

The Honorable Shelley Berkley
U.S. Representative of Nevada (1999–2013)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Decision to Run

Representative Berkley recalls making the decision to run for Congress.
Interview recorded July 22, 2019

I've been listening my entire life to candidates saying that their phones were ringing off the hook to run for office. I can say without fear of contradiction that that doesn't happen. I mean there, you have to be self-motivated. This is something I wanted to do. I let it be known that I was going to do it. I went back to Washington after I decided I was going to run and met with—you know, like any first-time candidate, you talk to the DCCC. You talk to, if you're a Democrat, you're talking to EMILY's List. You're talking to the labor unions. You're talking to the environmental groups and all of the other groups that are important to success if you're a Democrat. And I went to Washington, spent three days there meeting with everybody, and they gave me a lot of food for thought. I have to say that I hesitated after being in Washington. And when I got on the plane, I, I really had a, a good talk with myself. "Is this what you want to do? Is this what you want to dedicate your life to?" And at the end of the flight, before we landed, I said, "I do. And, and it's going to take every bit of energy and time and resources that I could possibly muster, but it's important enough to me." And, and I thought that I could do a good job that my, the reason for running was, my reasons for running I think were the right ones. Truly a desire to serve your fellow man, your fellow citizens, and that's exactly what I did. Once I made the decision, I never looked back.