

= Cory Booker =

Cory Anthony Booker (born April 27 , 1969) is an American politician and the junior United States Senator from New Jersey , in office since 2013 . Previously he served as mayor of Newark from 2006 to 2013 .

He attended Stanford University , where he played college football and received a Bachelor of Arts in political science and a Master of Arts in sociology , before earning a Rhodes Scholarship to attend the University of Oxford . Upon returning home , he received his Juris Doctor from Yale Law School .

Booker began his political career as a Newark city councilor from 1998 to 2002 . He ran for mayor in 2002 , but lost to incumbent Sharpe James ; he ran again in 2006 and won against deputy mayor Ronald Rice . During his tenure as mayor , Booker 's priorities were reducing crime and encouraging economic development projects . He gained a national reputation for his personal involvement in public service , particularly through his use of social media tools such as Twitter to connect with constituents .

Considered one of the most prominent Democrats in New Jersey , he became a candidate for the United States Senate in the 2013 special election to succeed Frank Lautenberg , who died in office . He won the Senate Democratic primary on August 13 , 2013 , and then won the general election against Steve Lonegan on October 16 , 2013 , becoming the first black U.S. Senator from New Jersey . Booker subsequently won the next regular election for the Senate seat against Jeff Bell in 2014 .

= = Early life , education , and early career = =

Booker was born on April 27 , 1969 , in Washington , D.C. , and grew up in Harrington Park , New Jersey , 20 miles (32 km) north of Newark , New Jersey . His parents , Carolyn Rose (née Jordan) and Cary Alfred Booker , were among the first black executives at IBM . Booker has stated that he was raised in a religious household , and that he and his family attended a small African Methodist Episcopal Church in New Jersey . One of Booker 's maternal great @-@ grandfathers was white , and Booker also has other European and Native American ancestry .

Booker graduated from Northern Valley Regional High School at Old Tappan and was named to the 1986 USA Today All @-@ USA high school football team . Booker went on to Stanford University , receiving a Bachelor of Arts in political science in 1991 and a Master of Arts in sociology the following year . While at Stanford , he played football as a tight end and was teammates with Brad Muster and Ed McCaffrey , and also made the All ? Pacific @-@ 10 Academic team and was elected senior class president . In addition , Booker ran The Bridge Peer Counseling Center , a student @-@ run crisis hotline , and organized help from Stanford students for youth in East Palo Alto , California .

After Stanford , Booker was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to study at the University of Oxford , where he earned an honors degree in United States history in 1994 as a member of The Queen 's College . He earned his Juris Doctor in 1997 from Yale Law School , where he operated free legal clinics for low @-@ income residents of New Haven , Connecticut . At Yale , Booker was a founding member of the Chai Society (now the Eliezer Society) , was a Big Brother with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America , and was active in the National Black Law Students Association .

= = Newark City Council = =

Contemplating advocacy work and a run for city council in Newark after graduation from law school , Booker lived in the city during his final year at Yale . After graduation , he served as staff attorney for the Urban Justice Center in New York and program coordinator of the Newark Youth Project . In 1998 , Booker won an upset victory for a seat on the Newark City Council , defeating four @-@ term incumbent George Branch . To draw attention to the problems of open @-@ air drug dealing and associated violence , he went on a 10 @-@ day hunger strike and lived in a tent and later in a motor

home near drug @-@ dealing areas of the city . Booker proposed council initiatives that impacted housing , young people , law and order , and the efficiency and transparency of city hall , but was regularly outvoted by all of his fellow councilors .

= = Mayor of Newark = =

= = = Mayoral campaigns = = =

= = = = 2002 election = = = =

On January 9 , 2002 , Booker announced his campaign for mayor of Newark rather than running for re @-@ election as councilman ; this pitted him against longtime incumbent Sharpe James . James , who had easily won election four consecutive times , saw Booker as a real threat , and responded with mudslinging , at one campaign event calling him " a Republican who took money from the KKK [and] Taliban ... [who 's] collaborating with the Jews to take over Newark " . In the campaign , James ' supporters questioned Booker 's suburban background , calling him a carpetbagger who was " not black enough " to understand the city . Booker lost the election on May 14 , garnering 47 % of the vote to James ' 53 % .

