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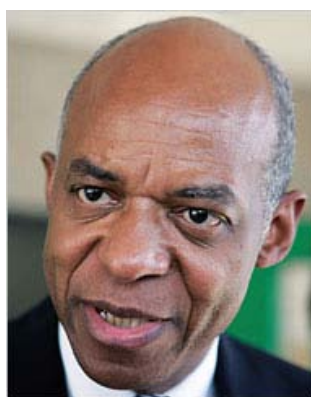
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William J. Jefferson

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Bill Haber/Associated Press

Updated Aug. 5, 2009

Former Representative William J. Jefferson represents a district in the New Orleans area, but is best known around the nation as the Congressman whose freezer was said by federal agents to be stuffed with cash.

Mr. Jefferson, 62, was convicted on Aug. 5, 2009 of using his office to try to enrich himself and relatives through a web of bribes and payoffs. The case stemmed from his efforts to promote contracts in Africa for iGate, a small digital-technology company based in Louisville, Ky. The congressman has been

influential on African issues in his years in the House.

Mr. Jefferson was found guilty of 11 of 16 counts of bribery-related crimes. The jurors rejected defense assertions that Mr. Jefferson's business-promotion activities in Africa did not qualify as "official acts" under public corruption laws.

Mr. Jefferson led official delegations to Africa, wrote letters to American and foreign officials and had members of his staff promote ventures in which he had a financial interest, prosecutors maintained. The ventures were in Nigeria, Ghana and Equatorial Guinea. While he sought millions of dollars in bribes, Mr. Jefferson may have actually received less than \$400,000, the government said.

The government's case relied in part on former Jefferson aides and business associates who pleaded guilty and agreed to testify against him. Mr. Jefferson did not testify in his own defense, and Judge Ellis cautioned the jurors that they were not to hold that decision against the defendant.

Mr. Jefferson faces a long prison term, unless his conviction is overturned on appeal.

As it unfolded over several years, the Jefferson case set off a government battle of constitutional proportions. In May 2006 federal agents raided Mr. Jefferson's Congressional office, the first time that the office of a sitting member of Congress had been searched, leading to an outcry from some Republicans as well as Democrats.

In June 2006, House Democrats voted to remove Mr. Jefferson from the Ways and Means Committee until his case was resolved, but even so, the investigation became an embarrassment for a party trying to make Republican ethical lapses a major issue in the fall campaign. Mr. Jefferson's constituents were less disturbed, however, and he was reelected handily that November.

William J. Jefferson Navigator

A list of resources from around the Web about William J. Jefferson as selected by researchers and editors of The New York Times.

- **Bio**
Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress
- **Member Page**
U.S. House of Representatives

DOCUMENTS

- **Indictment**
U.S. Department of Justice
- **Indictment Press Release**
U.S. Department of Justice

An interactive timeline of the bribery probe of former Representative William J. Jefferson.

May 2006



U.S. Attorney's Office via The Associated Press

The F.B.I. accuses Mr. Jefferson, an eight-term congressman, of taking hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes and stashing \$90,000 from the scheme in his home freezer in Washington. The accusations were made public hours after federal agents raided Mr. Jefferson's Congressional offices, the first raid the agency has ever conducted at a lawmaker's office on Capitol Hill.

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His support faltered in 2008. He lost his seat to a Republican lawyer, Anh Cao, on Dec. 7 in an election that was delayed because of Hurricane Gustav.

Highlights From the Archives

Voters Oust Indicted Congressman in Louisiana

By ADAM NOSSITER

Representative William J. Jefferson was defeated by a little-known Republican lawyer, underscoring the sharp demographic shifts that have taken place since Hurricane Katrina.

December 7, 2008 | US | NEWS

In Case Against Politician, a Tale of Friendship, Ambition and Betrayal

By CHRISTOPHER DREW

Representative William J. Jefferson of Louisiana went from helping a company to trying to take it over for his family's benefit.

September 16, 2006 | WASHINGTON | NEWS



Target of F.B.I. Raid Had a Hard Path to Capitol Hill

By CHRISTOPHER DREW and ROBERT PEAR

The questions facing Representative William J. Jefferson resonate in a career shaped by an ascent from deep poverty.

May 29, 2006 | WASHINGTON | NEWS



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Ex-Louisiana Congressman Sentenced to 13 Years

By DAVID STOUT

Former Representative William J. Jefferson, a New Orleans Democrat, was sentenced for using his office to try to enrich himself and his relatives.

