romp.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D)

Minnesota

Elected 2006; 2nd term

Committees: Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry;

Commerce, Science & Transportation;

Judiciary (Antitrust, Competition Policy & Consumer Rights – ranking member);

Rules & Administration; Joint Economic

Residence: Minneapolis

Born: May 25, 1960; Plymouth, Minn.

Religion: Congregationalist

Family: Husband, John Bessler; one child

Education: Yale University, B.A. 1982 (political science);

University of Chicago, J.D. 1985

Career: Lawyer; lobbyist

Political Highlights: Hennepin County attorney, 1999-2007

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Barely a week after Democrats were driven from power in the Senate last November, their grim-faced leader, Harry Reid of Nevada, adjusted his strategy and added several members to his leadership circle including Klobuchar, who was put in charge of the Democrats' steering and outreach committee. It was understood that the principle role of this personable, straight-forward Midwesterner would be as a liaison to moderate Democrats and Republicans in hopes of building coalitions in an otherwise bitterly divided Congress.

"I don't know anyone who tries harder to work across party lines than she does," Reid told reporters later. "Whether you're in the House or the Senate, if you want to get something done on a bipartisan basis, talk to Klobuchar."

In her eight years in the Senate, the former Minnesota county attorney with the tireless schedule has made herself a home at the center of congressional politics and a reputation both for getting things done across party lines and for getting ahead.

After Reid promoted her this winter, the online Minneapolis news site Minnpost wondered in a headline, "Can Klobuchar's Minnesota Nice melt Senate deadlock in 2015?"

By that time, Klobuchar (KLO-buh-shar) had already been talked about as a possible candidate for president or a choice for vice president in 2016.

Indeed, all the way back in the summer of 2013, when pundits were musing about possible alternatives to Hillary Clinton as a Democratic presidential candidate, Washington Post political blogger Chris Cillizza wrote that Klobuchar "may well be the most talented — and effective — politician most people have never heard of."

She has worked with senators from both parties on legislation that would be hard for either side to quarrel with, such as helping small businesses reach overseas markets and getting more money for science, technology, engineering and math education. In March, she teamed up with North Dakota Republican John Hoeven on a bill to protect the privacy of motorists' personal data collected by onboard computers. "We shouldn't have to choose," she said, "between improving driver safety and protecting driver privacy."

Much of this falls within her role as the ranking Senate Democrat on the Joint Economic Committee, her membership on the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry and as a member of the President's export council. She's also the top Democrat — and former chairwoman — of the Judiciary subcommittee on antitrust, competition policy and consumer rights.

She's also traveled to Iowa — a sure sign of national aspirations — and other states to campaign for Democratic candidates, make speeches and raise money for the party. In the process, she's been mentioned as a possibility for higher office and also as a

Cabinet appointment or perhaps, given her legal background, as a judge.

With all of this activity, she has been careful not to overlook her own state, including its agriculture industry. After President Barack Obama took steps in December to normalize relations with Cuba, Klobuchar and fellow Democrats Mark Warner of Virginia and Claire McCaskill of Missouri traveled to Havana in February to build support for Klobuchar's legislation ending the U.S. trade embargo, something many U.S. farmers are eager to see.

Klobuchar's bill, which has some Republican support, follows earlier proposals on Capitol Hill, led by GOP Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona, to ease travel restrictions.

During her first term, Klobuchar pursued many center-left, consumer-focused policies and became a well-liked colleague. Now firmly ensconced in the Senate, she is expanding her influence over larger economic matters.

In committee markups, passing conversations and speeches, Klobuchar makes fellow senators laugh with an unassuming charm. She has had success, particularly when handling smaller-bore issues, at recruiting bipartisan groups of allies to help her achieve her goals. "It's just getting to know people, and treating them with respect, and seeing where you agree," she said.

The Joint Economic Committee has no legislative authority, but it serves as an idea mill for policymakers in both parties. Klobuchar started her tenure by highlighting some common Democratic plans, but in her usual collegial manner. "Our financial industry is important, but it cannot be the basis of our economy," she said at another hearing. "We need to be a country that makes jobs, that invents things, that exports to the world."

Democrats often link infrastructure to employment, but Klobuchar was less successful as a consensus-builder when she was promoting Obama's infrastructure plans in the 112th Congress (2011-12). She was the sponsor of a 2011 bill that tracked with several White House proposals; it would have put \$50 billion toward infrastructure projects and created a \$10 billion national infrastructure bank. The costs would have been covered by a surtax on people making more than \$1 million a year. The measure got no Republican votes and died in the Senate. Klobuchar stayed upbeat, saying that ideas such as the infrastructure bank "will gain bipartisan support and ultimately pass."

Klobuchar, who was county attorney in Minneapolis, has taken an interest in consumer protection throughout her career, and her seats on the Commerce and Justice committees are ideal for indulging that interest.

She sponsored a bill, signed into law in 2007 by President George W. Bush, that bolstered safety standards for pool drains. She also made successful pushes to restrict formaldehyde in wood products and prohibit lead in children's toys. "I've always

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believed that the first responsibility of government is to protect its citizens,” she has said.

In the 112th Congress, she turned her focus to consumer electronics, urging the Federal Trade Commission to strengthen its oversight of cellphone billing. In 2013, she signed on to a bill to allow cell phone owners to “unlock” their phones, so they can use them with the wireless carrier of their choosing and introduced one to prohibit employers from requiring prospective employees to turn over passwords to their Facebook, Twitter and other online profiles.

“We need to ensure that our laws keep up with advances in technology and respect fundamental values like the right to privacy,” she said at the time.

From the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, she helped write a 2010 overhaul of the food safety regime in the United States. (Klobuchar also uses that post to help the ethanol industry in her state, and she has worked with South Dakota Republican John Thune to promote biofuels.)

Her work on consumer protection has boosted her popularity, but it has drawn criticism from Democrats and interest groups on her left, who have accused her of focusing on small, politically popular issues while staying clear of more controversial policy debates. “Dealing with swimming pools is good and important to families, but it doesn’t change the big drivers in our society,” said Steve Morse of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership to the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Klobuchar grew up in the Minneapolis suburb of Plymouth. Her mother taught second grade, and her father, Jim Klobuchar, was a columnist for the Star Tribune. She attended Yale, where her senior thesis detailed the 10-year political debate over the building of the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis. Published as a book, “Uncovering the Dome” has been used as a text in college courses.

After graduating from the University of Chicago’s law school, Klobuchar returned to Minnesota to practice law. She also worked as a legal adviser to Walter F. Mondale, who provided her first Washington experience through an internship in his office when he was the vice president in the Carter Administration.

She also helped her father recover from alcoholism, a battle he subsequently chronicled in a book. The challenge gave her thick skin, which came in handy during her first Senate run. “Growing up with my dad being in the public eye was also very helpful,” she said. His three DWI arrests “were all very prominent and well-known.”

