

**Muftiah McCartin**  
Staff Director, House Committee on Rules

## **Special Exhibit: Women in Congress**

### **Starting on the Hill: Part Two**

Muftiah McCartin recalls leaving her first position on the Hill to work in the Parliamentarian's Office in 1976.

*Interview recorded January 29, 2016*

So, I went to work that Monday in the Government Operations Committee. And the office manager at the time—well, I was in a secretarial pool, which was really uncomfortable for me. And the office manager at the time, she was taking me around to meet the professional staff. And she takes me to—into this woman's office. And she goes, "This is our, our token lady lawyer," which made me very uncomfortable. And so, again, I went home that Monday night, I was just absolutely in tears. Like, I can't do this for six months. I can't work in a secretarial pool. I can't work for a woman who calls their one female attorney a token lady lawyer. I—like, get me out of here. So, I called Bill Brown, who was the Parliamentarian at the time, because that was the job that I really wanted. And I said, "Is the offer still available? Is it still open?" And he said, "No, I'm sorry. I, I gave it—I offered it to somebody else." And he said, "If she says no, I'll call you." So, he—so, that was a Monday, he called me on Thursday, said she had turned down the, the offer. And I said, "I will take it," and then I went in on Friday and quit at the Government Operations. And Bill Jones, to his credit, over the years, he and I became very, very good friends over the years. But, you know, he used to always tease me that that was, you know, definitely the shortest stint on the committee. But, you know. So, I think that's a—you know, my being hired is a little bit representative of the time. And so, that's how I got here. And then when I was in the Parliamentarian's Office, I very quickly realized I was someplace very special. So, this whole notion of staying for, you know, six months, I just tossed out the window. And in fact, I ended up staying in that office for 29 years. It's a very, very special place. And that's where my love of the House and the Congress and the process—you know, that's where—it, it stemmed from being in that office and working with, with those people—the Parliamentarians.