November 14, 2009

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: MONEY LAUNDERING, RACKETEERING AND RACKETEERS, SENTENCES (CRIMINAL), ETHICS, BRIBERY, DECISIONS AND VERDICTS, AFRICA, UNITED STATES, LOUISIANA, CONGRESS



NATIONAL BRIEFING | WASHINGTON; Ex-Congressman Loses Bid For New Trial

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Federal judge denies request for new trial for former US Rep William Jefferson of Louisiana; he was convicted of corruption charges

September 22, 2009

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: SUITS AND LITIGATION, ETHICS, BRIBERY, DECISIONS AND VERDICTS, UNITED STATES, CONGRESS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATIONAL BRIEFING | SOUTH; Louisiana: Former Lawmaker Files For Bankruptcy

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Rep William J Jefferson of Louisiana, who was convicted of corruption, files for Chapter 7 bankruptcy; petitions say he and his wife owe \$1 million to \$10 million to fewer than 50 creditors; in Chapter 7 liquidation, debtor's property is sold and proceeds are distributed to creditors

September 1, 2009

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: MONEY LAUNDERING, RACKETEERING AND RACKETEERS, ETHICS, BRIBERY, LOBBYING AND LOBBYISTS, BANKRUPTCIES, CONGRESS (US), UNITED STATES, LOUISIANA

Ex-Rep. Jefferson Convicted in Bribery Scheme

By DAVID STOUT

Former Representative William J. Jefferson was convicted of using his office to try to enrich himself and relatives through a web of bribes and payoffs.

August 6, 2009

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: MONEY LAUNDERING, RACKETEERING AND RACKETEERS, ETHICS, BRIBERY, LOBBYING AND LOBBYISTS, DECISIONS AND VERDICTS, CONGRESS (US), NEW ORLEANS (LA), UNITED STATES, NIGERIA, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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Jury Prepares for Jefferson Bribery Case

By NEIL A. LEWIS

Prosecutors made their closing arguments in the bribery case against William J. Jefferson, a former Democratic congressman.

July 30, 2009

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: FRAUDS AND SWINDLING, UNITED STATES POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT, ETHICS, BRIBERY, NEW ORLEANS (LA), NIGERIA, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ABUBAKAR, ATIKU

History and Amazement in House Race Outcome

By ADAM NOSSITER

By defeating a once-untouchable incumbent in New Orleans, Anh Cao has become the first Vietnamese-American elected to Congress.



December 8, 2008

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: UNITED STATES POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS, ELECTION RESULTS, NEW ORLEANS (LA), HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Voters Oust Indicted Congressman in Louisiana

By ADAM NOSSITER

Representative William J. Jefferson was defeated by a little-known Republican lawyer, underscoring the sharp demographic shifts that have taken place since Hurricane Katrina.

December 7, 2008

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: HURRICANE KATRINA, ELECTIONS, LOUISIANA, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, REPUBLICAN PARTY

NATIONAL BRIEFING; National Briefs

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Appeals court upholds bribery and other charges against Rep William Jefferson, Democrat of Louisiana, rejecting his claims for legislative immunity and clearing way for trial

November 13, 2008

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION, ETHICS, BRIBERY, DECISIONS AND VERDICTS, CONGRESS (US), UNITED STATES, LOUISIANA

LOUISIANA: McCain

Louisiana Democratic Sen Mary Landrieu defeats Republican John Kennedy; in Congressional races, Rep William J Jefferson defeats Helena Moreno in primary runoff and is favored to win general election on Dec 8; Republican Bill Cassidy defeats incumbent Democratic Rep Don Cazayoux; Republican Rep Steve Scalise defeats Democratic challenger Jim Harlan; John McCain wins state, 59-40 percent; tallies

November 6, 2008

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: PRIMARIES AND CAUCUSES, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 2008, ELECTIONS, ELECTION RESULTS, LOUISIANA, SENATE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, KENNEDY, JOHN, OBAMA, BARACK, SCALISE, STEVE, MCCAIN, JOHN, CASSIDY, BILL, CAZAYOUX, DON, LANDRIEU, MARY, HARLAN, JIM, MORENO, HELENA

Indicted Congressman Makes Runoff

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Representative William J. Jefferson overcame the stigma of a federal bribery indictment in Louisiana's Democratic primary, garnering enough votes to secure a spot in a Nov. 4 runoff.

October 5, 2008

MORE ON WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON AND: PRIMARIES AND CAUCUSES, ELECTION ISSUES, ETHICS, BRIBERY, ELECTIONS, LOUISIANA, CONGRESS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MORENO, HELENA

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