The events that propelled her into big-league politics came in 1995. Her daughter Abigail was born with a frozen palate that prevented her from swallowing. While the baby stayed at the hospital, Klobuchar was discharged after 24 hours because it was all her health insurance plan would cover. Outraged, she successfully lobbied state lawmakers for a law to guarantee new mothers 48 hours at the hospital.

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Klobuchar entered the Hennepin County attorney's race in 1998 and defeated Sheryl Ramstad, sister of Republican Rep. Jim Ramstad. Klobuchar was re-elected in 2002 without opposition.

When Democrat Mark Dayton announced his retirement from the Senate in early 2005, Klobuchar was recognized as an early favorite to secure the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party nomination, and her three leading opponents dropped out of the race during the primary campaign. In the general election, she topped Republican Rep. Mark Kennedy, with 58 percent of the vote to Kennedy's 38 percent. It was the largest margin of victory in a U.S. Senate race in the state since 1978.

Klobuchar broke her own record in 2012. She beat GOP state Rep. Kurt Bills by almost 35 points.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Nita M. Lowey (D)

17th District/New York

Elected 1988; 14th term

Committees: Appropriations – ranking member

Residence: Harrison

Born: July 5, 1937; Bronx, N.Y.

Religion: Jewish

Family: Husband, Stephen Lowey; three children

Education: Mount Holyoke College, B.A. 1959 (political science)

Career: State government aide; homemaker

Political Highlights: New York assistant secretary of state, 1985-1987

As the ranking Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, the Bronx-born Lowey has proved to be a tough negotiator. She is unwavering in defense of liberal priorities such as education, foreign aid, biomedical research and the arts.

She told her Appropriations Committee colleagues early in 2015, “We have forged compromise in the past, the Murray-Ryan plan was not perfect, but does provide a path forward for another budget deal. Without such an agreement, our appropriations process is deeply imperiled. Discretionary funding is falling to its lowest level as a percentage of GDP since the Eisenhower administration.”

Lowey took her party’s top spot on the panel at the start of the 113th Congress (2013-14), so her first major test was the fiscal 2014 appropriations process. At times, the system appeared to be in tatters. The government shut down for two weeks in October 2013 as Republicans tried to block funding for the 2010 health care overhaul and Democrats refused to budge.

When the shutdown ended, Lowey found herself on the conference committee to finalize a fiscal 2014 budget — the first in several years. She pushed conferees to provide agencies with two years of partial relief from “sequestration” spending cuts that were put in place by a 2011 deficit reduction law; that effort was ultimately successful.

With spending limits in hand, Lowey then moved to high-level negotiations on a \$1.1 trillion appropriations package to wrap things up. Working with Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski of Maryland, she secured higher funding levels for Head Start and various infrastructure programs; she was particularly pleased with a \$1 billion boost for the National Institutes of Health. Controversial policy riders initially favored by the Republican-controlled House were dropped.

“I’ve always worked in a collegial way with my colleagues on the Democratic side and the Republican side of the aisle, which has made me successful,” Lowey said. “You know when to bargain hard, and you know when you’ve gone as far as you can go.”

Lowey has served in the House since 1989, and she is the first woman to lead either party’s roster on House Appropriations. She joined the spending panel in 1993 and successfully lobbied GOP leaders to keep her seat after the 1994 Republican Revolution eliminated some Democratic slots on the panel.

She was fourth on the committee’s Democratic depth chart by the start of the 112th Congress (2011-12). Ranking member Norm Dicks of Washington retired, and colleagues chose Lowey over Marcy Kaptur of Ohio as his replacement for the 113th Congress — Lowey had the support of Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, a longtime ally.

For Lowey, it might be the outcome she had in mind when she shut down a possible Senate run in 2000. She also took her name out of consideration for an

CQ ROLL CALL

appointment to the Senate after Hillary Rodham Clinton became secretary of State in 2009. She also has done her share of grunt work for Democratic Caucus; most notably, she chaired the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in the 2002 election cycle.

In addition to leading Democrats on the full Appropriations Committee, Lowey is the ranking member on the State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee, which she chaired from 2007 through 2010. In the past, she has advocated for bigger aid packages for Israel and the Arab world. However, in June 2014 she said U.S. aid to the Palestinian Authority was “in jeopardy” after Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas included Hamas ministers in a new unity government.

Lowey gets ruffled when social policy is involved, in foreign aid debates or elsewhere. For more than a decade she sought a codified end to the “Mexico City policy” — a ban on sending U.S. dollars to family planning programs abroad or to non-governmental organizations that perform or promote abortions. She cheered when President Barack Obama overturned the policy by executive order in early 2009.

She has been similarly aggressive on health issues as a senior member of the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee. During the 1998 appropriations cycle, Lowey secured for the first time mandatory contraceptive coverage for federal employees. Earlier in her House career, Lowey chaired the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues and the House Pro-Choice Caucus. She was a vocal critic of a pediatric research bill in the 113th Congress championed by Majority Leader Eric Cantor, calling it a “fig leaf for the majority’s dismal record on support for medical research.”

Among her parochial concerns, Lowey focuses on rail safety and oversight. A New York Metro-North commuter train derailed in the South Bronx in late 2013, killing four passengers and injuring another 70. Many of her constituents use Metro-North to commute to white collar jobs in Manhattan. Lowey has lamented the end of earmarking — it was effectively banned by Republicans in 2011 — but says she does not see the practice returning “anytime soon.”

Lowey grew up a few blocks from Yankee Stadium. Her father was an accountant and her mother was a homemaker. She cites her family and Jewish traditions as important factors in her involvement in service: “I believe in tikkun olam — to make it a better world — and tzedakah, which is charity,” she said.

After graduating from Bronx Science, the famous magnet school, Lowey went on to study political science at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts. While in college she interned with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Lowey spent a few years working at an ad agency, then married and became a homemaker, settling in Queens. (Her husband is a successful attorney, and their investments and real estate holdings make Lowey one of the wealthiest members of

Congress.) In 1974, she volunteered for a neighbor's campaign for lieutenant governor. The neighbor was Mario M. Cuomo. Though Cuomo lost the primary race, new Democratic Gov. Hugh L. Carey appointed him secretary of state, and Cuomo hired Lowey to work in the anti-poverty division. By the mid-1980s, Cuomo was governor and Lowey was the top aide to New York Secretary of State Gail Shaffer. Lowey also moved to Westchester County.

She made an impressive debut in electoral politics in 1988. She first survived a primary against Hamilton Fish V, publisher of *The Nation* magazine and scion of a famous Republican family in New York, and businessman Dennis Mehiel. She then unseated two-term GOP Rep. Joseph J. DioGuardi.

For that cycle she raised \$1.3 million, a huge sum for a challenger at the time, and won the general election with 50 percent of the vote. Since then, she has outdistanced all competition. She has not garnered less than 60 percent of the vote in a general election in her suburban district since 1994. Her district has been substantially altered by redistricting on several occasions, but she has always won with relative ease.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Cynthia M. Lummis (R)

At large/Wyoming

Elected 2008; 4th term

Committees: Natural Resources, Oversight & Government Reform (Interior — chairwoman)

Residence: Cheyenne

Born: Sept. 10, 1954; Cheyenne, Wyo.

