



BIOGRAPHY OF REP. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

The Honorable Donna M. Christensen continues to distinguish herself as a leader in the United States Congress. As a Member serving her seventh term, she is the first female physician in the history of the U.S. Congress, the first woman to represent an offshore Territory, and the first woman Delegate from the United States Virgin Islands.

In the 111th Congress, Delegate Christensen serves on the following House Committees, Subcommittees and Caucuses: She is a new member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, the first non-voting delegate to be named to the committee. She is also a member of the Committee on Natural Resources, which oversees territorial and public land issues and is a former chair of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Insular Affairs which oversees the affairs of the offshore territories to include Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Marianas Islands, and the free associated states of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau.

She was named to the Energy and Commerce Subcommittees on Health, Telecommunications and the Internet, and Oversight and Investigations. The Subcommittee on Health has jurisdiction over public health and quarantine, hospital construction, mental health and research, biomedical programs and health protection, Medicaid and national health insurance, food and drugs, and drug abuse. The Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet has jurisdiction over telecommunication and information transmission by broadcast, radio, wire, microwave, satellite, or other mode. The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations has responsibility for oversight of agencies, departments, and programs within the jurisdiction of the full committee, and for conducting investigations within such jurisdiction.

She was named to the Natural Resources Subcommittees on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife which has jurisdiction over the affairs of the offshore territories and their people along with oversight protection and responsible use of the nation's marine and terrestrial wildlife resources and the environmental health of the nation's coasts and oceans. She is also a member of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands which has jurisdiction over the nation's vast park system and other cultural resources.

Delegate Christensen has just been elected Second Vice-chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and chairs the Congressional Black Caucus' Health Braintrust, which oversees and advocates minority health issues nationally and internationally. She is a Member of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues; Member of the Steering Committee of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus; Member of the Congressional Rural Caucus; Member of the Friends of the Caribbean Caucus; Member of the Coastal Caucus; Member of the Congressional Fire Caucus and additionally, a Member of the Congressional National Guard and Reserve Caucus.

She was born in 1945 to the late Judge Almeric Christian and Virginia Sterling Christian. She earned a Bachelor of Science in 1966 at St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She earned an M.D. (Doctor of Medicine) in 1970 from George Washington University School of Medicine in Washington, D.C. She interned at Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, California from 1970 to 1971 and did her residency in family medicine at Howard University Medical Center from 1973 to 1974. She became a board certified physician in 1977.

Christensen began her medical career in the Virgin Islands in 1975 as an emergency room physician. She served as staff physician at the Maternal & Child Health program, Medical Director of the Nesbitt Clinic in Frederiksted, Director of the Frederiksted Health Center, Director of Maternal and Child Health and Family Planning, served as the Medical Director of the St. Croix Hospital and rounded out her medical career as the Territorial Assistant Commissioner of Health and as the Acting Commissioner of Health. She maintained a private practice in family medicine from 1975 until her election to Congress in 1996.

As a registered member of the Democratic Party of the Virgin Islands, she has served as Democratic National Committeewoman, member of the Democratic Territorial Committee, Delegate to Democratic Conventions from 1984 to present, Member, Platform Committee of the Democratic National Committee from 1988 to present. She was elected to the Virgin Islands Board of Education from 1984 to 1986 and was appointed as a member to the Virgin Islands Status Commission from 1988 to 1992.

Christensen is a member of the National Medical Association, the Virgin Islands Medical Society, the Caribbean Studies Association, the Caribbean Youth Organization and the Virgin Islands Medical Institute. Prior to her election to Congress she served on a variety of church and civic associations.

She is the mother of two daughters, Rabiah Green George and Karida Green and the grandmother of Nia Elena Hamilton, Kobi George and Nealia Williams. She is the granddaughter of the late renowned Virgin Islands educator Elena Christian. Congresswoman Christensen also gained two new daughters, Lisa and Esther, and two sons, Bryan and David, through her 1998 marriage to Chris Christensen.