

## CIVIL RIGHTS

### 1. Eliminate Racist, Misogynistic Violent Words and Images from the Airways and Other Public Media

**WHEREAS**, after more than 300 years of hateful violence and sexual abuse of African Americans, especially African American women by white slave owners; and

**WHEREAS**, racial and sexual violence against African Americans continued in post slavery years where lynching of thousands of African Americans became a public spectacle and a National disgrace; and

**WHEREAS**, racism and sexism have continued to deprive African Americans of equal treatment and equal opportunity in every aspect of life in these United States by laws and by practice, relegating far too many of all African Americans to substandard health care, substandard housing, substandard education, substandard or no employment and substandard citizenship rights; and

**WHEREAS**, this racism and sexism is perpetuated by the constant portrayal of African Americans as ignorant, violent, vulgar, lazy, immoral, criminal and sexual freaks with no redeeming positive qualities except to entertain or provide revenue for the prison industrial complex; and

**WHEREAS**, the media and other public airways, as well as the internet, convey these negative racist and sexist dangerous images and stereotypes on a regular and on going basis in talk shows, infotainment, music videos, and comedy shows; and

**WHEREAS**, these racist and misogynistic words and images perpetuate hate, disrespect and even provoke violence especially against African American women, whether it is produced or promoted by other African Americans or anyone else.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that all NAACP Units petition their local radio and television stations to discontinue playing recordings that contain hateful, sexist and racist words; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that they petition all retail outlets that sell recordings, videos and video games that contain hateful, violent and misogynistic

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material to remove such items from public display and require proof that a buyer is 18-years of age or older; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all NAACP Units petition their local and state legislative bodies to levy fines of a substantial amount against merchants who fail to label such items as adult material not to be sold to minors; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that all NAACP Units petition, lobby and demonstrate to have all state and local pension funds *divested* from media and other companies that develop, promote or air this reprehensible material, and that, from this day forward, no purveyor of said reprehensible material, be they writer, producer, artist or performer, promoter, manufacturer, distributor, retailer, broadcaster, or contractor or employee of any of the aforementioned or other types of purveyors of said reprehensible material, be eligible for or recipient of an NAACP award of any kind.

### **2. Reparations for Unpaid Labor Rendered by Enslaved Persons of African Descent**

**WHEREAS**, the enslavement of Africans and the Transatlantic Slave Trade were appalling tragedies in the history of our country, not only because of their abhorrent barbarism, but also in terms of their magnitude, organized nature and their complete negation of the humanity of the enslaved person; and

**WHEREAS**, the enslavement of Africans constituted an immoral and inhumane deprivation of a person's life, liberty and cultural heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, the enslavement of Africans resulted in the annihilation of millions of Africans eviscerating whole cultures, languages, religions, morals, and customs, psychologically destroying its victims; and

**WHEREAS**, the enslavement of Africans wrenched its victims of their history, memories and families on a scale never previously witnessed; and

**WHEREAS**, the enslavement of Africans fueled the prosperity of our young nation, allowing its economy to reap the benefits of unpaid labor of untold value.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports the United Nations World Conference on Racism's position that the enslavement of Africans and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade are crimes against humanity; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports efforts to establish responsibility and recover compensation in trust from private and public companies, agencies and governmental entities that benefited from the enslavement of persons of African descent; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirms its previous position on reparations, established in 1991, as embodied in H.R. 40 by Representative John Conyers that demands the United States Government take immediate action to commence hearings and to establish a congressional commission to examine the issue of reparations for descendents of enslaved persons of African descent.

**3. The United States Government to Consider Reparations to African Americans (Re-Affirmation of the 1991 and 2003 NAACP Policy)**

**WHEREAS**, in the United States, a nation forged in a revolutionary struggle for inalienable human rights, natives of Africa were torn by force from their homeland and subjected to the barbarities of institutionalized slavery; and

**WHEREAS**, in the post-revolutionary United States, slavery was maintained by governmental fiat, with violence, depriving African-Americans of freedom of association, privacy, life, liberty, property and due process of law in complete abdication of the spirit and letter of the Bill of Rights from its inception and ratification to the enactment and ratification of the Anti-slavery Amendment of 1865; and

**WHEREAS**, the dehumanization of the African American began by constitutionally relegating his or her stature to three-fifths (3/5) of a white man; and

