

BIOGRAPHY

Congresswoman Martha McSally proudly represents the people of Arizona's Second Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, where she serves on the Committees on Armed Services and Homeland Security and as the chair of the Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security.

Prior to serving in Congress, Representative McSally served 26 years in the U.S. Air Force, retiring in 2010 as a full Colonel. She is the first female fighter pilot to fly in combat and first to command a fighter squadron in combat in United States history.

Rep. McSally is a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and after training to fly the A-10 Warthog, flew her first combat mission to Iraq while deployed from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in 1995. During that assignment, she flew nearly 100 combat hours in support of Operation Southern Watch in the Middle East.

Rep. McSally was next selected to become an A-10 Instructor Pilot in the 358th Fighter Squadron, becoming the first woman in U.S. history to serve in that role.

In 1999, Rep. McSally was chosen to participate in the Air Force's Legislative Fellowship Program, serving on the staff of Senator Jon Kyl as national security advisor on issues including terrorism, cyber security, and missile defense.

After serving as a Legislative Fellow, Rep. McSally was assigned to Saudi Arabia to oversee combat search and rescue operations over southern Iraq and Afghanistan. While there, Rep. McSally was on the leadership team that planned and executed the initial air campaign in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks.

In 2001, Rep. McSally became a Flight Commander and then the Director of Operations in the 612 Combat Operations Squadron at 12th Air Force Headquarters at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. She deployed twice back to the Middle East, holding leadership positions at the Combined Air Operations Center for Operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, and then Iraqi Freedom.

While stationed in Saudi Arabia, Rep. McSally challenged a discriminatory Pentagon policy that required servicewomen to wear Muslim garb when traveling off-base. She fought for a total of eight years to get the policy changed, eventually culminating with filing *McSally vs Rumsfeld* in court. She then helped to successfully shepherd legislation that was signed by the President and into law ending the demeaning policy.

In 2004, Rep. McSally took over as commander of the 354th Fighter Squadron, becoming the first woman in U.S. history to command a combat aviation unit. In that role, she was responsible for deploying her squadron anywhere in the world in 24 hours' notice.

As Squadron Commander, Rep. McSally flew for 225 combat hours, leading her A-10 combat team during Operation Enduring Freedom from September 2005 to February 2006. For her combat leadership, Rep. McSally was awarded the Bronze Star and her squadron was awarded the Air Force Association David C. Schilling Award for the most outstanding contribution in the field of flight in 2006.

During her military career, Rep. McSally flew 2,600 flight hours, including over 325 combat hours, earning six air medals. After her time in the military, she taught and mentored senior military officials from around the world as a Professor of National Security Studies at the George C. Marshall Center in Germany.

Rep. McSally holds Masters Degrees from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and the U.S. Air War College in Public Policy and Strategic Studies, where she graduated #1 in her class of 261 senior military officers.

She also is an accomplished triathlete, having won the National Military Triathlon Championship multiple times and the Military Division of the grueling Hawaii Ironman Triathlon.

Rep. McSally is an avid outdoors enthusiast who in her free time enjoys running and hiking with her Golden Retriever rescue, Boomer. She currently lives in Tucson.