Religion: Lutheran — Missouri Synod

Family: Widowed; one child

Education: University of Wyoming, B.S. 1976 (animal science), B.S. 1978 (biology), J.D. 1985

Career: Rancher; lawyer; gubernatorial aide

Political Highlights: Wyoming House, 1979-83, 1985-93; Wyoming Senate, 1993-95; Wyoming State Lands and Investment acting director, 1997-1998; Wyoming treasurer, 1999-2007

Until late 2014, Lummis was known mostly as an advocate for issues important to Western states.

But in December, Lummis became nationally prominent when she had a dramatic confrontation at a House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing with economist Jonathan Gruber, who'd served as a consultant to the Obama administration on the design of the Affordable Care Act.

She pressed Gruber on why he had said in 2012 that he wrote part of the health care legislation. When Gruber replied, "I was speaking glibly" and trying to make himself seem more important than he was, she calmly told the story of her husband, Al Wiederspahn, who had died on Oct. 24, 2014, of a heart attack.

Lummis explained that she and her husband had had trouble verifying whether or not they were enrolled under the ACA for insurance coverage. "My husband was having chest pains at the time that he was told we were not enrolled in Obamacare, and ... he didn't have all of the tests that he was advised by his physician to have," she said. "So, on October 24th, a week before election, my husband went to sleep and never woke up."

She added, "Regardless of what happened to me personally, that there have been so many glitches in the passage and implementation of Obamacare that have real-life consequences on people's lives. And the so-called glibness that has been referenced today have direct consequences for real American people. So get over your damn glibness."

When Lummis came to Washington in 2009, fiscal issues were at the top of her list. The former state treasurer considers taming the federal deficit a moral imperative, and she speaks passionately about restraining government spending and rethinking entitlement programs. However, she has been frustrated with Congress' efforts on those fronts. In the 113th Congress (2013-14) she shifted the focus of her hands-on policy work to become a more engaged advocate for the perspective of Western states.

And a big piece of her reworked agenda is what she calls a 21st-century approach to conservation.

Lummis (LUH-miss), who chairs the House Western Caucus, is a Wyoming native. Her family arrived in Cheyenne one year after the railroad in the 1860s. Her great-grandfather opened a hardware store, then acquired ranch land when he bought out his partner. The property stayed in the family, and Lummis grew up in the ranching business. She and her siblings now own big chunks of property in several parts of the state.

But the federal government owns more than 40 percent of Wyoming, and that fact colors Lummis' view of federal activity. "A lot of Western states are more like colonies than they are states, as Easterners know states," she said. A recurring theme of her work is the effect of federal regulations and management on

economic activity in the West, particularly in regard to the energy and agriculture sectors. She generally resists attempts to extend federal wilderness designations (and restrictions that come with them) to new tracts.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, Lummis co-chairs a Republican working group aiming to overhaul the Endangered Species Act. She describes the ESA — and several other laws rooted in the 1970s — as outdated and based on a “litigation model” of conservation. “The American conservation ethic has changed,” she said. “To the extent that laws like the Endangered Species Act have influenced species awareness, they have had a huge cultural impact on the way Americans view conservation. ... It’s cultural, it’s embedded, and our laws don’t reflect that.”

Her preference is to shift more ecological management to state and local entities, which would still be beholden to goals set by the federal government — “and once the goals are achieved, the shackles come off.”

The approach is consistent with her overall philosophy of government. Lummis, a member of the conservative Republican Study Committee, helped launch its 10th Amendment Task Force in 2010. That group promotes the dispersal of decision-making and funding away from Washington.

Part of Lummis’ strategy for promoting her model is to emphasize that resources sunk into conservation-related litigation aren’t going to actual boots-on-the-ground conservation. The ESA working group introduced a package of four bills in 2014, and Lummis’ would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to report on the expenses and hours dedicated to ESA lawsuits. The House passed a bill by Lummis and Tennessee Democrat Steve Cohen to modify a 1980 law that reimburses attorney’s fees for those who successfully sue the government. Lummis contends that the law is useful to some groups, but has been abused by environmental organizations with litigation shops; the bill requires more analysis of and reports on payments.

Lummis is a strong critic of the Obama administration’s regulation of coal-fired power plants — some utilities are citing compliance costs when shutting plants down.

She is skeptical of government spending to address climate change; without quantifiable measurements of mankind’s contribution to the phenomenon, such efforts are “folly,” she said.

Lummis is part of the civil libertarian bloc — including both conservatives and liberal Democrats — that bonded over various security issues in the 113th. Lummis and Vermont Democrat Peter Welch wrote a bill to require disclosure of the top-line budget numbers of intelligence-gathering agencies. “The coordination among them, the growth of some over others, is not well understood,” she said.

Lummis arrived on all her committees after an unsatisfying stint on the

Appropriations Committee in the 112th Congress (2011-12). She voted against most of the bills the committee produced, exasperated that they didn't do more to tame deficits. She also chafed at the hierarchy within the committee itself.

"Members of the committee have very little to do with crafting anything except the budget riders, and they aren't really included in drafting the spending components in the bill," she said. "It doesn't give members, especially conservatives, much of a chance to make some suggestions about program consolidations or prioritizing spending." She left the panel of her own volition.

The third of four children, Lummis went to a "little bitty four-room Lutheran school. ... It was school, church and 4-H all wrapped into one. Very, very simple, wonderful life," she remembers. Ranching was always in her career plans, but she "fell head over heels for the Wyoming Legislature" during an internship with the state Senate to wrap up her college requirements.

She met her husband while serving in the Wyoming state House. She is a Republican and he was a Democrat. They were married in 1983 and had one daughter.

At 24, she became the youngest woman elected to the legislature, where an early assignment to the Judiciary Committee convinced her to attend law school. She later returned to serve 12 years in the state House and two years in the state Senate before twice being elected state treasurer.

After failing to win appointment to the Senate following the 2007 death of GOP Sen. Craig Thomas, Lummis announced her candidacy for the seat being vacated by Republican Barbara Cubin. She won a four-way GOP primary, then faced Democrat Gary Trauner, a businessman who had lost to Cubin in 2006 by less than 1 percentage point. Lummis won that November with 53 percent of the vote, then improved to 70 percent in 2010. She had similar results in 2012 and 2014.

While passionate about politics, Lummis lights up when talking about cows. "They're my favorite non-human friends," she said. "They have lovely personalities." By her accounting, she has ridden, trained, branded, castrated, vaccinated, shot, butchered, judged, driven, and been kicked by cattle; Lummis has pulled calves, "shoveled more poop than you can shake a stick at" and once jumped into a swollen creek to rescue a drowning calf.