**WHEREAS**, this continued even after the passage of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1868, in the form of local Jim Crow laws and public policies across America well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century imposing lasting political, economic and cultural harm on generations of African-Americans, persisting to the present day; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Government and various states therein have seen fit to take reparative steps for the wounds that they have caused by their bigoted actions, i.e., toward Native Americans and Americans of Japanese heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, these reparative steps can be cited as a payment to the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan in the amount of thirty-two million dollars, which represents money plus interest on the money promised them by the United States Government by a treaty signed in 1836, and to the Klamath Indians of Oregon, who were awarded eighty-one million dollars and the Chippewa of Wisconsin, who were awarded thirty million dollars, and the Sioux Indians of South Dakota, who were awarded one hundred five million dollars plus; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Government has acknowledged the cruelty, the prejudice and arrogance, if not the racial hatred, of their acts to confine Japanese Americans to concentration camps during World War II. Said acknowledgment resulted in an agreement to compensate each survivor to the sum of twenty thousand dollars each; and

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**WHEREAS**, African-Americans suffered, as did Native Americans and Japanese-Americans, from broken promises, broken contracts, abandonment of moral justice, were deprived of land, of life, of freedom, of property. Further, African Americans labored in the chains of slavery on the farmlands, highways and byways of this nation, and, thus, contributed fruitfully toward the growth and development of this nation.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People bring to the attention of the United States Government the obligation on the part of this nation to acknowledge its debt to the African-American slaves, and the descendants of slaves; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports the bill by Congressman John Conyers of the State of Michigan to create a Congressional Commission to make reparation proposals to direct descendants of African slaves.

### 4. NAACP Calls to Action to Address Racial and Ethnic Disparities

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP was founded to address existing racial and ethnic disparities; and

**WHEREAS**, today consistent racial and ethnic disparities exist in Education, Health, Economic Empowerment, Criminal Justice, Civic Engagement, and International Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2001, the NAACP developed and launched a National *Call for Action in Education* document which challenged governors nationwide to reduce the education-related racial and ethnic disparities in their states by 50% over a five-year period; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of the NAACP's National *Call for Action in Education*, NAACP state conferences and local units achieved measurable progress addressing disparities on issues such as class size reduction, fiscal equity, early childhood education, special education, etc; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP must develop a systemic approach to advocacy that aligns the Association's national, state and local advocacy agendas.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP launch Calls to Action in Health, Criminal Justice, Economic Empowerment, Civic Engagement, International Affairs, and Gulf Coast Recovery; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirms its National *Call to Action in Education*; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP Calls to Action shall establish numerical disparity gap reducing benchmarks for state and local systems to achieve over a set number of years; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all NAACP state conferences are advised to present the Calls to Action to their respective state officials;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP Calls to Action shall be reviewed and evaluated after a five-year period; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the National office, shall provide technical assistance to the units to support the implementation of the National Calls to Action in order to get state conferences to take appropriate action.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### 1. NAACP Resolution for Comprehensive Election Reform

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP believes that all Americans have the constitutionally protected right to an electoral process that is free, accessible, fair and accountable; and

**WHEREAS**, the current U.S. electoral system is plagued by barriers in voter registration, voter education, election administration, election protection and Get-Out-The-Vote efforts that impede certain citizens from participating in local, state, and federal elections; and

**WHEREAS**, voter identification requirements are burdensome and restrictive measures that hinder access to the ballot box for minority, elderly, and young voters; and

**WHEREAS**, deceptive practices such as misinformation and polling location challenges have become common symptoms of a flawed electoral process that adversely affect communities of color; and

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**WHEREAS**, felony disenfranchisement presently impedes 5.3 million Americans from participating in the electoral process due to felony convictions despite having completed their sentences; and

**WHEREAS**, the administration of elections which includes the maintenance of voter files, precinct allocation, and poll worker training – among other items – needs to be enhanced to ensure fair access and management of elections; and

**WHEREAS**, absentee ballots – in many states – require voters to submit their request for an absentee ballot in writing and have an “excuse” for not being able to appear in person on Election Day; and

