

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

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

“Vote for My Mom”

Representative Berkley recalls being pregnant while running for the Nevada state assembly and dressing her son in a campaign shirt when he was born.

Interview recorded July 22, 2019

Well, when I first ran for the Nevada state assembly, I was pregnant with my first son, Max. I had Max in, at the end of May of 1982, and I won my first assembly race that November. So I, I, I never—gender, to me, was never an issue. I mean, I was very obviously pregnant while I was running. I don't think there had ever been a candidate before for the Nevada state assembly or any other office where the candidate was visibly pregnant. After Max was born, you know, I put a T-shirt on him “vote for my mom,” and he and I went out campaigning. It, you know, we just, that was as much a part of his life as it was of mine. So I think the balance, you know you have to reach the proper balance. How do I, you know, how do I raise a family and, and do public service? And I think that's always a challenge, but I always realized that my family came first. My kids came first.