

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Jones, Emil, 1935-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr.,
Dates:	January 6, 2000
Bulk Dates:	2000
Physical Description:	8 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:27:05).
Abstract:	State senator The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr. (1935 -) was the Democratic leader in the Illinois State Senate. In 1972, Emil Jones was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives, a position he held for ten years before moving to the Senate. Jones was a passionate and consistent advocate for public schools. Jones was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 6, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2000_078
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born in 1935, Emil Jones was raised in one of Chicago's integrated communities, where he was exposed to many different traditions and cultures. After graduating from Roosevelt University, Jones held several jobs before becoming inspired by the 1960 presidential candidacy of John F. Kennedy. Jones volunteered for the campaign and organized support for Kennedy. During this effort, Jones decided to pursue a political career of his own, making important political contacts during the campaign. After Kennedy's presidential campaign ended, Jones served as an assistant for Wilson Frost, who was the only African American alderman to head the City of Chicago's Finance Committee. Then, in 1972, Jones was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives, a position he held for ten years before moving to the Senate. In 2003, Jones was unanimously selected as Senate Minority Leader, one of the chief spokespersons for the Senate Democrats.

A lifelong resident of Chicago's South Side, Jones has remained close to his community. He has been a passionate and consistent advocate for public schools. His commitment to education resulted in the passage of a bill that channeled hundreds of millions of dollars for education of children from disadvantaged families. Furthermore, he successfully passed legislation that now requires the teaching of African American and Holocaust history in all Illinois schools.

Very active in the promotion of minority-owned businesses, Jones supported legislation that guarantees a portion of state construction contracts to qualified minority entrepreneurs. This was the first such legislation of its kind in Illinois. Jones also ensured the passage of a bill that encouraged public pension systems to use minority and female investment managers for their pension investments. Both of these measures are designed to promote growth for all communities.

One of Jones' later accomplishment is the creation of an educational pamphlet designed to inform Illinois citizens

about the important history of African American legislators who served in the Illinois General Assembly in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. This led to the production and distribution of an educational project entitled *Pioneers in the Struggle* which includes a video documentary, an interactive CD-ROM and a curriculum guide that document the history of African American legislators from 1877 to 2001. Jones has made it possible for this innovative educational package to be distributed free of charge to classrooms throughout the state.

For his efforts in civil rights legislation, Jones has been recognized by many educational and labor organizations. He is a member of the National Conference of State Legislators and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr. was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on January 6, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 Betacame SP videocassettes. State senator The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr. (1935 -) was the Democratic leader in the Illinois State Senate. In 1972, Emil Jones was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives, a position he held for ten years before moving to the Senate. Jones was a passionate and consistent advocate for public schools.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Jones, Emil, 1935-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Bieschke, Paul (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Jones, Emil, 1935---Interviews

African American legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

African American politicians--Illinois--Interviews.

Segregation in education.

Segregation--Illinois--Chicago.

Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963.

Political campaigns--Illinois.

Davis, Corneal A., 1900-.

Daley, Richard J., 1902-1976.

Illinois. General Assembly.

Illinois--Politics and government.

African Americans--Politics and government.

Education--Illinois--Finance.

Government aid to education--Illinois.

Educational equalization--Illinois.

United States--Race relations--Political aspects--History--20th century.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois

Occupations:

State Senator

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., January 6, 2000. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 6/7/2022 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30 2000/01/06

Illinois State Senator and Senate Majority Leader Emil Jones details his life in Chicago. Born in Morgan Park, Jones discusses life in his "pocket" and segregated neighborhood. He also recalls his elementary and high school education and how race intruded upon his education. Intrigued by the 1960 Presidential election, young Jones was drawn into politics. The segment closes with his recounting of his electoral triumph

African American legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

African American politicians--Illinois--Interviews.

Segregation in education.

Segregation--Illinois--Chicago.

Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963.

Political campaigns--Illinois.

Davis, Corneal A., 1900-.

Daley, Richard J., 1902-1976.

Illinois. General Assembly.

Illinois--Politics and government.

African Americans--Politics and government.

Education--Illinois--Finance.

Government aid to education--Illinois.

Educational equalization--Illinois.

United States--Race relations--Political aspects--History--20th century.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_002,
TRT: 0:29:25 2000/01/06

Illinois State senator and Senate Majority Leader Emil Jones details his life in politics in Chicago and Springfield. He recalls his political mentor, Corneal Davis and how Davis intervened and showed him the ropes. Jones also offers first hand recollections of the jockeying for Richard J. Daley's seat by Wilson Frost after his Daley's untimely death, and Frost's ultimate concession to the political realities that Chicago was not yet ready for a black mayor.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_003,
TRT: 0:29:55 2000/01/06

Illinois Senate majority leader and senator Emil Jones, offers insider details on the inner workings of the Illinois state legislature. He comments on the importance of African American involvement in politics. Jones also talks about the difficulties of his first election and his attempts to get funding for education.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_004,
TRT: 0:31:05 2000/01/06

Illinois Senate majority leader and senator Emil Jones, comments on the state of education in Illinois and the U.S. He comments on recent legislation meant to improve public education in Illinois, and the problems encountered by districts when funds are misused. Jones vehemently disagrees with the development of charter schools, feeling they remove much needed funding and resources from already cash-strapped school districts.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_005,
TRT: 0:30:05 2000/01/06

Illinois Senate majority leader and senator Emil Jones discusses his political career since moving from the General Assembly to the Senate. He shares various ideas about politics and society and gives advice for African Americans entering politics.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_006,
TRT: 0:17:35 2000/01/06

Illinois state senate majority leader Senator Emil Jones delves into the internecine aspects of Chicago and Springfield politics. He also discusses the impact of race on the political arena as well. Finally, reluctant to write his own epitaph, Jones details his hopes and projected accomplishments.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_007,
TRT: 0:08:25 2000/01/06

Emil Jones displays his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Emil Jones, Jr., Section A2000_078_001_008,
TRT: 0:31:05 2000/01/06

Emil Jones displays his photographs.