

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

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Appointed to Ways and Means

Representative Berkley remembers Speaker Nancy Pelosi supporting her desire to serve on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Interview recorded July 22, 2019

I wanted a spot on the Ways and Means Committee from before I got elected. I knew that it was a very, very important committee for my congressional district for a whole host of reasons. Gaming issues, tax issues, Social Security issues—all of that went through the, went through the Ways and Means Committee. So I actively sought this position for quite a while. When Nancy Pelosi became the Speaker, both—Harry Reid, who in those days was Majority Leader of the United States Senate, recognizing how important that position was for, for me to represent my district. And I actively approached Nancy, and there hadn't been somebody, a Democrat from Nevada on the Ways and Means Committee since, I think, the turn of the last century, and I'm talking about 1900. And John Ensign, my predecessor, was on Ways and Means, but he was a Republican. And there were very few women on the committee. And so I approached Nancy with those two issues, in addition to the fact that I, I thought it was essential to represent my constituents. And she agreed with me, and she made the appointment. And I was very grateful to her for that.