Chapter 9

ONES TO WATCH

These lawmakers are ready to break out, building more influence and bigger profiles as they add experience and expertise.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Donna Edwards (D)

4th District/Maryland

Elected 2008; 4th full term

Committees: Science, Space & Technology (Environment; Space - ranking member);
Transportation & Infrastructure (Economic Development, Public Buildings &
Emergency Management; Highways & Transit; Water Resources & Environment)

Residence: Oxon Hill

Born: June 28, 1958; Yanceyville, N.C.

Religion: Baptist

Family: Engaged to Nelson Jones; one child

Education: Wake Forest University, B.A. 1980 (English);

Franklin Pierce Law Center, J.D. 1989

Career: Nonprofit executive director; lobbyist; lawyer;
aeronautical company project manager; United Nations publication editor

Political Highlights: Sought Democratic nomination for U.S. House, 2006

CQ ROLL CALL

Edwards is often called aggressive for her outspokenness and unabashed liberalism.

She's also forthright about her own political career. When veteran Sen. Barbara Mikulski announced in the first week of March that she wouldn't run for a sixth term, popular Rep. Chris Van Hollen, the ranking Democrat on the House Budget Committee, promptly announced for the seat, with the equally rapid endorsement of also retiring Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid. Edwards didn't flinch, though, and announced her own campaign against Van Hollen for Mikulski's job with the backing of some liberal groups who supported her when she won a House seat in 2008.

"I've lived the American dream, a middle-class American dream, the one you have to work hard for just to hold on to, the one that's slipping away for far too many Maryland families," she said in a video sent to supporters. "These are the people I fight for."

Edwards has said that she accepts the "aggressive" label if it means getting results. She tries to get results for her party as a member of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and she tries to get results for her district as a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Edwards also has professional ties to the space program, and she is a leading legislative voice on the future of NASA, whose Goddard Space Flight Center is in Maryland.

Part of Edwards' assertiveness is her willingness to share the details of her own life. She often weaves in her personal story when making the case for a larger role for the government. She defends the 2010 health care overhaul by relating her struggle to pay hospital bills as a young, uninsured single mother. At the Democratic National Convention in 2012, she said that "no one should end up in an emergency room facing financial ruin and the loss of middle-class life, my middle-class life, just because they can't afford a doctor's visit and a \$20 batch of antibiotics."

Similarly, she has spoken of the embarrassment of using food pantries when she was a struggling lawyer. On issues such as campaign finance and domestic violence, she invokes her work experience at related nonprofits.

She attributes her openness in part to her childhood: Edwards is the second of six children raised by an Air Force officer and a stay-at-home mom, and frequent relocations forced her to adapt quickly. She also says the upbringing gave her a wanderlust, which she gets to satisfy while touring the country for the DCCC.

In the 113th Congress (2013-14), Edwards was in charge of the DCCC's "Red to Blue" program, which offers financial and logistical support to non-incumbent candidates, and she headed up candidate recruitment for the 2014 cycle, though the

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election went heavily against Democrats. Edwards, who is not known as a powerhouse fundraiser, was in contention for the job of leading the DCCC in 2015, but House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of California passed her over in favor of Ben Ray Lujan of New Mexico.

Edwards started her congressional career by defeating Rep. Albert R. Wynn in a 2008 Democratic primary. She touted her opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and ran to the left of Wynn, who had the support of many members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Even while working within the DCCC, in fact, she still clashes with her own party on occasion. When the House was considering deficit reduction plans in the summer of 2011, Edwards reportedly criticized Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer at a party meeting as she insisted that cuts to Social Security and Medicare should be off the table. Since then, she has united liberal Democrats in opposition to using a “chained CPI” calculation for Social Security benefits — which would result in smaller increases for beneficiaries. President Barack Obama eventually dropped his own request for such a change. (Edwards is a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and ran unsuccessfully to lead that group in late 2010.)

For her seat on Transportation, Edwards tries to address the needs of her suburban Washington, D.C., district. Even before coming to the House, she supported the notion of the Purple Line, a light-rail corridor in Maryland that would cross several branches of the region’s existing hub-and-spoke mass transit system. The project entered an advanced planning stage in 2011, though Maryland’s new Republican Gov. Larry Hogan in early 2015 ordered a review of the project. She sits on the committee’s economic development panel, where she has called for the relocation of the FBI headquarters to Maryland. Edwards was disappointed with a 2012 reauthorization of surface transportation programs, suggesting that it could have done more to spur job creation; she did not agree with provisions to streamline the environmental review process. She registered another objection when those streamlining principles were included in a 2014 reauthorization of water infrastructure projects. The provisions “were based on the assumption that a significant number of project delays are due to environmental reviews,” she said on the House floor. “I couldn’t disagree more.” Edwards is a leading House promoter of “green infrastructure” — incorporating the natural environment in storm water management plans.

Edwards also sits on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, where she is the top Democrat on the Space Subcommittee. She once worked as a manager on the Spacelab program for Lockheed Martin Corp. at Goddard, which is located in Hoyer’s 5th District.

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Edwards shares several broad goals with the subcommittee chairman, Republican Steven M. Palazzo of Mississippi. After a partisan reauthorization of NASA was approved by the panel in 2013, Edwards and Palazzo reopened negotiations and got a one-year reauthorization through the House in June 2014. It sets a mission to Mars as the goal of NASA's human exploration program, but lets the agency formulate the intermediate steps.

She once was skeptical of the privatization of some NASA functions, but Edwards now feels that the subcommittee has helped steer the private sector toward "things that NASA shouldn't be doing anymore," such as delivering cargo to the International Space Station.

As a child, Edwards moved around the country with her family. They settled in the D.C. suburbs during her senior year of high school. She had some political involvement during college and in her early professional career; Edwards volunteered on Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign and Jesse Jackson's 1984 and 1988 runs. She worked for a U.N. publication and Lockheed Martin before attending Franklin Pierce Law Center in New Hampshire.

After finishing law school in 1989, Edwards worked for several nonprofit groups. She co-founded the National Network to End Domestic Violence in 1990 and was its first executive director, pushing for the 1994 law that expanded resources for the prosecution of such crimes and services for victims.

Her first attempt at electoral politics came in 2006, as she challenged Wynn in a Democratic primary. Edwards had worked for Wynn after her second year in law school, when he was a state senator, and she also campaigned for one of Wynn's early congressional races. Edwards lost a close race, but prevailed in the 2008 rematch. Wynn resigned from Congress to join a lobbying firm after that defeat, and Edwards cruised in both the special election to finish Wynn's term and the general election in November.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D)

2nd District/Hawaii

Elected 2012; 2nd term

Committees: Armed Services; Foreign Affairs

Residence: Kailua

Born: April 12, 1981; Leloaloa, American Samoa

Religion: Hindu

Family: Husband, Abraham Williams

Education: Hawaii Pacific University, B.A. 2009 (international business)

Military: Hawaii National Guard, 2003-present

Career: Media production company owner; congressional aide

Political Highlights: Hawaii House, 2002-2004;

Honolulu City Council, 2011-2012

CQ ROLL CALL

Gabbard is a rising star among Democrats, partly due to her multi-cultural heritage (her father is Samoan, and she's the first Hindu member of Congress), her military service (two tours in Iraq with a National Guard medical unit) and her celebrity (she addressed the 2012 Democratic National Convention while running for Congress, was profiled by Vogue her first year in office and is a frequent network news guest.)

