

United States Representative Alcee L. Hastings

Alcee L. Hastings represents his native state of Florida by serving as Congressman for District 23, which includes parts of Broward, Palm Beach, Hendry, Martin, and St. Lucie Counties. Congressman Hastings was first elected in 1992 and is currently serving his 9th term in the Congress. Born in Altamonte Springs, he attended Florida's public schools, and graduated from Fisk University in 1958. He earned his law degree from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee.

Known to many as "Judge," Alcee Hastings has distinguished himself as an attorney, civil rights activist, judge, and now Member of Congress. Appointed by President Jimmy Carter in 1979, he became the first African-American Federal Judge in the state of Florida, and served in that position for ten years. Since his election to Congress as the first African-American from Florida since the post-Civil War period, Congressman Hastings has been an outspoken advocate for making our country safer and more secure; ensuring that our election systems are easier and more fair; creating tax incentives for small businesses; expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit; providing job training and reeducation for displaced workers; banning assault weapons; funding Head Start and education programs; making Social Security an independent agency; advocating for environmental justice and providing family and medical leave to all workers. Known throughout the world as an expert in foreign policy, Mr. Hastings has introduced legislation advocating diplomacy before military action to settle disputes with established and emerging nations. Throughout his lifetime, Congressman Hastings has championed the rights of minorities, women, the elderly, children and immigrants.

Among Congress' most respected voices in international affairs, Congressman Hastings is the Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Commonly referred to as the Helsinki Commission, this independent U.S. government agency was created in 1976 to monitor and encourage compliance with the landmark human rights and democracy-building treaty signed in Finland the previous year. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Speaker of the House, the Majority Leader of the Senate and the President. In 2007, Congressman Hastings became the first African-American to chair the Commission and continues his work in the areas of human rights, economic development and parliamentary diplomacy.

Congressman Hastings is a senior Member of the powerful House Rules Committee and Chairman of its Legislative and Budget Process Subcommittee. This Subcommittee, under the direction of the Chairman, has general responsibility for measures or matters associated with the inter-branch relations of Congress and the Executive, and exercises oversight of the Congressional budget process. Mr. Hastings also serves as Vice Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and is a member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism/HUMINT, Analysis and Counterintelligence, as well as the Subcommittee on Intelligence Community Management.

As a Senior Democratic Whip, Mr. Hastings is an influential member of the Democratic leadership. Moreover, underscoring his commitment to work closely on a bipartisan basis with his Florida colleagues, Hastings is the Co-Chairman of the Florida Delegation. Previously, Mr. Hastings served as Vice Chairman of the Democratic Select Committee on Election Reform.

Congressman Hastings is the proud recipient of numerous honors and awards bestowed on him from organizations both at home and abroad. His governing philosophy is simple: he firmly believes that progress and change can be achieved through mutual respect and appreciation and that individuals and communities can see beyond the limits of parochialism, enabling them to better understand each other.