= = = = 2006 election = = = =

Booker announced on February 11 , 2006 , that he would again run for mayor . Although incumbent Mayor Sharpe James filed paperwork to run for reelection , shortly thereafter he announced that he would instead cancel his bid to focus on his work as a State Senator , which he was originally elected to in 1999 . At James 's discretion , Deputy Mayor Ronald Rice decided to run as well . Booker 's campaign outspent Rice 's 25 to 1 , for which Rice attacked him . In addition to raising over \$ 6 million for the race , Booker attacked Rice as a " political crony " of James . Booker won the May 9 election with 72 % of the vote . His slate of city council candidates , known as the " Booker Team " , swept the council elections , giving Booker firm leadership of the city government .

= = = = 2010 election = = = =

On April 3 , 2010 , Booker announced his campaign for reelection . At his announcement event , he remarked that a " united government " was crucial to progress , knowing his supporters in the city council faced tough reelections . Heavily favored to win , Booker faced former judge and Essex County prosecutor Clifford J. Minor , as well as two minor candidates . On May 11 , Booker won reelection with 59 % of the vote , but with only seven of his nine council supporters winning reelection .

= = = Tenure = = =

Before taking office as mayor , Booker sued the James administration , seeking to terminate cut @-@ rate land deals favoring two redevelopment agencies that had contributed to James 's campaigns and listed James as a member of their advisory boards . Booker argued that the state 's " pay @-@ to @-@ play " laws had been violated and that the land deals would cost the city more than \$ 15 million in lost revenue . Specifically , Booker referenced a parcel at Broad and South Streets that would generate only \$ 87 @,@ 000 under the proposed land deals yet was valued at \$ 3 @.@ 7 million under then @-@ current market rates . On June 20 , 2006 , Superior Court Judge Patricia Costello ruled in favor of Booker .

In late June 2006 , before Booker took office , New Jersey investigators foiled a plot to assassinate Booker led by Bloods gang leaders inside four New Jersey state prisons . The motive for the plot

was unclear , but was described variously as a response to the acrimonious campaign and to Booker 's campaign promises to take a harder line on crime .

= = = = First term = = = =

Booker assumed office as mayor of Newark on July 1 , 2006 . After his first week in office , he announced a 100 @-@ day plan to implement reforms in Newark . The proposed changes included increasing police forces , ending background checks for many city jobs to help former offenders find employment in the city , refurbishing police stations , improving city services , and expanding summer youth programs .

One of Booker 's first priorities was to reduce the city 's crime rate . In furtherance of this , he appointed Garry McCarthy , former deputy commissioner of operations of the New York City Police Department , as director of the Newark Police Department . Crime reduction was such a central concern to the Booker administration that Booker , along with his security team , was known to personally patrol the streets of Newark until as late as 4 a.m.

Booker is a member of the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Coalition , a bipartisan group with a stated goal of " making the public safer by getting illegal guns off the streets " . Booker was honored in October 2009 by the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence with the Sarah Brady Visionary Award for his work in reducing gun violence . During his mayoralty , crime dropped significantly in Newark , which led the nation in violent crime reduction from 2006 to 2008 . March 2010 marked Newark 's first murder @-@ free month in over 44 years , although murder and overall crime rates began to rise again after 2008 . In addition to his crime @-@ lowering initiatives , Booker doubled the amount of affordable housing under development and quadrupled the amount under pre @-@ development , and reduced the city budget deficit from \$ 180 million to \$ 73 million .

After taking office , Booker voluntarily reduced his own salary twice , reducing his salary by 8 % early in his first year as mayor . He also raised the salaries of many city workers . However , his administration imposed one @-@ day @-@ a @-@ month furloughs for all non @-@ uniformed employees from July through December 2010 , as well as 2 % pay cuts for managers and directors earning more than \$ 100 @,@ 000 a year . In 2008 and 2009 the City of Newark received the Government Finance Officers Association 's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award . In an effort to make government more accessible , Booker has held regular open office hours during which city residents can meet with him personally to discuss their concerns . In 2010 , Booker was among the finalists for the World Mayor prize , ultimately placing seventh . He was an unsuccessful candidate for the 2012 award .

