

WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
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ISSUE UPDATE

DATE: November 19, 2016
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

THE UPCOMING 115TH CONGRESS WILL OPEN WITH THE MOST AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN HISTORY

NAACP WASHINGTON BUREAU LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HISTORICALLY LARGE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS (CBC) TO ADVOCATE THE CRUCIAL PRIORITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

THE ISSUE

The 115th Congress will be sworn into service on January 3, 2017, and is scheduled to run for two years until the end of the year in 2018. As a result of the 2016 election, the 115th Congress will be one of the most diverse ever, including an historically high number of African Americans. Specifically, beginning in 2017 there will be a record 51 African Americans in the Congress: 3 in the US Senate (including only the second African American woman in history), and 48 in the US House of Representatives. This means that African Americans will represent just under 10% of the entire Congress. In the 114th Congress, which covered the years 2015 – 2016 and is almost over, there were 48 African Americans in both the House and the Senate, which translates to just under 9%.

African Americans did not serve in Congress until the 41st Congress (1869-1870) during the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. No African Americans served in Congress from the 57th Congress (1901-1902) until the 71st Congress (1929-1930), and from that point on the number has grown steadily (see the chart on the next page).

In terms of gender, in January 2017, a record high number of women, 109, (or just over 20% of the total) will be sworn into the House and Senate. Of this 109, 21 (out of 100) women will serve in the US Senate and 88 will be in the U.S. House of Representatives (out of 440 total). A total of 38 women of color will serve in the 115th Congress.

Also, with several races still to be decided, it is clear there will be more Hispanic and Asian Members of Congress than ever before. At last count, there will be at least 39 Members of the House and Senate in 2017 who are of Hispanic heritage, and at least 15 Asian Members of the US House and Senate.

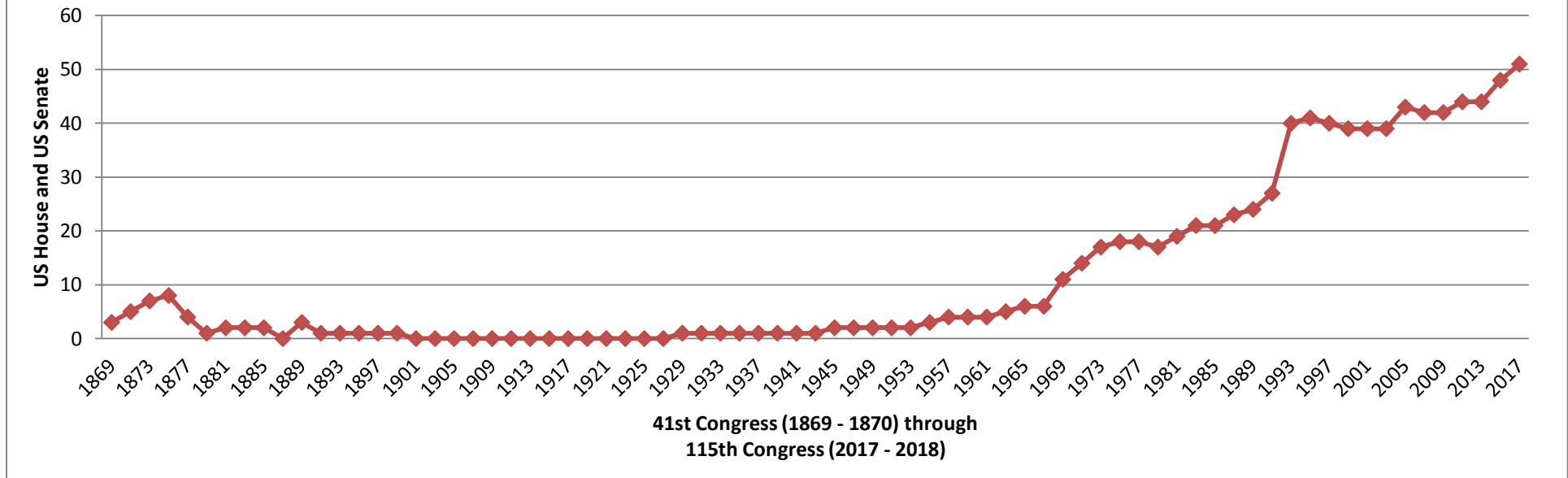
There will also be a new-found ethnic diversity in both the House and the Senate in the 115th Congress: for the first time ever, there will be a Latina Senator as well as a Senator whose mother is Chinese-Thai; this year's House and Senate crop also includes members who were born in foreign countries including India, Thailand, Italy, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, France, Panama, Cuba, Germany, Guatemala, Pakistan and Mexico.

With the incoming Congress, the NAACP Washington Bureau, will, as always, ask for meetings with all freshman Members of the Senate and House to share with them our policy agenda as well as the priorities of the NAACP. We will also continue to educate, promote and advocate strongly for our agenda with the Congress and the new Administration.

MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.

For more information, call your local NAACP branch or visit www.naacp.org

African Americans in Congress



AFRICAN AMERICAN MEMBERS OF THE 115TH US CONGRESS (2017-2018)

US Senate

Cory Booker, NJ

* Kamala Harris, CA

Tim Scott, SC

US House of Representatives

Alma Adams, NC – 12

Karen Bass, CA – 37

Joyce Beatty, OH – 3

Sanford Bishop, GA – 2

* Linda Blunt Rochester, DE –
At large

* Anthony Brown, MD – 4

GK Butterfield, NC – 1

André Carson, IN – 7

Yvette Clark, NY - 9

William Lacy Clay, MO – 1

Emmanuel Cleaver, MO – 5

Jim Clyburn, SC – 6

John Conyers, Jr., MI - 13

Elijah Cummings, MD – 7

Danny Davis, IL – 7

* Val Demings, FL - 10

Keith Ellison, MN – 5

* Dwight Evans, PA – 2

Marcia Fudge, OH – 11

Al Green, TX – 9

Alcee Hastings, FL – 20

Will Hurd, TX – 23

Sheila Jackson Lee, TX – 18

Hakeem Jeffries, NY – 8

Eddie Bernice Johnson, TX – 30

Hank Johnson, GA – 4

Robin Kelly, IL – 2

Brenda Lawrence, MI – 14

* Al Lawson, FL – 5

Barbara Lee, CA – 13

John Lewis, GA – 5

Mia Love, UT – 4

* Donald McEachin, VA – 4

Gregory Meeks, NY - 5

Gwen Moore, WI – 4

Eleanor Holmes Norton, DC –
at large

Donald Payne Jr. NJ – 10

Stacy Plaskett, VI – at large

Cedric Richmond, LA – 2

Bobby Rush, IL – 1

Bobby Scott, VA – 3

David Scott, GA – 13

Terri Sewell, AL – 7

Bennie Thompson, MI – 2

Marc Veasey, TX – 33

Maxine Waters, CA – 43

Bonnie Watson Coleman, NJ – 12

Frederica Wilson, FL - 24

* = New to Congress in 2017