

Shirley Chisholm

Congressional Gold Medal Act

Senator Laphonza Butler is proud to introduce the ***Shirley Chisholm Congressional Gold Medal Act*** to honor the first African American woman elected to Congress in 1968. The bill would instruct Congress to posthumously present Congress' highest award in commemoration of Shirley Chisholm's accomplishments and activism. Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA-12) is championing a version of this bill in the House of Representatives.

Shirley Chisholm was born in Brooklyn, New York on November 30, 1924. She graduated from Brooklyn College and went on to earn her master's degree from Columbia University. Chisholm dedicated her entire career to service, working in education, social services, and joining local chapters of the National Association for League of Women Voters, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Urban League, before being elected as the second African American to the New York State Assembly in 1964.

During her seven terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and her run for President of the United States, Shirley Chisholm was an outspoken advocate for women and minorities through legislation and leadership. Nicknamed "Fighting Shirley", she introduced 50 pieces of legislation and championed racial and gender equity, low-income communities, and the end of the Vietnam War. In 1972, Shirley Chisholm was the first African American to seek the nomination of a major party for President of the United States. She was a co-founder of the National Organization for Women and National Political Congress of Black Women.

The Shirley Chisholm Congressional Gold Medal Act would:

- Instruct Congress to present the medal in commemoration of Chisholm's legacy.
- Posthumously award Chisholm with Congress's highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.
- Instruct the Department of Treasury to strike the gold medal and create duplicates to be sold to the public and displayed via the Smithsonian Institution.

After a lifetime of service, Shirley Chisholm died at the age of 80 in Orlando Beach, Florida, on New Year's Day 2005. The year 2024 would have marked Chisholm's 100th birthday. On her impact, Chisholm said, "I want to be remembered as a woman ... who dared to be a catalyst of change."



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The list of original co-sponsors includes Senators:

Warnock (D-Ga.), Booker (D-N.J.), Smith (D-Minn.), Murray (D-Wash.), Warren (D-Mass.), Cortez Masto (D-Nev.), Hirono (D-Hawaii), Sanders (I-Vt.), Collins (R-Maine), Murkowski (R-Alaska), Stabenow (D-Mich.), Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Van Hollen (D-Md.), Duckworth (D-Ill.), Kaine (D-Va.), and Padilla (D-Calif.)

The list of endorsing organizations includes:

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated; American Association of University Women; Auxiliary, National Medical Association; Black Women Collective; Black Women's Roundtable; Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Incorporated; Continental Societies, Incorporated; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.; Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Incorporated; Greater Sacramento Urban League; Jack & Jill of America, Incorporated; Las Amigas, Incorporated; Les Gemmes, Incorporated; NAACP; National Association for League of Women Voters; National Association of University Women; National Bar Association, Women Lawyers Division; National Black Nurses Association; National Coalition of 100 Black Women; National Coalition of Black Civic Participation; National Council of Negro Women (NCNW); National Education Association; National Newspaper Publishers Association; National Organization for Women (NOW); National Urban League; National Women's Law Center; North County African American Women's Association; OneHundredBlack Women; Shirley Chisholm Institute; Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Incorporated; Swing Phi Swing Social Fellowship Incorporated; The Chums, Incorporated; The House of the Lord Churches, Incorporated; The Ladies Auxiliary of the Knights Peter Claver; The Links Incorporated; The Shirley Chisholm Project; The Chums, Incorporated; Women's Missionary Society, African Methodist Episcopal Church.