

**James Johnson**  
Page, U.S. House of Representatives

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

### **Not Allowed on the House Floor**

James Johnson describes the different responsibilities he had compared to floor Pages and the moment he finally went on the House Floor.

*Interview recorded October 24, 2019*

Eventually, if, if someone left for any reason, someone else would be found. I also worked for Adam Clayton Powell, for Charlie Diggs from Michigan, Ludlow Ashley from Ohio, and Henry Reuss from Wisconsin, were also Members that I worked for. But I always had five people. I was always on five Members' payroll. And when I left school, the other Pages went to the House, to the Senate, the Supreme Court. I went to whatever office I was scheduled for that day and, and worked in the office. I did, you know, personal message running for that particular Member and learned all kinds of office skills. So it was a good education for me in terms of, you know, learning skills which would benefit me later on. Was never allowed on the floor of the House or the Senate while they were in session. Could go into the cloakroom but was never allowed on the floor. So, it was years later, in fact within the last three to five years—Susan Davis is my Congresswoman. I live in the 53rd District of—Congressional District in California. And she, a couple years ago, took me on the floor of the House while they were in session to close out that bucket list of my life. That only happened within the last five years.