= = = = Second term = = = =

On October 10 , 2010 , Booker established Let 's Move ! Newark as part of First Lady Michelle Obama 's national Let 's Move ! initiative against childhood obesity . In October 2011 he expanded the program to include Let ? s Move ! Newark : Our Power , a four @-@ month fitness challenge for Newark public school students run by public health advocate Jeff Halevy .

Booker gained national attention when , on December 28 , 2010 , a constituent used Twitter to ask him to send someone to her father 's house to shovel his driveway because her elderly father was going to attempt to do it himself . Booker responded by tweeting , " I will do it myself ; where does he live ? " Other people volunteered , including one person who offered his help on Twitter , and 20 minutes later Booker and some volunteers showed up and shoveled the man 's driveway . On April 12 , 2012 , Booker saved a woman from a house fire , suffering smoke inhalation and second @-@ degree burns on his hands in the process . Newark Fire Chief John Centanni said that Booker 's actions possibly saved the woman 's life . After Hurricane Sandy destroyed much of the shoreline areas of New Jersey and New York in late October 2012 , Booker invited Newarkers without power to eat and sleep in his home . In February 2013 , responding to a Twitter post , Booker helped a nervous constituent propose to his girlfriend . Booker rescued a dog from freezing temperatures in January 2013 and another dog that had been abandoned in a cage in July 2013 .

On November 20 , 2012 , a melee occurred at a Newark City Council meeting attended by Booker . The nine @-@ seat council was to vote on the successor to the seat vacated by newly elected U.S. Representative Donald M. Payne , Jr . Booker 's opponents on the council , including Ras Baraka , sought to appoint John Sharpe James , son of the former mayor , while Booker and his supporters favored Shanique Speight . Booker attended the meeting to deal with the eventuality of the lack of a quorum or a tie vote , in which state law would allow him to cast a deciding vote . After Baraka was refused an opportunity to address the council by acting Council President Anibal Ramos , Jr . , Baraka and two other council members walked away in protest . Booker cast the deciding vote for Speight . Supporters of James stormed the stage and were held back by riot police , who eventually used pepper spray on some members of the crowd . Baraka later blamed Booker for inciting the disturbance , while Booker refused comment to the media after the vote .

In December 2012 , after discussions with a constituent about New Jersey 's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) , Booker began a week @-@ long challenge attempting to live on a food budget of \$ 30 per week ? the amount SNAP recipients receive . When critics noted that the very name of the SNAP program shows that it is intended to " supplement " an individual 's food budget , not be its sole source , Booker replied that his aim was to spark a discussion about the reality that many Americans rely solely on food stamps to survive .

= = = Newark Watershed = = =

The Newark Watershed comprises 35 @,@ 000 acres of reservoirs and water treatment systems for more than 500 @,@ 000 customers in northern New Jersey , including Newark and neighboring Belleville , Elizabeth , Bloomfield , and Nutley . It is considered one of the city 's greatest assets . A New Jersey State Comptroller report issued in February 2014 revealed irregularities and corruption within the Newark Watershed and Development Corporation , which is in the process of being dismantled after being taken over by the city while on Booker 's watch .

= = = Public opinion polling = = =

Throughout Booker 's mayoralty , Fairleigh Dickinson University 's public opinion poll PublicMind asked New Jersey residents statewide whether or not they had heard of Mayor Booker and whether they had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of him . The results are as follows :

March , 2014

Name recognition : 88 %

Favorable opinion : 47 %

Unfavorable opinion : 23 %

= = = Legacy = = =

Booker 's mayoralty and personal celebrity drew much media attention to Newark . While he enjoyed high ratings from city residents , his legacy has received mixed reviews . Since his election there has been millions of dollars of investment in downtown development , but persistent underemployment and high murder rates continue to characterize many of the city 's neighborhoods . Despite legal challenges initiated during his term , Newark Public Schools has remained under control of the state for nearly twenty years . Newark received \$ 32 million in emergency state aid in 2011 and 2012 , requiring a memorandum of understanding between Newark and the state that obligates the city to request and the state to approve appointments to city hall administrative positions .

While mayor of Newark , Booker claimed in an interview that Newark 's unemployment rate had fallen by two percentage points . This statement was rated " false " by Politifact because the actual rate was 0 @.@ 7 percentage points .

