

# Congresswoman Giffords battles for life after shooting



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By Tim Gaynor and Peter Henderson - 38 mins ago

TUCSON, Arizona (Reuters) - Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords battled for her life on Sunday after a man shot her in the head and killed six people in a rampage that fueled debate about extreme political rhetoric in America.

The 40-year-old Democratic lawmaker was in critical condition after Saturday's shooting at a public event in Tucson, Arizona, but doctors were cautiously optimistic she would survive. A single bullet passed through her head.

The suspect was in federal custody as investigators sought a motive and looked for a possible accomplice.

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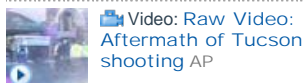
The violence shocked politicians in Washington, where Congress postponed a vote on healthcare reform later this week. After an acrimonious campaign for congressional elections last November, some Democrats were quick to say a shrill climate of political vitriol might have played a role.

"We are in a dark place in this country right now and the atmospheric condition is toxic," Democratic Representative Emanuel Cleaver told NBC's "Meet the Press" program.

[Click image to see scenes from the shooting in Arizona](#)



ABC News - Arizona Congresswoman Shot



Reuters - U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords of Arizona addresses the United States Congress in this still ...



AFP/Getty Images/John Moore

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