She's not a total team player, though, which probably has caused the White House some heartburn. Gabbard has questioned President Barack Obama's Middle East strategy, so much so that she's been welcomed as a guest on conservative Fox News shows. In particular, while Obama has emphasized that "We are not at war with Islam; we are at war with people who have perverted Islam," Gabbard thinks he should zero in on the "Islamic extremism" that she says has fueled the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS) and other terrorist groups.

She told CNN host Gloria Borger in March 2015 that the underlying issue in Iraq is "the fact that starting with the Bush administration, continuing now, the United States has supported propping up this Shia-led, Iranian-influenced government in Baghdad that has completely oppressed the Sunni people creating this oxygen for ISIS."

In considering the administration's proposal for Congress to authorize the use of military force, or AUMF, Gabbard said she's particularly anxious to avoid mistakes of the past and to have a clear strategy in place.

"When I look at this proposal that the president has brought before Congress," she told MSNBC's Rachel Maddow in March 2015, "I look at it within the prism of our 2002 authorization that caused the United States to invade Iraq in the first place. I look how 12 years later, after spending over a trillion dollars and thousands of American lives, not to speak of Iraqi lives, we're still there. And this authorization is what allowed that to occur, and we're seeing what happens when there is not a clear strategy in place."

Gabbard's main interests have been defense and foreign policy, and she is a member of the Armed Services, Foreign Affairs and Homeland Security committees. In March, she and Pennsylvania Republican Scott Perry, also a former Army officer, started the Congressional Post-9/11 Veterans Caucus. "Taking care of our brothers and sisters in uniform who have selflessly served our country must be a priority for Congress," Gabbard said at the time.

Her military experience is clearly a plus for Democrats. "She's been in combat in a leadership role, and she knows how to lead," House Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland told Vogue for its 2013 profile of Gabbard. "She deals well with men and women, young and old, Republican and Democrat. She's got an extraordinary political talent."

When Sen. Daniel K. Inouye died in December 2012, Gabbard asked to be

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considered as his appointed replacement, even before being sworn into the House. A few notable politicians (including Sen. Cory Booker, who was then the mayor of Newark, N.J.) cheered her on.

Gabbard was 21 when she was elected to the Hawaii State Legislature, making her the youngest member in its history. At 29, she joined the Honolulu City Council, and at 31 she was elected to Congress. She is one of the first two female combat veterans to serve in the House (Democrat Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, also first elected in 2012, is the other).

A few weeks after taking office, Gabbard was recruited as a vice chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, and she spent a significant part of her first term flying to engagements around the country in advance of the 2014 elections.

She also seems less partisan than many of her colleagues and says she's willing to work with Republicans on legislation. In a March 2015 panel discussion on millennials at the South By Southwest festival in Austin, Texas, Gabbard said people in her age group "care less about party labels and blind partisanship, and care more about getting things done. Like so many people, of all generations, I'm working towards finding creative solutions to the challenges that face our country, and finding strong partners to work with to get the job done."

Gabbard is one of five children and was born in American Samoa — her father is Samoan and her mother is white. Her family moved to Hawaii when she was 2. She was homeschooled by her parents, who were active in civic affairs. She has credited them with fostering her interest in public service.

Her father, Mike, is a state senator and former Republican, and her mother, Carol, is a former State Board of Education member.

As a teenager, Gabbard helped her father establish and run a nonprofit dedicated to environmental protection and community health. (Mike Gabbard also founded a nonprofit advocating against same-sex marriage and civil unions, a view Tulsi Gabbard says she no longer shares. In several interviews, she has said that her military service changed her perspective on social issues.) Like her mother, Gabbard is a Hindu.

Gabbard joined the Hawaii state House in 2002 but wasn't there long. When the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, she joined the National Guard. The next year, she resigned from the legislature and volunteered to be deployed with her brigade. After returning from her first deployment in 2006, Gabbard moved to Washington to work for Sen. Daniel K. Akaka as a legislative aide. After her second deployment in 2008, she returned to Hawaii, completed a bachelor's degree and won election to the Honolulu City Council in 2010.

In her first year in the U.S. House, Gabbard generally voted along liberal lines, but she had a few departures when the military was involved. She and 90 other House Democrats voted against an attempt, led by fellow Democrat Barbara

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Lee of California, to trim most military accounts by 1 percent in the fiscal 2014 Defense spending bill. She was one of 18 Democrats to oppose a \$3.5 billion cut to the Pentagon's overseas contingency fund that was proposed by conservative Republicans.

When Obama floated the idea of a military intervention in Syria's civil war, Gabbard was opposed. "I saw the horrors of injury and death," she wrote in a Huffington Post opinion piece. "I came home from my yearlong deployment resolved that I would do whatever I could to prevent my brothers and sisters in uniform from going to war, unless absolutely necessary to defend our nation. The proposed intervention in Syria does not meet this test."

Gabbard also has been an advocate for female veterans and women in the military, and she applauded the Pentagon's decision to lift the ban on women in combat roles. "If you can pull your weight and if you can do the job, you should be able to do it," she told ABC News. "What we see in the policy change, now that we're seeing starting to be executed, is just a reflection of what women have already been doing in the military."

She joined in efforts to address the problem of sexual assault in the military, co-sponsoring several bills.

Her House District was left open in 2012 by Democrat Mazie Hirono, who ran for the Senate (and won). In the primary, Gabbard was an underdog to Mufi Hannemann, a former Honolulu mayor who had the endorsement of the Senate's Democratic leader, Harry Reid of Nevada. Initial polls showed Gabbard trailing by wide margins, but as the campaign wore on she closed the gap, supported in part by veterans groups, Emily's List and the Sierra Club. She ended up winning by more than 20 points. No Republican has won the 2nd District since its creation in the 1970s, and Gabbard cruised in the general election and had no trouble in 2014.

Gabbard still participates in one of her state's most famous pastimes. "I hold on very tightly to my surfboard when I'm home," she told ABC News.



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL



Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R)

West Virginia

Elected 2014; 1st term

Committees: Appropriations (Legislative Branch - chairwoman);
Energy & Natural Resources; Environment
& Public Works; Rules & Administration

Residence: Charleston

Born: Nov. 26, 1953; Glen Dale, W.Va.

Religion: Presbyterian

Family: Husband, Charles L. Capito Jr.; three children

Education: Duke University, B.S. 1975 (zoology);
University of Virginia, M.Ed. 1976 (counselor education)

Career: University system information center director; college career counselor

Political Highlights: West Virginia House, 1997-2001;
U.S. House (2001-2015)

CQ ROLL CALL

Capito has made a career of riding the wave that is rapidly making over West Virginia from a Democratic stronghold to a state that tilts Republican in federal elections. Capito tends to side with a majority of Republicans on most tax, defense, regulatory and energy issues, while often joining Democrats on labor, trade and health care.

