

Maria Shriver endorses Obama

by UPI

LOS ANGELES - California first lady Maria Shriver Sunday endorsed Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois for the Democratic presidential nomination. Shriver -- whose husband, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, last week endorsed Sen. John McCain of Arizona for the Republican nomination -- made a surprise appearance at an Obama rally at UCLA. After Caroline Kennedy, Stevie Wonder and Oprah Winfrey spoke, Obama's wife, Michelle, addressed the crowd with her standard stump speech -- and then introduced Shriver, who had not been announced as part of the program, which was carried live on C-Span. Shriver -- a niece of former President John Kennedy and former Sen. Robert Kennedy -- joined her cousin Caroline and her uncle, Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy, in endorsing Obama. "If Barack Obama was a state, he'd be California," Shriver told the audience. "Think about it. (He is) diverse, open, smart, independent, bucks tradition, innovative, inspiring, dreamer, leader. He's not about himself. He's about us." Shriver did not mention her husband's endorsement of McCain, but did ask the audience to acknowledge the other presidential hopefuls and their spouses for the sacrifices they're making running for president.

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