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Danny K. Davis

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Daniel K. Davis (born September 6, 1941) is an [American](#) politician who is the [U.S. Representative](#) from [Illinois's 7th congressional district](#), elected in 1996.

Davis is a [Democrat](#) and a member of the [Congressional Black Caucus](#),^{[1][2]} [Progressive Caucus](#), and [Democratic Socialists of America](#).^{[3][4]} Davis was one of 31 U.S. Representatives who voted against counting the [electoral votes](#) from [Ohio](#) in the [2004 presidential election](#).^[5]

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Danny K. Davis



Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Illinois's 7th district

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 3, 1997

Preceded by [Cardiss Collins](#)

Member of the Cook County Board of Commissioners from the 1st district

In office

1994–1997

Preceded by Constituency established

Succeeded by [Darlena Williams-Burnett](#)

Member of the Cook County Board of Commissioners from Chicago's at-large district

In office

1990–1994

Member of the Chicago City Council from the 29th Ward

In office

1979–1990

Preceded by [Leroy Cross](#)

Succeeded by [Sam Burrell](#)

Personal details

Early life, education,

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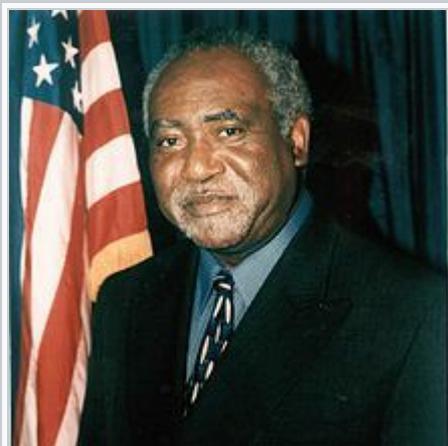
and career [edit]

Davis was born in [Parkdale, Arkansas](#), and educated at the [University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff](#) (B.A. in [history](#), 1961), [Chicago State University](#) (M.S. in [guidance](#), 1968), and the [Union Institute & University in Cincinnati, Ohio](#) (Ph.D. in [public administration](#), 1977).^[6]

Davis worked as a government clerk, a high school teacher, executive director of the Greater Lawndale Conservation Commission, director of training at the Martin L. King Neighborhood Health Center, and executive director of the Westside Health Center before entering politics, where he represented Chicago's 29th Ward on the [Chicago City Council](#) from 1979 until 1990.^[7]

He challenged Congresswoman [Cardiss Collins](#) in Democratic primaries in 1984 and 1986, but lost both races. Davis was then elected to the [Cook County Board of Commissioners](#), serving from 1990 to 1996 before entering the House.^[8] Davis had also waged an unsuccessful campaign against Chicago Mayor [Richard M. Daley](#) in the [1991 Democratic mayoral primary](#).

Campaign for Congress [edit]



Davis, 1997.

Born September 6, 1941 (age 77)
[Parkdale, Arkansas, U.S.](#)

Political party [Democratic](#)

Spouse(s) [Vera Davis](#) (m. 1974)

Children 2

Education [University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff](#) (BA)
[Chicago State University](#) (MSc)
[Union Institute and University](#) (PhD)

On December 6, 1995, Davis announced his candidacy for the [7th Congressional District](#), adding his name to the already announced Democratic candidates, including Alderman Percy Z. Giles, Cook County Board of Commissioners member [Bobbie L. Steele](#), labor leader [Ed Smith](#), and Alderman [Dorothy Tillman](#).^[9] Five other Democratic candidates entered the race later: S. Mendenhall, Joan Sullivan, G. Winbush, Anthony

Travis, and Joan Powell, making it the largest field of candidates for U.S. Congress in Illinois for 1996.^[10] Davis resided a block outside the [7th Congressional District](#), but he was familiar in the district.^{[11][12]}

Davis ran on the progressive Democratic platform popular in the district. He was [pro-choice](#) and supported [gay rights](#), the [ERA](#), [single-payer health care](#), and some federal support for child nutrition and care.^[11]

In early January 1996, the [FBI](#) revealed its [Operation Silver Shovel](#), which included an investigation into Alderman Percy Z. Giles.^[13] What Operation Silver Shovel may have done to undermine Giles's chances for election are unclear as he was already lagging with a mere 3% among likely Democratic primary voters in a mid-December poll compared to Davis' 33%, Smith's 8%, Tillman's 7%, and Steele's 6%.^[14] However, up until Operation Silver Shovel

