

Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman

Representing the 12th District of New Jersey

About Bonnie



Bonnie Watson Coleman, a long-time and influential advocate for the people of New Jersey, is currently serving her first term in the United States Congress. Prior to her election as Representative for New Jersey's 12th Congressional District, Watson Coleman served eight consecutive terms in the New Jersey General Assembly.

The daughter of legendary state legislator John S. Watson, Watson Coleman has continued a family legacy of public service fighting for women, economic and socially disadvantaged populations, and other vulnerable groups in our society. Watson Coleman shattered racial and gender barriers to become the first African American woman to serve as Majority Leader of the New Jersey General Assembly, and the first African American woman to serve as the Chair of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee. Her election to the House of Representatives makes her the first African American woman to represent New Jersey in Congress.



Watson Coleman has led the call for reforms to prisoner re-entry programs, fighting tirelessly to shut the revolving door of recidivism for individuals who have returned from incarceration. During her time as Majority Leader, Watson Coleman convened a year-long series of public hearings on the

topic while shepherding through to passage legislation *The New York Times* called “a model for the rest of the nation,” on prisoner rehabilitation and release.

Watson Coleman has also fought on the front lines of the fight to improve the lives of working families and protect our environment and natural resources, supporting increases in the minimum wage and sponsoring legislation that created New Jersey’s first energy efficiency standards. She also authored legislation creating New Jersey’s Office of the Comptroller in an effort to battle waste, fraud, and abuse in government spending.



As a member of the 114th Congress, Watson Coleman serves on both the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the House Committee on Homeland Security, where she is Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Homeland Oversight. Watson Coleman is an active member of the [Congressional Black Caucus](#), the [Congressional Progressive Caucus](#), the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues, and the [Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus](#).



Watson Coleman graduated from Thomas Edison State College. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and an honorary member of the Girl Scouts of America. She is also a Deaconess at Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton, N.J.

Watson Coleman and her husband William reside in Ewing Township and are blessed to have three sons; William, Troy, and Jared and two grandchildren; William and Kamryn.