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FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER PREMIERES SPECIALS ON REPUBLICAN WOMEN SHAKING UP CONGRESS AS PART OF PBS' SUMMER-LONG CELEBRATION OF WOMEN TRAILBLAZERS

“Rising Stars” premieres Friday, June 26 at 8:30 p.m. and “Newcomers” premieres Tuesday, June 30 at 10:30 pm on PBS (check local listings), pbs.org/firingline and the PBS Video app

NEW YORK, NY – JUNE X, 2020 – FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER, the discussion program known for its news-breaking interviews, presents two new specials examining a major but under-reported trend this election cycle: the unprecedented number of female Republican politicians running for office in 2020.

In the first 30-minute special, **FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER: RISING STARS**, premiering Friday, June 26 at 8:30 p.m. on PBS (check local listings), pbs.org/firingline and the PBS Video app, Host Margaret Hoover interviews several of Congress' female Republican rising stars, including Rep. Elise Stefanik (NY-21), the youngest GOP woman ever elected, Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler (WA-3), the only Hispanic Republican woman in Congress, and Sen. Joni Ernst (IA), the first female combat veteran in the Senate.

“I spoke with these leaders about the role of women in the GOP and also about the principles that underpin their politics,” says Host Margaret Hoover. “These are women on the front lines of democracy at one of the most critical times in our nation’s history, and their complex and nuanced viewpoints deserve to be heard.”

Stefanik catapulted to national prominence during the impeachment hearings with her strong defense of President Trump, but her record shows that she has not always voted in lockstep with the president. Stefanik was one of only 12 Republicans to vote against the Trump administration’s 2017 tax cuts.

While Herrera Beutler points to her record of reaching across the aisle to get legislation passed, the 41-year-old mother of three says being a Republican woman comes with a specific type of challenge. “The opposition I faced hasn't actually been within my own party; it's been in political players on the other side who seek to take our seats out, because we're the ones that destroy the narrative that Republicans don't support women,” says Herrera Beutler.

While a record number of women were elected to the current 116th Congress, only 13 House members are Republicans. That is the lowest number in 25 years.

“I looked around and it was just not reflective of the American people,” says Stefanik about meeting with the new Congressional class. “Some of my colleagues were taken aback. They weren't expecting that comment, but it really spurred in me a call to action that we have to do better.”

Stefanik and others in the GOP have been working to recruit female candidates this election cycle. More than 220 Republican women have filed to run for the House of Representatives, more than ever before. In the second special, **FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER: NEWCOMERS**, premiering Tuesday, June 30 at 10:30 p.m. on PBS (check local listings), pbs.org/firingline and the PBS Video app, Hoover interviews three of these women seeking a first term in Congress: Young Kim (CA-39), Ashley Hinson (IA-1) and Lisa Scheller (PA-7). Hoover explores their motivations for running, policies and visions for the Republican Party.

“Let's be frank, in the past, the Republican Party has not done as good of a job of encouraging and recruiting women to run for partisan offices,” says Kim, who ran two years ago and narrowly lost. This time, she says there is more support from the party. If she wins, she will be the first Korean American woman in Congress.

Scheller, a former opioid addict from coal country who now employs other recovering opioid addicts, says her candidacy is about advancing the values that she represents, including those of “personal liberty, equality of opportunity” and “low taxes.” Hinson is a former local news anchor turned Iowa State Representative who is looking to unseat Democratic Rep. Abby Finkenauer, who was elected in 2018. She tells Hoover that one of her inspirations for running is increasing the number of conservative women in Congress.

FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER launched in June 2018 and begins its third season on PBS this July. The show maintains the character of the original series by William F. Buckley Jr., providing a platform that is diligent in its commitment to a balanced exchange of opinion. Each month, **FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER** reaches 2.9 million unique television viewers, with average viewership up 5% from last season and Twitter impressions up 143% from last season. **FIRING LINE**'s news-breaking interviews with guests, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Michael Bloomberg, Susan Rice, Adam Schiff, Larry Hogan and Tom Cotton, have been covered hundreds of times by major print, television and online media outlets.

FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER is executive produced by Tom Yellin, Margaret Hoover and Alyssa Litoff. Creative News Group LLC for WNET

is co-producer. Neal Shapiro and Stephen Segaller are executives in charge for WNET.

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ABOUT MARGARET HOOVER

Margaret Hoover is the host of PBS' "Firing Line with Margaret Hoover," a refreshing revival of the iconic television series hosted by William F. Buckley Jr. for 33 years. Hoover is a bestselling author, strategist and political commentator whose experience includes serving on the White House staff of President George W. Bush, on Capitol Hill, and on two presidential campaigns. In 2013, Hoover co-founded American Unity Fund, a political organization focused on achieving full freedom and equality for LGBT Americans by working with conservatives.

About PBS TRAILBLAZERS

In the summer of 2020, PBS is celebrating the women's vote centennial with a slate of multiplatform content honoring and commemorating U.S. women's suffrage, the feminist movement and modern-day changemakers. **AMERICAN EXPERIENCE "The Vote"** tells the story of the campaign to grant women the right to vote, a transformative cultural and political movement that resulted in the largest expansion of voting rights in U.S. history. **AMERICAN MASTERS "Unladylike2020"** is a multimedia series featuring courageous, little-known and diverse female trailblazers from the turn of the 20th century. **"And She Could Be Next" (w.t.)**, a **POV** miniseries, follows women of color as political candidates and organizers who seek to expand the electorate, asking whether democracy itself can be preserved — and made stronger — by those most marginalized. And a two-part **FIRING LINE WITH MARGARET HOOVER** special documents what motivated several conservative women to run for office. Two fan-favorite PBS series will salute female changemakers: **AMERICAN MASTERS** with **"Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am"** and **"Mae West: Dirty Blonde;"** and **GREAT PERFORMANCES** with **"Gloria: A Life,"** about Gloria Steinem, and **"Ann,"** about Texas governor Ann Richards. **ANTIQUES ROADSHOW** spotlights outstanding contributions from female athletes, artists, activists and more in the all-new special "Women's Work." The lineup also features two new miniseries: **PREHISTORIC ROAD TRIP**, hosted by the Field Museum's Emily Graslie, who embarks on an epic adventure through America's fossil country; and BBC co-production **ROYAL HISTORY'S MYTHS AND SECRETS WITH LUCY**

WORSLEY, who investigates notable women and their roles in historical events. In addition, PBS will encore the critically acclaimed and award-winning **FRONTLINE** documentary “**For Sama**,” an intimate yet epic journey of one woman’s experience of the Syrian war.

ABOUT WNET

WNET is America’s flagship PBS station: parent company of New York’s [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its new [ALL ARTS](#) multi-platform initiative, its broadcast channels, three cable services (THIRTEEN PBSKids, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each month. WNET produces and presents a wide range of acclaimed PBS series, including ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters***, ***PBS NewsHour Weekend***, and the nightly interview program ***Amanpour and Company***. In addition, WNET produces numerous documentaries, children’s programs, and local news and cultural offerings, as well as multi-platform initiatives addressing poverty and climate. Through THIRTEEN Passport and WLIW Passport, station members can stream new and archival THIRTEEN, WLIW and PBS programming anytime, anywhere.