

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Bill Perkins

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Perkins, Bill, 1949 April 18-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins,
<b>Dates:</b>	November 10, 2016 and October 26, 2016
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2016
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:52:50).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Political official and activist Bill Perkins (1949 - ) served on the New York City Council from 1998 to 2005, and the New York State Senate from 2006 to 2017, before returning to the New York City Council. Perkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 10, 2016 and October 26, 2016, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2016_055
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Political official and activist Bill Perkins was born on April 18, 1949 in the South Bronx neighborhood of New York City. After completing high school preparatory courses at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, Perkins was awarded a full scholarship to attend the elite Collegiate Preparatory School during high school. Following graduation, he received a full scholarship to attend Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where he earned his B.A. degree in political science in 1972.

After graduating from Brown University, Perkins returned to New York City, where he worked as a social worker and tenant organizer. Encouraged by former Harlem politician, Bill Lynch, Perkins founded the Sojourner Truth Democratic Club as a base for his community activism. In 1998, Perkins was elected to the New York City Council, where he served as deputy majority leader during his seven year tenure. Perkins garnered national attention as an outspoken advocate for progressive issues, including public health, human rights, community services, and education reform. He sponsored the Childhood Lead Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 2004, and tackled New York City's rat infestation problem. As an advocate of public education, he also secured funding for scholarships, full-time staffing, and college preparatory courses for the City University of New York (CUNY) system. In 2006, Perkins was elected to the New York State Senate as a representative of New York City's 30th District, which encompassed Harlem, East Harlem, the Upper West Side, and Washington Heights. Perkins supported raising the minimum wage, reforming the juvenile justice system to prevent minors from being sentenced as adults, setting limits on the solitary confinement of prisoners, and prohibiting eating on subways to minimize the rat population. In 2007, Perkins was the first New York City politician to support presidential hopeful Barack Obama.

After leaving the New York Senate in 2017, Perkins returned to the New York City Council as a representative of the 9th District. He introduced the Patriot Act Resolution in the City Council, and sponsored landmark legislation to protect the rights of gay, lesbian and transgender communities.

Perkins is married to Pamela Green.

Bill Perkins was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on October 26, 2016.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins was conducted by Harriette Cole on November 10, 2016 and October 26, 2016, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Political official and activist Bill Perkins (1949 - ) served on the New York City Council from 1998 to 2005, and the New York State Senate from 2006 to 2017, before returning to the New York City Council.

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# 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®.

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# 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.

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# Controlled Access Terms

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

## Persons:

Perkins, Bill, 1949 April 18-

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Perkins, Bill, 1949 April 18---Interviews

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# Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

State Senator

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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## 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 Bill Perkins, November 10, 2016 and October 26, 2016. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:56 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:48 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_001\_003,  
TRT: 3:28:36 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_001\_004,  
TRT: 4:24:28 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_001\_005,  
TRT: 5:22:13 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_002\_006,  
TRT: 6:20:16 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_002\_007,  
TRT: 7:27:03 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_002\_008,  
TRT: 8:28:02 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Bill Perkins, Section A2016\_055\_002\_009,  
TRT: 9:22:28 ?