

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

Congressional Black Caucus Victory

Representative Clay Sr. recalls how the Congressional Black Caucus helped Representative Ron Dellums make history as the first African-American Member to serve on the Armed Services Committee.
Interview recorded September 10, 2019

Hébert, yeah, and he was saying that, that he didn't want Dellums, and we had to say to, to the Speaker, "Look, we, no, nobody, nobody's going to pick who speaks for us." That was the position we took. And we said, "We will disrupt the hell out of this," because we had already boycotted Nixon and all of that stuff, so they knew they couldn't, who they were talking to. And so we said, "No. Hébert can't tell us who's going to speak for Black America. This is what the Black Caucus wants. We want Dellums to speak for us," and that's how he got on it.