

The Honorable William Lacy Clay Sr.
U.S. Representative of Missouri (1969–2001)

**The Long Struggle for Representation: Oral Histories of African Americans
in Congress**

Filing for Congress

Representative Clay Sr. recounts the day he decided to run for Congress.
Interview recorded September 10, 2019

I was in my car coming from the city hall, and on the radio, they announced that it the district was final. I pulled over to the side. I called my wife first and said, "I'm getting ready to file for Congress." And she said, "Right on." Then I called one of the Black elected officials that, that was close to me, to make sure he was on board, and then he said he would call some others, and I would, I would call some, and then that, from that day, that was, that was, oh I guess maybe six, eight months before the election, that's when we started—already had the apparatus added that got me elected to, to the board of aldermen, and, and got a whole lot of other people elected in subsequent years, so that's the way I got, got into the national scene.