= = U.S. Senate = =

== 2013 election ==

On December 20 , 2012 , Booker announced that he would explore running for the U.S. Senate seat that was then occupied by Frank Lautenberg in the 2014 election , ending speculation that he would challenge Governor Chris Christie in the 2013 gubernatorial election . On January 11 , 2013 , Booker filed papers to form a campaign committee , without announcing whether or not he would run . Roughly one month after declaring his interest in running for the Senate , incumbent Lautenberg announced that he would not seek reelection .

On June 3 , Lautenberg died of viral pneumonia ; five days later Booker announced his intention to run for Lautenberg 's seat in the 2013 special election . Booker announced his candidacy at two events : one in Newark and the other in Willingboro .

On August 13 , 2013 , Booker was declared the winner of the Democratic primary , with approximately 59 % of the vote . On October 16 , 2013 , he defeated Republican Steve Lonegan in the general election 55 % to 44 % , making him the first African @-@ American U.S. Senator from New Jersey and the first African @-@ American to be elected to the Senate since Barack Obama in 2004 . The night before his victory , Booker visited the gravesite of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson , where he offered his prayers and lit a vigil in memory of his father .

== Tenure ==

On October 31 , 2013 , Booker was sworn into the Senate .

In November 2013 , Booker co @-@ sponsored and voted for the Employment Non @-@ Discrimination Act . In December 2013 , he was one of the original cosponsors of Bob Menéndez 's Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2013 , which would toughen sanctions against Iran . He also voted for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 . In January 2014 , he cosponsored the Respect for Marriage Act . In February 2014 , Booker voted against the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013

Booker has pledged to meet with each of his Republican colleagues in the Senate in order to find common ground . In March , he was spotted having dinner with Senator Ted Cruz in Washington .

Booker has faced criticism on the left . Salon called him an avatar of the wealthy elite , a camera hog , and a political cipher .

Leading up to the 2016 presidential election , Booker endorsed Hillary Clinton for the Democratic nomination . He was speculated as a potential vice presidential candidate during the primary and as the general election began , though Booker stated on June 16 , 2016 that he was not being vetted .

== Committee assignments ==

Committee on Commerce , Science , and Transportation

Subcommittee on Aviation Operations , Safety , and Security

Subcommittee on Communications , Technology , and the Internet

Subcommittee on Consumer Protection , Product Safety , and Insurance

Subcommittee on Space , Science , and Competitiveness

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure , Safety , and Security (Ranking Member)

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Oversight

Subcommittee on Superfund , Toxics and Environmental Health

Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

== 2014 election ==

After being defeated in the 2013 special election , Steve Lonegan announced that he would not run again for the seat in the 2014 race . Presumed candidates for the Republican primary were Thomas Kean Jr . , Jay Webber , Jon Bramnick , and Michael J. Doherty . On January 9 , 2014 , Brian D. Goldberg , a West Orange resident and New Jersey businessman , announced that he would seek the Republican nomination .

On February 4 , 2014 , conservative political consultant Jeff Bell announced his bid for the nomination . Bell won the Republican Primary and received significant support from the conservative American Principles Fund , which ran a direct mail operation costing over \$ 80 @, @ 000 , and the National Organization for Marriage , an anti @-@ same @-@ sex marriage group , which paid for \$ 6 @, @ 000 of automated calling .

Booker defeated Bell , capturing 55 @. @ 8 % of the vote to Bell 's 42 @. @ 4 % . Brendan W. Gill was Booker 's campaign manager .

== Political positions ==

Booker has been described by many as a liberal , a moderate , and a neoliberal . In a July 2013 Salon interview , Booker said that " there 's nothing in that realm of progressive politics where you won 't find me . " However , in a September 2013 interview with The Grio , when asked if he considered himself a progressive , he avoided the term , saying he is a Democrat and an American . George Norcross III described Booker as " a new Democrat ? a Democrat that 's fiscally conservative yet socially progressive . " In May 2012 , Booker defended Bain Capital 's record and criticized Obama 's attack on private equity . In response , the Republican National Committee created a petition called I Stand With Cory Booker . Booker has also received criticism from both progressives and liberals , such as Ronald Rice and Rush Holt .