Giles did and Mayor **Richard M. Daley's** support and that of other well-known area figures—some of whom continued their support during the controversy.^[15]

On March 10, 1996, during a radio debate hosted by **WMAQ-AM**, Tillman and Smith called for Davis to reject the endorsement of former alderman candidate **Wallace "Gator" Bradley**,^[16] spokesman for convicted **Gangster Disciples** leader **Larry Hoover**.^[15] "Why do you keep badgering me with this question?" Davis replied. "You got a problem with something? You're not going to catch me going around saying I hate Gator Bradley... I'm not in the business of disavowing individuals. The good Lord said he hated sin, but not sinners. I'm not hating Gator Bradley. I disagree with those who commit crime and those who'd use drugs, but you won't catch me going around saying that I hate Gator Bradley."^[15] Davis never rejected Bradley's endorsement during the campaign and after winning the primary claimed that Bradley's endorsement played no role in the outcome, though Bradley asserted the contrary.^[17]

During the campaign, Tillman highlighted comments Davis made in an August 1970 issue of **Ebony**: "(T)he white female often gives the black man certain kinds of recognition that the black woman often does not give him."^[18] The Davis campaign countered that Davis was speaking as a **psychologist** in his role as a training director at a health center.^[18]

Although Davis was fully promoted as a Democratic candidate, he also ran as a **New Party** candidate.^{[19][20][21]} Supporting this was New Party's celebration of him as the "first New Party member elected to the U.S. Congress."^[22] Although the State of Illinois did not permit fusion voting, New Party advocated fusion voting as a means to promote their party and party agenda and to particularly project New Party ideology into the mainstream Democratic Party.^[23] Candidates were referred to as "N[ew]P[arty] Democrats"^[23] and were required to sign a contract mandating a "visible and active relationship" with New Party.^[24] During this timeframe, New Party was experiencing substantial growth.^[25] Davis also received the endorsement of the Chicago **Democratic Socialists of America** (CDSA)^[26] of which he is a member^{[27][28]} and had a relationship pre-dating his congressional run.^[29] **ACORN**, **AFL-CIO**, **Sierra Club**, and **International Brotherhood of Teamsters** are included in other groups also endorsing Davis in his bid.^[30]

In the March 20 Democratic primaries, Davis received more votes than the two closest candidates — Tillman and Smith — combined.^[10] The first five announced candidates all received more than double the five late-entering candidates with none of the latter receiving more than 2,700 votes.^[10]

In the November 5 general election, **Davis won with over 82 percent** of the votes cast over **Republican Randy Borow** and third-party candidates Chauncey L. Stroud (Independent), Toietta Dixon (Libertarian), and Charles A. Winter (Natural Law).^[31]

U.S. House of Representatives [edit]

Committee

assignments [edit]

- United States House**





Davis with President [Barack Obama](#) ↗ in January 2011

Party leadership and Caucus membership [\[edit \]](#)

- . Chair of the Congressional Postal Caucus
- . Regional Whip
- . [Congressional Progressive Caucus](#)^[32]
- . [Congressional Arts Caucus](#)^[33]



Davis watches as President Obama ↗ signs an [executive order](#) ↗ on July 26, 2012

Other political interests [\[edit \]](#)

Davis expressed interest in replacing [John Stroger](#) on the ballot in the 2006 race for President of the Cook County Board.^[34] Stroger's son [Todd Stroger](#) was ultimately selected.

Davis expressed interest in being President [Barack Obama](#)'s replacement in the [U.S. Senate](#), and [Illinois Governor](#) in late 2008 before Blagojevich's major [scandal](#) erupted.^[35] In a December 31, 2008, article published on the website of *The New York Times*, Davis said that he turned down an offer from representatives of Blagojevich to appoint him to the Senate.^[36] Instead, Blagojevich appointed [Roland Burris](#).^[37]

Stroger ran a second time for Mayor of Chicago in 2011, but withdrew before election and endorsed [Carol Moseley Braun](#).^[38]

Controversies [\[edit \]](#)

Rev. Sun Myung Moon [\[edit \]](#)

