

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

**Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress**

**Generational Impact**

Representative Berkley reflects on the legacy of her long political career in Nevada.  
*Interview recorded July 22, 2019*

When I first lost my Senate race, I was absolutely heartbroken. For somebody that loved public service, when you don't have an office to do public service with or from—a very, very difficult year for me. And at the same time, and this was so bizarre, while I was feeling my absolute lowest, that's when I was being honored by almost every organization, every church, every, every group in, in southern Nevada. And there was such a tremendous outpouring of support that the dichotomy was really difficult for me to wrap my head around. I, I just, you know, feeling so poorly myself and yet having people coming over to me and thanking me and honoring me for my service. The irony of it all and the paradox was, was a little shocking to my system. But as I got past that, and with time, time heals all wounds, obviously. With, as, as time went on, I came to realize that I had had a tremendous impact on a whole generation of Nevadans. All the little schoolchildren, I mean, when they were learning about their government or about who their elected officials were, they all knew about me. So for, from 1983, when I started my service in the Nevada state assembly, to 2013, when I concluded my service in Congress, that's a 30-year stretch of, of people in this state that knew who I was, what I did, why I did it, and, and were very much a part of my life because I was a part of their lives without even knowing who they were. And so I think for a large number of youngsters, especially girls in Las Vegas, I think I served as a role model for their future aspirations. And I think, if anything, that would be my legacy.