On social issues , Booker supports abortion rights , affirmative action , and same @-@ sex marriage . He supports ending the War on Drugs . On economic issues , he supports long @-@ term deficit reduction efforts to ensure economic prosperity , Cap and Trade taxation to combat climate change , and increased funding for education . Booker is a supporter of the DREAM Act and the Patriot Act , stating the abolition of the latter would be " a little irresponsible " , although he does support some reform of it .

On foreign policy , Booker supports scaling down U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and is against intervention in Syria . He supports a two @-@ state solution to the Israeli @-@ Palestinian conflict . On Iran , Booker has stated the country poses a direct threat to American and Israeli security and feels all options should be on the table for dealing with the conflict . However , his decision to back the Iran nuclear deal framework damaged his long @-@ term relationship with Jewish voters and supporters . In an attempt to reduce the damage , Booker initiated an emergency summit for Jewish leaders , which some of his longstanding supporters did not attend .

== Other activities ==

== Obama association ==

In 2009 , after Barack Obama became President of the United States , Booker was offered the leadership of the new White House Office of Urban Affairs . He turned the offer down , citing a commitment to Newark .

Booker generated controversy on May 12 , 2012 , when he appeared on Meet The Press as a surrogate for the reelection campaign of Barack Obama and made remarks that were critical of that campaign . Booker said that the attacks on Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney 's record at Bain Capital were " nauseating to me on both sides . It 's nauseating to the American public . Enough is enough . Stop attacking private equity . Stop attacking Jeremiah Wright . " The comments

were subsequently used by the Romney campaign against Obama . Booker made follow @-@ up comments clarifying that he believed Obama 's attacks on Romney 's record at Bain were legitimate but did not retract his point about attacking private equity in general . Two weeks later , Booker 's communications director Anne Torres tendered her resignation , although she maintained it was unrelated to Meet the Press .

= = = Affiliations and honors = = =

Booker sits on the board of advisers of the political action committee Democrats for Education Reform . He is currently a member of the board of trustees at Teachers College , Columbia University , and was formerly a member of the Executive Committee at Yale Law School and the Board of Trustees at Stanford University .

In 2010 , Booker received the U.S. Senator John Heinz Award for Greatest Public Service by an Elected or Appointed Official , an award given out annually by the Jefferson Awards .

In May 2009 , Booker received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the Newark @-@ based New Jersey Institute of Technology for " his outstanding career in public service as the Mayor of Newark " . In May 2009 , he received an honorary doctorate from Brandeis University , and was a commencement speaker that year as well . Booker received another honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree in December 2010 from Yeshiva University for " his bold vision for Newark and setting a national standard for urban transformation " . In June 2011 , Booker received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree and served as that year 's commencement speaker at Williams College for the urban transformation of Newark . In May 2012 , Booker received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Bard College and gave the commencement speech at the graduation . In 2010 , Booker delivered the commencement addresses at Pitzer College in Claremont , California , on May 15 , Columbia University 's Teachers College in New York City on May 17 , and Suffolk University Law School in Boston , Massachusetts , a week later on May 23 , 2010 . Booker gave the commencement address to New York Law School graduates on May 13 , 2011 , at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center . Booker also gave the commencement address at the University of Rhode Island in May 2011 ; he also received an Honorary doctorate in Human Letters . He delivered a commencement address to Stanford University graduates on June 17 , 2012 , at Stanford Stadium . He also received an honorary degree at Fairleigh Dickinson 's 69th Commencement Ceremony in May 2012 . In May 2013 , Booker gave the commencement address at Washington University in St. Louis and received an honorary doctorate of law . On May 16 , 2014 , Booker gave the commencement speech for Ramapo College of New Jersey graduates at the IZOD Center .

= = = Films = = =

Booker 's 2002 mayoral campaign , which he lost , was chronicled by filmmaker Marshall Curry in his documentary Street Fight . The film was nominated in 2005 for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature .

Since 2009 , Booker has starred in the documentary series Brick City . The series focuses on Booker and his efforts to improve Newark by reducing crime and bringing about economic renewal . Brick City won a Peabody Award in 2009 and was nominated for a Primetime Emmy in 2010 .

