

Kelly: Giffords cleared to attend shuttle launch

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This undated file photo provided by the office of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, shows her, left, with her husband, NASA astronaut Mark Kelly. Looking back on the horror of Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011, this seems miraculous today: that Kelly would indeed command the next-to-last space shuttle flight and that his wounded wife would be in Florida watching. Yet that is what is expected to happen Friday, April 29, 2011 provided doctors approve her travel. The Kelly-Giffords ordeal has been a national drama since the congresswoman was shot in the head at a meet-and-greet in her hometown of Tucson, Ariz. (AP Photo/Office of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, File)

(AP) -- NASA astronaut Mark Kelly says doctors have given his wife, Arizona congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, approval to travel to Cape Canaveral this week to watch him fly into space Friday on the next-to-last shuttle mission.

Giffords was shot in the head in a mass shooting outside a Tucson, Ariz., supermarket more than three months ago. This would be her first trip since she was flown from Arizona to a Houston rehabilitation hospital where she has been in therapy.

Kelly said during an interview with CBS' Katie Couric that his wife will witness the launch of Endeavour, which is scheduled for 3:47 p.m. Friday. Kelly is the commander of the mission.

"I've met with her doctors, her neurosurgeon and her doctors, and ... they've given us permission to take her down to the launch," Kelly said in the interview in Houston. The network statement did not specify when the interview occurred.

CBS released excerpts of the interview Sunday, and it was scheduled to air Monday evening.

James Hartsfield, spokesman for NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, referred all questions about Giffords to her staff, which gave no immediate comment.

President [Barack Obama](#) and the first family also are scheduled to watch the launch, although it's unclear if they will watch it with Giffords.

Families view launches at Kennedy [Space](#) Center from a restricted area, and there are no plans for Giffords to make a public appearance.

Giffords went to Kelly's last launch in 2008, when he commanded the [space shuttle](#) Discovery. The two married in 2007.

The shooting happened as Giffords was holding a community outreach event in the parking lot of a Tucson shopping center. Besides the congresswoman, six people were killed and 13 were wounded.

Jared Lee Loughner, 22, has pleaded not guilty to charges stemming from the attack and is in custody.

Giffords has not been seen publicly since the shooting and has spent the last three months relearning how to speak, walk and take care of herself. She has been singing - as part of musical therapy - asking for her favorite foods and visiting with family, friends, and her rabbi.

Kelly returned to training for the shuttle [launch](#) in February after taking time off to be at his wife's hospital bedside.

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