In 2004, Davis was met with national controversy when he crowned the late Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#) in a [religious ceremony](#) at the [Dirksen Senate Office Building](#) honoring the controversial spiritual leader.^{[39][40]} Moon declared himself the [Messiah](#) at the crowning ceremony, in which Davis appeared on the invitation as a sponsoring co-chair.^[40] Davis wore white gloves and carried the crown on a pillow to crown Moon and his wife "the King and Queen of Peace."^[41] Davis told *Christian Challenge* that Moon declaring himself the Messiah "was similar to a baseball team owner telling team members that 'we are the greatest team on earth'" prior to a baseball game. Davis said the peace awards were to "recognize people for promoting peace. Of course the highest recognition goes to the highest promoter and the highest promoter is Reverend Moon, so they come up with something higher than the certificates and plaques that other folks get."^[40] Other lawmakers who attended included Senator [Mark Dayton \(D-Minn.\)](#), Representatives [Roscoe Bartlett \(R-Md.\)](#) and [Elijah Cummings \(D-Md.\)](#), as well as former Representative [Walter Fauntroy \(D-D.C.\)](#). Key organizers of the event included [George Augustus Stallings, Jr.](#), a controversial former [Roman Catholic](#) priest who had been married by Moon, and Michael Jenkins, the president of the [Unification Church of the United States](#) at that time.^[42]

Trip paid for by Tamil Tigers [edit]

As the 15th most prolific traveler in Congress, Davis stirred up controversy by accepting a trip to [Sri Lanka](#) in 2005 on behalf of the [Tamil](#) minority there, paid for by the [Tamil Tigers](#), a group that the U.S. government has designated as a [terrorist](#) organization for its use of [suicide bombers](#) and [child soldiers](#). Davis said that he was unaware that the Tigers were the source of the trip's funding.^[43]

Relationship with Louis Farrakhan [edit]

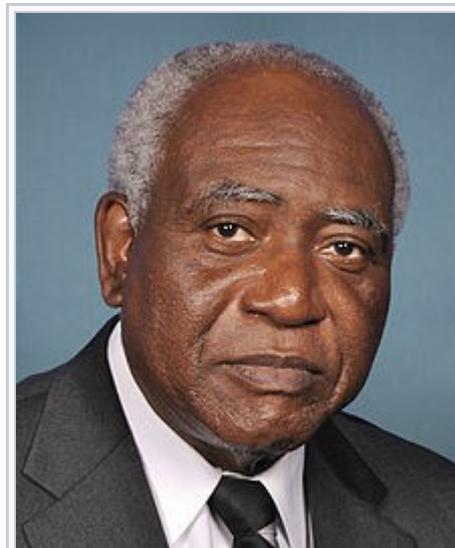
Davis has said that [Louis Farrakhan](#), the leader of the [Nation of Islam](#) who has attracted considerable controversy regarding his repeated [anti-Semitic](#) and [homophobic](#) remarks, is an "outstanding human being" and "I personally know [Farrakhan], I've been to his home, done meetings, participated in events with him." In March 2018 he said, "The world is so much bigger than Farrakhan and the Jewish question and his position on that and so forth. For those heavy into it, that's their thing, but it ain't my thing."^{[44][45][46][47][48]} Davis condemned Farrakhan's views later that month, saying, "So let me be clear: I reject, condemn and oppose Minister Farrakhan's views and remarks regarding the Jewish people and the Jewish religion."^[49] He attended Farrakhan's [Million Man March](#) and was the only member of Congress to address the 20th anniversary of it.^{[50][51]}

Personal life [edit]

Davis is married to Vera G. Davis. They have two children, Jonathan and Stacey^[52] Davis is a member of [Alpha Phi Alpha](#) fraternity.^[53] Davis is notable for his support of the [National Federation of the Blind](#). He spoke at their conventions in 2004 and 2005.^[citation needed]

On November 18, 2016, Davis' 15-year-old grandson, Javon Wilson, was murdered while trying to break up a fight during a home invasion in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood.^[54]

On March 30, 2017, Davis' 44-year-old son, Stacey Wilson, was found dead in his home. He was the father of Javon Wilson.^[55]



Davis, 2007.



See also [edit]

- [List of African-American United States Representatives](#)

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Further reading [edit]

- . BuzzFlash Interview: Congressman Danny Davis ↗ April 2001

External links [edit]

- . Congressman Danny K. Davis ↗ official House site
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U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)		
<p>Preceded by Kevin Brady</p>	<p>United States Representatives by seniority 46th</p>	<p>Succeeded by Diana DeGette</p>

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