Booker contributed to the 2011 documentary Miss Representation and commented on the representations of women in politics within mass media .

Booker appeared in a scene in the Parks and Recreation episode " Ms. Ludgate @-@ Dwyer Goes to Washington " alongside Orrin Hatch .

= = = Mark Zuckerberg donation = = =

In July 2010 , Booker attended a dinner at a conference in Sun Valley , Idaho , where he was seated with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg . Zuckerberg , who had no known ties to Newark , announced in September 2010 that he was donating \$ 100 million of his personal fortune to the

Newark school system . According to an article in the New York Times , Booker and Zuckerberg continued their conversation about Booker 's plans for Newark . The initial gift was made to start a foundation for education . The gift was formally announced when Booker , New Jersey Governor Chris Christie , and Zuckerberg appeared together on The Oprah Winfrey Show . The timing of Zuckerberg 's donation was questioned by some as a move for damage control to his image , as it was announced on the opening day of the movie The Social Network , a film that painted an unflattering portrait of Zuckerberg . On her show , however , Winfrey told the audience that Zuckerberg and Booker had been in talks for months and had actually planned the announcement for the previous month , and that she and Booker had to force Zuckerberg to put his name to the donation , which he had wanted to make anonymously .

= = = Conan O 'Brien " feud " = = =

In the fall of 2009 , Tonight Show host Conan O 'Brien engaged in a satirical on @-@ air and YouTube feud with Booker , with O 'Brien jokingly insulting the City of Newark and Booker responding that he would ban O 'Brien from the Newark airport . Then @-@ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called for the feud to end during a prepared comedy bit , telling Booker to chalk it up to a head injury suffered by O 'Brien less than two weeks earlier . Booker then appeared on O 'Brien 's show and assured viewers that the feud was over and that he was actually a big fan of O 'Brien , who agreed that every time he made a joke about Newark , he would donate \$ 500 to the City of Newark , and also made a \$ 50 @,@ 000 donation to the Newark Now charity , which was matched by NBC Universal .

= = = Waywire = = =

In 2012 , Booker and tech executives Sarah Ross and Nathan Richardson formed Waywire , a company focused on video sharing technology . Early investors included Oprah Winfrey , Eric Schmidt , Jeff Weiner , and Troy Carter . After Booker 's relationship to Waywire was discussed in a front @-@ page New York Times story , board member Andrew Zucker stepped down from his position . Shortly thereafter , Waywire CEO Nathan Richardson departed the business as the company shifted its focus from content creation to content curation . In August 2013 , Booker told NBC News he intended to resign from the Waywire board and put his holdings in a trust if elected to the Senate ; by September , he had resigned his place on the board and donated his share of the company to charity . Waywire was sold to another video curation business the following month .

= = Personal life = =

Booker regularly exercises and has been a vegetarian since 1992 , when he was a student at Oxford . He abstains from alcohol and " has no known vices or addictions " other than books and coffee . In 2014 , Booker began practicing a vegan diet and has expressed his vegan ethical philosophy and advocacy for animals .

Booker has never been married , and in 2013 he was named one of Town & Country ? ? s " Top 40 Bachelors " . Although he has generally tried to keep his personal life private , Booker has in the past described himself as a " straight male " and has said that he is trying to date more in hopes of finding someone to settle down with . In a 1990 column in the Stanford Daily , Booker admitted regretfully that as a teenager he had " hated gays " . Booker has himself been the target of rumors about being gay and has generally refused to address these on principle , which he explained in 2013 : " Because I want to challenge people on their homophobia . I love seeing on Twitter when someone says I ? m gay , and I say , ' So what does it matter if I am ? So be it . I hope you are not voting for me because you are making the presumption that I 'm straight . ' " .

From 1998 to 2006 , Booker lived in Brick Towers , a troubled housing complex in Newark 's Central Ward . In November 2006 , as one of the last remaining tenants in Brick Towers , Booker left his apartment for the top unit in a three @-@ story rental on Hawthorne Avenue in Newark 's South

Ward , an area described as " a drug- and gang @-@ plagued neighborhood of boarded @-@ up houses and empty lots " . Brick Towers has since been demolished , and a new mixed @-@ income development was built there in 2010 .

= = Electoral history = =