She was the only Republican in West Virginia's five-person congressional delegation when she was first elected to the House in 2000. By the time she was sworn into the Senate in early 2015, four out of the Mountain State's five seats were controlled by the GOP, reflecting a generational shift and larger political realignment in West Virginia. "This is a pivotal moment for West Virginia," Capito said in May 2014. "We're on the precipice of big change. ... I think West Virginia will be an interesting state to watch."

In style, Capito (CAP-ih-toe) is less vitriolic than many politicians. When Missouri Democrat Emanuel Cleaver II founded the Civility Caucus in 2006, Capito became the second member. She has criticized colleagues who take intraparty disputes public. "I'd rather have us air our dirty laundry behind closed doors," she said.

As a member of the moderate Main Street Partnership, she sometimes sides with Democrats on labor, trade and health care issues. Capito lists as one of her biggest accomplishments in the House helping to establish a prescription drug plan for seniors during the Bush administration. The other was rewriting mine safety rules after a fire at Sago Mine in her district killed 12 miners in January 2006.

She has backed gun owners and abortion rights, but has supported numerous limits to abortion, voting to ban a procedure opponents call "partial birth" abortion and to require that parents be notified before a minor can obtain an abortion. Overall, though, Capito said she plans to focus on helping her largely rural, impoverished state.

"I want to accomplish the big things: entitlement reform, tax reform, balancing the budget. But we decided the way I am and the way our state is and the way our state sort of has an expectation of me, is to really focus on where the biggest impact can be in our state and locally," Capito said in a March 2015 interview. "So I always have my foot back in West Virginia, there's no doubt about it."

She wants to expand healthcare options for veterans and children, as well as expand rural broadband access, which can help businesses in hard-to-serve communities. "It's something that sounds like a small thing, but if you don't have it it's a big thing," Capito said.

Capito's stance on energy is integral to her statewide appeal. In a nod to her state's economic lifeblood, she co-founded the Coal Caucus, and she has a sharper edge when accusing the Obama administration of trying to "destroy coal" through EPA regulation. She wants the federal government to invest in technologies that make fossil fuels cleaner and more efficient — there is a federal energy lab in Morgantown that

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would benefit handsomely from increased fossil energy research and development funding. She led GOP opposition to sweeping cap-and-trade legislation that narrowly passed the House but stalled in the Senate in the 111th Congress (2009-10).

She plans to use her assignments on the Energy and Natural Resources and the Environment and Public Works committees — she was named chairwoman of the Clean Air and Nuclear Safety subcommittee on the latter panel — to challenge the EPA's air and water regulations and shield her state's vulnerable coal mining industry.

“The administration's overreach has contributed to thousands of coal miners losing their jobs in West Virginia and our neighboring states — devastating local economies and families,” she said in her maiden floor speech. Capito has also vowed to help her state's fledgling natural gas industry through supporting an improved energy infrastructure like oil and gas pipelines and helping to find new markets for U.S. oil.

Capito has also made her mark on transportation issues. She was a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in the House, a post from which she promoted a GOP plan in 2012 to tie transportation funding to energy. After she was sworn in as a senator, Capito vowed to make it a priority to pass a six-year highway bill for her state, which relies heavily on bridges and highways to fuel its economy.

In a nod to the legendary legacy of Robert C. Byrd on the committee, Capito was named to the Senate Appropriations panel. She is the only freshman subcommittee chairwoman, or “cardinal,” in either chamber, and she oversees the spending measure that funds Senate operations, the Capitol Police, the Architect of the Capitol and other legislative branch agencies including the Government Accountability Office and the Congressional Budget Office. “I think I'm looking for accountability,” said Capito when asked about her vision for the subcommittee. In addition to helping veterans and to keep the EPA in check, Capito said she more broadly hopes to use her seat on Appropriations to protect some of the federal agencies and programs brought to West Virginia by Byrd and to use them to promote more private-sector investment.

The grandmother of two enjoys spending time with her family and plays tennis, runs and walks in her free time. Last year she was co-captain of the Congressional Women's Softball team.

Her family comes from Glen Dale, W.Va., a small town that was home to the Marx toy company. She was 3 when her father, the late Arch A. Moore Jr., began a 12-year run in the House; he later served three non-consecutive terms as governor. Political functions and speeches were part of her childhood (she attended John F. Kennedy's funeral with her dad), and she credits Moore with teaching her a great lesson about the job: “To be able to compartmentalize. Leave it at the end of the day.”

Her father's career ended in 1990 when he pleaded guilty to federal charges that

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included taking illegal contributions for his gubernatorial campaign. He served three years in prison and eventually paid a \$750,000 settlement to the state.

Capito went to Duke University planning to become a doctor. (All three of her children are Blue Devils.) She found hospital work not to her liking; instead she wound up as a college counselor and administrator. Capito was a governor's daughter when she met her husband on a blind date; he now works as a financial services executive. She waited until her youngest child was 11 to enter politics, winning a seat in the House of Delegates in 1996.

She won an open U.S. House seat in 2000, narrowly defeating wealthy class-action attorney Jim Humphreys. The 2002 rematch was the most expensive House campaign that year, but she won by 20 points. Her reelection races from there were cakewalks.

After Byrd died in June 2010, Capito was widely viewed as the strongest potential GOP contender, but she passed on the special election eventually won by the Democratic governor, Joe Manchin III.

Almost immediately after winning her seventh House term in 2012, Capito announced her intent to run for Senate in 2014. Soon after, incumbent Democrat Jay Rockefeller announced that he was retiring. West Virginia Secretary of State Natalie Tennant, a Democrat, ran a spirited campaign to succeed Rockefeller, but Capito trounced her by nearly 30 points, drawing more than 62 percent of the vote in the general. Capito became the first West Virginia Republican to win a full Senate term since 1942 and the first woman senator from the Mountain State.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL



Rep. Kristi Noem (R)

At large/South Dakota

Elected 2014; 3rd term

Committees: Ways & Means (Human Resources; Oversight)

Residence: Castlewood

Born: Nov. 30, 1971; Watertown, S.D.

Religion: Evangelical Christian

Family: Husband, Bryon Noem; three children

Education: Northern State University, attended 1990-1992;
South Dakota State University, B.S. 2011 (political science)

Career: Farmer; rancher; hunting lodge owner; restaurant manager

First Elected: 2010

Political Highlights: South Dakota House, 2007-2011
(assistant majority leader, 2009-2011)

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An increasingly frequent presence on cable TV talk shows, Noem has spoken out on a range of issues from the estate tax to federal school lunch rules.

As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, she is positioned to play a role in shaping tax overhaul, especially with an eye toward protecting the agricultural interests of her part of the country.

Noem spoke from personal experience during the committee's markup of a bill in early 2015 to abolish the estate tax. While Democrats criticized the bill as a massive tax break for a few of America's wealthiest families, Noem described how her family struggled to pay the estate tax by taking out loans after her father died in 1994 in an accident on the family farm.

