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By IKE MGBATOGU
Contributing Writer

COLUMBUS – For Democrat Joyce Beatty, it's been an amazing journey. Being recently sworn in as a member of Congress was a dream come true. But it was also a history making moment for the former member of the Ohio House of Representatives.

"It's historical," she said. "It's historical that I'm female and I'm African-American and it's a new district."

And representing that brand new district is also historical in that, for the first time in the history of Ohio, two African-Americans from the state are serving in the United States House of Representatives as Beatty joins Rep. Marcia Fudge, who represents the 11th Congressional district and was who recently elected chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC).

Beatty is representing the new 3rd Congressional district that was carved out in Central Ohio during last year's bruising redistricting row. After creating the district, it was immediately widely perceived as a historic opportunity to elect another Black member of congress given that it was drawn to lean heavily Democratic.

State Representative Sandra Williams, who is also the president of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC), had furiously decried the paucity of Black representation in Congress, calling it "a shame that Ohio has one Black congressional representative."

Beatty, 62, earned the right to represent the 3rd district after clobbering her Republican opponent Chris Long, 54, a member of the Reynoldsburg City Council.

She won 72 percent of the vote.

Beatty fought off former Congresswoman Mary Jo Kilroy, Ohio House of Representatives member Ted Celeste and Columbus Councilmember Priscilla Tyson in a bruising Democratic primary fight for the right to take on the hopelessly underdog Long.

The new 3rd district is entirely in Franklin County, and covers most of Columbus, Bexley, Gahanna, Reynoldsburg and Whitehall.

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