

Norton Says Major Appointment of D.C. NAACP President Lorraine Miller is A Fitting Start- 2/2/2007

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A Fitting Start to Black History Month

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Washington, DC- Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) today marked the start of Black History Month by applauding a local history maker, Lorraine Miller, a longtime D.C. resident, named as the first African American Clerk of the House of Representatives by Speaker Nancy Pelosi this week. Norton, who has worked closely with Miller, who is President of the local branch of the NAACP, said, "We in the District take particular satisfaction in this appointment for Lorraine, who has worked so long as a local leader of the nation's oldest civil rights organization to help African Americans advance, without any thought that she herself would be awarded a historic appointment." The Clerk is responsible for preserving the order and decorum of the House, certifying the passage of all bills, receiving messages from the President and the Senate, and retaining a permanent set of the books and documents generated by the House, among other duties.

Miller has worked closely with Norton on D.C. voting rights both as NAACP President and in her current position as a senior advisor to Speaker Pelosi. Miller has worked for two other Speakers, Jim Wright and Tom Foley, as well as for Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) over nearly two decades with the House. A native of Fort Worth, Texas, Miller holds an executive master's degree from the Georgetown School of Business. She is a member of the historic Shiloh Baptist Church, where she sings in the Senior Choir and serves on the Board of Directors of Shiloh's Henry C. Gregory Family Life Center Foundation. Miller will replace the current Clerk, Karen Haas, later this month.

"The U.S. Congress has not been known for leadership in promoting diversity," Norton said. "Now, however, with the first woman Speaker, the first African American Clerk and several Black Members chairing major committees, we see racial and gender barriers collapsing as never before."