Jeannette Rankin

Jeannette Rankin (1880-1973), American legislator, born near Missoula, Montana, and educated at the University of Montana and at the School of Philanthropy, New York City. She attained prominence as a leader of the woman suffrage movement in Washington and Montana and in 1917 became the first woman member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where she served until 1919 as a representative of Montana. A Republican, she was one of 50 House members to vote against the declaration of war against Germany. She was subsequently active in promoting legislation benefiting women and was also active in the pacifist movement. Serving again in the House, in 1941 she was the only member of Congress to oppose the declaration of war against Japan; Rankin was thus the only House member to vote against both wars. After completing her term of office in 1943, she remained active in civic affairs and the peace movement.

Actively opposed to U.S. military action in Indochina, in 1968 Rankin led a protest demonstration of thousands of women in Washington, D.C. The following year she participated in other antiwar marches in Georgia and South Carolina.