

Surgeon optimistic congresswoman will survive shooting; 6 dead, 13 wounded

By Arizona Republic

Pima County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik said Arizona U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords was the intended target in the shooting and he described suspect Jared Loughner as one with a criminal record and one with mental issues. Dupnik also said he was "not convinced" that the suspect acted alone, but he declined to elaborate.

Giffords, 40, a third-term Democrat, was shot through the head at shortly after 10am Saturday at a Safeway at Ina and Oracle roads in northwest Tucson. Loughner, 22, is currently in custody. (Initial news accounts and reports from authorities misidentified the name as Laughner.)

Giffords has undergone brain surgery after being shot by a man who opened fire with a handgun when the Congresswoman was holding a public appearance in Tucson.

One of the surgeons who operated on Giffords said afterwards, "I'm very optimistic about her recovery."

Six people were killed, including U.S. District Judge John Roll, a Giffords aide and a young girl, and 13 others were wounded in the shooting, authorities said. The aide was identified as Gabe Zimmerman, 30, Giffords' community outreach director; he was engaged to be married.

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