"People who sit on this committee and say it only affects the wealthy ... have no idea what they're talking about," Noem said.

When her father died, Noem was 22, attending college part time, married and nearly eight months pregnant with her first child. She left school to help take over the family operation. It was then that she found out the family would be assessed estate taxes and would have to decide whether to sell land or take out a loan. Noem said the experience is what kindled her interest in politics.

"It was tough for me to reconcile that because we had a tragedy in our family, now we had a financial situation, too. And that's what got me involved," she said.

Noem also is concerned about the federal debt burden on future generations, telling Fox News, "When we look at the actions the Federal Reserve will be faced with taking into the future and dealing with interest rates, we may be in a situation one of these coming years where we can't even service the interest on this country's debt."

It has always been a moral issue, she said. "We should not be leaving this debt for our kids and our grandkids. That's why I ran to come to Washington, D.C.," she said, "to make tough decisions."

Noem takes the orthodox conservative view that more decisions ought to be left to state and local governments.

She introduced a bill that would bar the secretary of Agriculture from enforcing some school lunch regulations if complying with them raised costs for local school systems, telling MSNBC's "Morning Joe" that "we've had a lot of new regulations come out of the federal government telling us how to feed our kids at schools, and it's been extremely restrictive. They've restricted calories, also meat and proteins. And whole grains have been required. Sodium levels have been required to where we can't even possibly put milk or cheese on the menu anymore."

She has questioned the effectiveness of federal education, job training and other programs for low-income people, saying they spend too much on overhead and administration, with too little of the money directly benefiting people in need.

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At a hearing of the Ways and Means subcommittee on human resources, she referred to Native American reservations in her state and said it was “critically important that we not just continue to rubber stamp [federal aid] programs,” but that Congress evaluate them to see if they’re helping people, to “not just create a better situation for them and their children, but for their grandchildren, and their grandchildren’s children, because that is how long these communities and these families have been in poverty and have struggled.”

Noem (NOHM) came to Congress with the budget-cutting, anti-regulation movement of 2010. Republicans are happy to have her in front of the cameras. Noem, a high school beauty queen, is a comfortable spokeswoman on a variety of topics; she made media appearances and spoke at news conferences to promote her party’s plans on issues such as the economy and energy policy.

Born and raised in northeastern South Dakota, Noem, her sister and two brothers helped raise cattle, corn, wheat and soybeans on their family’s farm and ranch. She later served in the state House from 2007 to 2011, two of those years as assistant majority leader.

When she was on the Agriculture Committee, one of Noem’s few public disputes with GOP leaders was over a five-year reauthorization of farm and nutrition programs that the committee approved in 2012. It never received a floor vote — leaders felt that conservative opposition to the bill would sink it — and programs lapsed for several months.

Noem made a public campaign for a floor vote, insisting that safety net provisions were absolutely crucial, particularly in light of severe drought throughout her state.

During the panel’s work on the bill, Noem focused on extensions of livestock disaster programs and “sodsaver” provisions, which cut back federal subsidies in order to remove unintended incentives that induced farmers to convert open prairies into cropland. Noem endorsed billions in reductions to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program but helped defeat deeper SNAP cuts favored by more-conservative panel members.

Noem re-introduced her sodsaver plan in the opening months of the 113th Congress (2013-2014), working with Minnesota Democrat Tim Walz. She also produced a standalone bill to extend the livestock safety net programs.

She also takes part in the GOP’s anti-regulatory efforts. In 2011, the House passed her bill to preclude the EPA from increasing air quality standards on dust. The bill drew a veto threat, as the Obama administration said it was too ambiguous and could interfere with existing clean-air standards. The White House also insisted that it had no plans to further regulate farm dust. Noem wasn’t swayed by such assurances. “The EPA hasn’t always done the same thing that it said it was going to do,” she said.

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Noem joined the Armed Services Committee in the 113th Congress, giving up seats on the Natural Resources and Education and the Workforce panels to do so. Her chief concern was Ellsworth Air Force Base, the only major military facility in South Dakota. Personnel issues are also pressing, as her state has an above-average number of veterans per capita.

Overall, Noem takes a fairly conservative tack, but she voted for an August 2011 deficit reduction package that some Republicans found too weak. And though she is a member of the conservative Republican Study Committee, she didn't support its more austere fiscal 2013 budget. In 2015, she again voted against the Republican Study Committee budget.

Noem was one of the 85 House Republicans who voted for a January 2013 measure that extended lower income tax rates only for those earning less than \$400,000. She expressed reservations that the bill lacked spending cuts, but the deal had other elements she supported: an extension of the production tax credit for wind energy, a short-term extension of farm programs and a permanently higher exemption level for the estate tax.

After helping run her family's farm after her father's death, Noem resumed her college studies while in the state House, and she spent free time in 2011 completing a degree in political science at South Dakota State.

Noem was the last person to enter the three-way GOP primary to run against popular Democratic Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin in 2010. Emphasizing her experience as a farmer, rancher and small-business owner, she won the primary with 42 percent of the vote. As the general election campaign picked up, polls showed a dead heat between the three-term incumbent and Noem, who was dubbed "Palin of the Plains" after former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

Herseth Sandlin tried to emphasize her work across party lines and her moderate-to-conservative voting record — she voted against the 2010 health care law and 2009 cap-and-trade energy legislation. She also criticized Noem for a driving record that was reported to include 20 speeding tickets, six notices for failure to appear in court and two related arrest warrants.

Noem knocked her competitor for being part of a Democratic Congress plagued by what she called reckless spending. She captured the seat in November with 48 percent of the vote. She had no trouble holding it in 2012 and won in a landslide in 2014.

Chapter 10

**FRESHMEN
ON THE RISE**

*These freshmen have already generated interest
and started building high-profile reputations
early in their Congressional careers.*



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL

Sen. Joni Ernst (R)

Iowa

Elected 2014 (1st term)

Born: July 1, 1970; Red Oak, Iowa

Residence: Red Oak **Religion:** Lutheran

Family: Husband, Gail Ernst; three children

Education: Iowa State University, B.A. 1992; Columbus College, M.P.A. 1995

Military Service: Army Reserve, 1992-2001; Iowa National Guard, 2001-present

Committees: Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry
(Rural Development & Energy — Chairwoman); Armed Services;
Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs;
Small Business & Entrepreneurship

Political Highlights: Montgomery County auditor, 2005-2011; Iowa Senate, 2011-2014

The first woman elected to the Senate from Iowa and the first female combat veteran in the Senate, Ernst will stand out in archives of the chamber's history. Where she will fit in, with much of the GOP at least, is in her fiscal and social conservatism.

A relatively unknown state senator two years ago, Ernst has already made a splash. From her campaign ad about castrating pigs to her camouflage-styled heels to her friendly demeanor, she jumped in quickly with the Republicans, delivering their State of the Union response in 2015, replete with folksy comments about growing up middle class in a small town where she wore bread bags on her shoes.

