

Bar Code
placed here

The first black woman ever elected to Congress, Shirley Chisholm (1924-2005) was an outspoken politician who shattered barriers and stood up for the disadvantaged. Chisholm ran for President in 1972, becoming the first African American and only the second woman to seek the nomination of a major political party. She later wrote of her unsuccessful bid, "I ran because somebody had to do it first. The next time a woman runs, or a black, or a Jew or anyone from a group that the country is 'not ready' to elect to its highest office, I believe that he or she will be taken seriously from the start."

© 2013
USPS

Chisholm first ran for Congress in 1968, campaigning in her Brooklyn neighborhood with a sound truck that announced, "Ladies and gentlemen...this is fighting Shirley Chisholm coming through." A maverick who was not beholden to the traditional Democratic party machinery, Chisholm's campaign motto was "Unbought and Unbossed." She won the election and entered Congress in 1969.

Chisholm scored another historic first in 1972 when she declared her candidacy for the Democratic nomination for President. She received more than 150 delegate votes at the Democratic National Convention before George McGovern won the party's nomination.

PLATE
POSITION


Chisholm served in Congress until January 1983. She continued to speak out for the rights of women, people of color, and the poor. She was also a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus and the National Women's Political Caucus. She died on January 1, 2005, having already spoken of her legacy. "I'd like them to say that Shirley Chisholm had guts," she said. "That's how I'd like to be remembered."

Bar Code
placed here

