

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Bobby Rush

PERSON

Rush, Bobby L., 1946-

**Alternative Names:** The Honorable Bobby Rush;

**Life Dates:** November 23, 1946-

**Place of Birth:** Albany, Georgia, USA

**Residence:** Chicago, Illinois

**Work:** Chicago, Illinois

**Occupations:** Political Activist; U.S. Congressman

## Biographical Note

Congressman Bobby Rush, a legendary figure in modern African American politics, exhibited extraordinary leadership long before his 1992 election to Illinois' First Congressional District. Rush was born in Albany, Georgia, in November 23, 1946, under extremely segregated conditions. Rush's family moved to Chicago in 1953, when he was seven years old.

In 1963, at the age of seventeen, Rush enlisted in the U. S. Army and served honorably until 1968. Later, Rush made history when he formed the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party after having been inspired by the activism of Stokely Carmichael and others. During this time, Rush formed the Free Medical Clinic in Chicago. It was later that Rush would confront the political establishment with a more traditional approach.

Rush ran for alderman of Chicago's Second Ward in 1975, but lost the election. Rush later won that same seat in 1983; and he continued to serve as an alderman until 1992, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Rush participated on the subcommittees on Telecommunications, Trade and Consumer Protections, and Energy and Power, as well as on the House Committee on Commerce. These three entities accounted for three-quarters of all national legislation. During his term, Rush served as member of the U.S. delegation of the North Atlantic Assembly, and sponsored many community-based initiatives.

In 2022, Rush announced that he would not seek reelection to the U.S. House of Representatives.

## Related Entries

**Benjamin Franklin Elementary Fine Arts Center** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Wells Community Academy High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**John Marshall Metropolitan High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Richard T. Crane Medical Preparatory High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

[STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Englewood High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Roosevelt University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**bachelor's degree**

**University of Illinois at Chicago** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.S. in political science**

**Franklin Academy** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**McCormick Theological Seminary** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

[EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Insurance agent**

**Beloved Community Christian Church** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Pastor**

**United States Army** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1963 to 1968]

**Black Panther Party** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1968 to 1974]

**Deputy Minister of Defense and founder of Illinois chapter**

**Chicago City Council** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1983 to 1993]

**Alderman**

**Illinois 1st Congressional District** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1993 to ?]

**Congressman**

**Black Panther Party** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to 1974]

**Chapter President**