Ernst opposes abortion rights and strongly supports gun owners' rights.

Fundamental tenets of small-government policy — lower taxes, fewer federal regulations, increased government efficiency — and fiscal discipline — a balanced-budget amendment, less spending — set the outline for her approach. “I believe the free-enterprise economy is the greatest job creation machine ever imagined, but only if government gets out of the way.” The only provision for spending that continually meets her standards is any money in support of the armed services or veterans.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL

Rep. Gwen Graham (D)

2nd District/Florida

Elected 2014 (1st term)

Born: Jan. 31, 1963; Miami, Fla.

Residence: Tallahassee

Religion: Episcopalian

Family: Husband, Steve Hurm; three children

Education: University of North Carolina, B.A. 1984;

American University, J.D. 1988

Committees: Agriculture; Armed Services

Graham, a former employee relations negotiator at a school district, comes from a family with political muscle. Her father, former Florida Sen. Bob Graham was a Florida governor, and a brief presidential candidate.

Graham, whose campaign mascot, Petey the stuffed possum, came to D.C. with her, was a bright spot for Democrats as one of two Dems to win against a Republican incumbent during Midterms.

Graham, though, must proceed cautiously as a Democrat in a largely conservative district. She's already reached across the aisle in trying to quash congressional perks, including eliminating first class flights and long-term car leases, and was one of 28 Democrats who voted for Keystone XL pipeline project.

Military issues will likely rise to the top of the agenda for Graham, who has a seat on the Armed Services committee and an Air Force base in her district. There need to be options for those leaving the military, to transition into the civilian workforce, said Graham.

While in the House, Graham plans to continue what she calls "work days," where she shadows employees at various jobs around her district, from barbershops to food trucks.



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Rep. Mia Love (R)

4th District/Utah

Elected 2014 (1st term)

Born: Dec. 6, 1975; Brooklyn, N.Y.

Residence: Saratoga Springs **Religion:** Mormon

Family: Husband, Jason Love; three children

Education: University of Hartford, B.F.A. 1997

Committees: Financial Services

Political Highlights: Saratoga Springs City Council, 2004-2010; mayor of Saratoga Springs, 2010-14; Republican nominee for U.S. House, 2012

Love won a seat in the House on her second try, and she became the first black Republican woman to serve in Congress. But she's not new to politics, and she's not new to the spotlight.

The demographically challenged Republican Party has had its eye on Love for a while. She was a featured speaker at the 2012 Republican National Convention when she was mayor of Sarasota Springs. In a recent TV interview, Love pushed for more blacks to vote for the GOP. "We have to kind of figure out who is going to take us from the lowest common denominator and bring us up. Who is going to give us the opportunity to rise to the occasion and become independent, contributing members of society?"

The daughter of Haitian immigrants, Love was raised Catholic in Norwalk, Conn. Shortly after graduating from college, she followed her sister into the Mormon faith, was hired as a flight attendant for Continental Airlines and moved to Utah. She stayed in Utah and got involved with her community, ending up in the mayor's office after two terms on the city council.

Love serves on the Financial Service Committee and joined the Congressional Black Caucus, with plans to change the group from the inside.



BILL CLARK/CQ ROLL CALL

Rep. Martha McSally (R)

2nd District/Arizona

Elected 2014 (1st term)

Born: March 22, 1966; Warwick, R.I.

Residence: Tucson

Religion: Christian **Family:** Single

Education: U.S. Air Force Academy, B.S. 1988; Harvard University, M.P.P. 1990

Military Service: Air Force, 1988-2010

Committees: Armed Services; Homeland Security (Border & Maritime Security, Emergency Preparedness, Response & Communications — chairwoman)

Political Highlights: Sought Republican nomination for U.S. House (special election), 2012; Republican nominee for U.S. House, 2012

McSally has proved that she's persistent — she fought the Air Force for the opportunity to be a fighter pilot, she fought the Defense Department over uniform requirements for female service members in the Middle East, and she rejected her party's platform position restricting women from serving in ground combat roles.

McSally, who has combat leadership experience, knowledge of international affairs and national security issues, and thousands of jobs at military bases in her district wants to be a go-to resource on national security topics.

Taking on the label Republican feminist, McSally also thinks her perspective on women's issues resonates. She notes that most women's veterans groups seek out Democratic advocates, "so I have been reaching out to the women and the men in our party and said this should be our issue."

McSally also supports equal pay policies. "I would write it differently than it's currently being written up, but we've got to address some of these things. Some of them are cultural, and you can't legislate them. But others are structural, so we have to make sure women can compete fairly and stop pretending that it's not still a problem, because it is."



GETTY IMAGES

Rep. Kathleen Rice (D)

4th District/New York

Elected 2014 (1st term)

Born: Feb. 15, 1965; Manhattan, N.Y.

Residence: Garden City **Religion:** Roman Catholic **Family:** Single

Education: Catholic University of America, B.A. 1987; Touro Law Center, J.D. 1991

Committees: Homeland Security; Veterans' Affairs

Political Highlights: Assistant U.S. attorney, 1999-2005; Nassau County district attorney, 2006-2015; sought Democratic nomination for N.Y. attorney general, 2010

Rice is bringing her experience as a federal and local prosecutor to bear on issues such as airport security, smuggling and terrorism in her first House term.

Rice is ranking member on the Homeland Security subcommittee on transportation security, which will give her visibility on terrorism and travel. Those issues remain especially relevant in her district, which lost many victims in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center.

Some of Rice's national news coverage while district attorney of Nassau County was because of her crackdown on drunk driving, and she hopes to transfer methods on that issue to a nationwide strategy to curb texting while driving.

She had also served as a prosecutor in Brooklyn and a federal prosecutor in Philadelphia.

Several of Rice's policy priorities are linked to her career in law enforcement — and one in particular she will pick up from her predecessor, Democratic Rep. Carolyn McCarthy: “gun violence is a public health and safety epidemic in our country.”

Rice, who looks to be in a safe seat in Democratic-dominated Nassau County, had been courted by Democratic party officials for some time before announcing in early 2014 that she would run to succeed McCarthy, and she defeated Republican Bruce Blakeman.

CQ ROLL CALL CONTRIBUTORS



Emily Ethridge

Over nine years of reporting, Emily Ethridge has covered several aspects of Congress, including the debate and implementation of the 2010 health care law. Ethridge, the author of the introductory chapters, reported on the appropriations and budget process as a staff writer for CQ Roll Call. Previously, she covered the pharmaceutical and medical device industry.

A native of Charlotte, N.C., Emily graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a degree in Writing Seminars.



Jay Hunter

Hunter, who shepherded and edited the profiles, has spent the last several years researching, interviewing and profiling members of Congress and candidates for CQ Roll Call. He also manages the company's annual "Wealth of Congress" special report.

A graduate of The Ohio State University, Jay grew up in Pittsburgh and currently lives in the District of Columbia.

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