

# COMMENTARY: PEN OAKLAND ENTICES: WHEN THE NEWS IS BAD, TRY POETRY

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Strongman politics is not for the weak. Here in the U.S., Donald Trump is testing how strongman politics could work in the world's model democracy. The post COMMENTARY: PEN Oakland Entices: When the News is Bad, Try Poetry first appeared on Post News Group.

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By U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler  
Special to The Post

U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler (D-Calif.) and U.S. Representative Barbara Lee (D-Calif.-12) celebrated the passage of bipartisan legislation to honor the life and work of the late Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress in 1968.



The Shirley Chisholm Congressional Gold Medal Act would instruct Congress to posthumously endow Chisholm with a Congressional Gold Medal – the highest award Congress can bestow – in commemoration of her accomplishments, activism, and legacy.

The Shirley Chisholm Congressional Gold Medal Act was led in the House by Congresswoman Lee, Congressman Byron Donalds, Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Congresswoman Maxine Waters, and Congresswoman Yvette Clarke. The Senate companion to the bill was introduced by Butler and Georgia Senator Raphael Warnock.

“Shirley Chisholm lived an honorable life of service and was a trailblazer who opened doors for generations of Black women and opened the imagination of what leadership looked like for our entire nation,” said Butler. “Her extraordinary contributions to American history and progress deserve recognition, and today I am proud to stand with my colleagues in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle to have taken this step to celebrate her legacy, ensuring that future generation of leaders never forget her courage, sacrifice, and patriotism.

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The Congressional Gold Medal serves as the nation's highest expression of gratitude for distinguished service and achievements, and I see no one more deserving than Shirley Chisholm,” said Lee. “It is critical for the next generation of leaders to see the first Black woman elected to Congress get the recognition that she deserves.

“Congresswoman Chisholm made history as the first Black woman elected to the United States Congress and the first Black woman to run for President of the United States. To Mrs. C, thank you for being unbought and unbossed, for paving the way, and for being a catalyst for change,” Lee said.

During her seven terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, “Fighting Shirley” introduced 50 pieces of legislation and was a champion for racial and gender equity, low-income communities, and the end of the Vietnam War.

In 1972, Chisholm became the first woman and Black candidate to seek the nomination for president of the United States from one of the two major political parties.

After a lifetime of service, Shirley Chisholm died at the age of 80 in Ormond Beach, Florida, on New Year's Day 2005. Nov. 30, 2024, would have marked Chisholm's 100th birthday. Chisholm's motto, "Unbought and Unbossed," embodies her unwavering advocacy for women and minorities, which defined her remarkable career and inspired future generations of leaders.

After passing the House and Senate with significant bipartisan support, the Shirley Chisholm Congressional Gold Medal Act will head to President Biden's desk for a signature.

"Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm broke barriers for Black women, Black Americans, and anyone who refuses to be confined by injustice. As an educator, trailblazing public servant, and presidential candidate, she fought for an inclusive democracy that lives up to our nation's highest ideals of equity and justice under law," said Warnock. "I am proud to have passed this bill alongside Senator Butler to honor Chisholm's legacy with a Congressional Gold Medal, and I will continue working to carry on her fight through my work in the Senate."

"Shirley Chisholm was a pioneering figure in American politics, serving as a source of inspiration for millions throughout our country," said Senator Susan Collins. "I am proud to join this effort to recognize her historic contributions to our nation."

"Shirley Chisholm broke barriers as the first African American woman elected to Congress, paving the way for future generations of women leaders," said Nevada Senator Cortez Masto. "I'm proud I helped pass this bill in the Senate to honor her legacy and continue the fight for representation and opportunity for everyone across the country."



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