**WHEREAS**, current procedures for issuing, casting, and counting provisional ballots are not uniform and reliable.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP is firmly committed to advocating for comprehensive election reform that enhances the ability of all eligible voters to register to vote, cast informed ballots, and have them counted on Election Day; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports policies that promote uniform and non-discriminatory voter identification requirements that are not limited to photo identification; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls for the end of deceptive practices that confuse, mislead, intimidate, and hinder voters from casting their ballots on Election Day and for the establishment of structures and criminal penalties for acts of voter suppression; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls for the automatic restoration of rights for ex-offenders upon completion of their incarceration; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls for the fair access and administration of elections that includes a uniform and non-discriminatory method for maintaining a public record of all registered voters, allocating sufficient polling location resources, and training of poll workers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls for early voting and permanent “no excuse” absentee voting to be made available in all 50 states and for a clear and uniform process for the accessibility, distribution, and counting of absentee ballots; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls for the establishment of a uniform and non-discriminatory process for issuing, casting and counting provisional ballots; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls for the use of verifiable, reliable and trustworthy voting machines and other technologies that allow voters to cast a ballot and have it counted on Election Day as well as in any audit conducted after an election.

## **2. NAACP Resolution for the Automatic Restoration of Voting, Civic Engagement, Education and Employment Rights for Ex-Offenders**

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP is the largest and oldest civil rights organization and has advocated for voting rights for all citizens in our society; and

**WHEREAS**, 5.3 million Americans are presently disenfranchised due to a felony - conviction; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 2 million ex-offenders who are barred from voting have completed their sentences; and

**WHEREAS**, 13 percent of African American men over the age of 18 are presently disenfranchised due to a felony conviction; and

**WHEREAS**, states are moving to restore the right to vote to people with a felony conviction; and

**WHEREAS**, restoring the right to vote strengthens our democracy by increasing voter participation and helps to integrate ex-offenders back into society.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirms its support for reform policies and practices that promote the automatic enfranchisement of ex-offenders who have completed all of the terms and conditions of their sentences including voting, education, housing rights, professional licensure, jury and civic engagement participation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will partner with organizations and individuals to promote a far-reaching effort that is focused on restoring ex-offenders' voting rights.

## **3. In Support of Full Voting Rights for the Citizens of the District of Columbia**

**WHEREAS**, over 572,000 residents of the District of Columbia, like citizens of the fifty states, bear all of the obligations of American citizenship: they are required to obey the laws passed by Congress; they pay annually over \$3 billion in federal taxes; they serve in the military; and, they fight and die in our wars.

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Yet, they lack the most basic right that should accompany American citizenship - the right to full voting representation in the Congress; and

**WHEREAS**, in the 206-year history of the District of Columbia, Congress has ruled over the District with little regard for the promise of America's democracy - that those who govern derive their powers from the governed. The people of the District of Columbia have not only been left out of decisions affecting how our nation is run, they have been left out of decisions affecting how their own city is run. Congress has held exclusive legislative authority to review and modify their local budget and to annul any local law of the District of Columbia to which Congress does not agree; and

**WHEREAS**, the District of Columbia has sent thousands of its young men and women to defend freedom and democracy in both World Wars, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War; and the young men and women of the DC National Guard were the first called to protect our freedom and democracy as the tragedies of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 unfolded and were also the first deployed to Afghanistan to defend our country's freedom and democracy from terrorism; and has suffered more casualties than have several states; and

**WHEREAS**, the population of the District of Columbia, like 8 other states, is under one million, but is larger than the state of Wyoming, which is still entitled to 2 Senators and 1 Representative; and

**WHEREAS**, residents of the District of Columbia are denied the Constitutional right to appoint its own Judges and to manage its own court and prison systems, as guaranteed to citizens living in states; and

**WHEREAS**, residents of the District of Columbia pay full federal taxes that are higher per capita than citizens of all 50 states; and

**WHEREAS**, the area designated as the National Capital Service Area for all Americans, is a very small portion of the City that is home to Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, and the many federal buildings and museums, is separate and apart from the 120 neighborhoods where most people live as permanent residents of the District of Columbia, with 50 percent having resided there for 20 years or more; and

**WHEREAS**, in other areas of the country such as Nevada, Utah, Arkansas, Idaho, Oregon, and California, where the federal government owns a larger percentage of the land than in the District of Columbia, citizens of those states still have a right to vote for representation in the national legislature; and

**WHEREAS**, the District of Columbia is responsible for most functions of a city, county, and state such as driver licensure, vehicle inspections, occupational licensure, insurance and securities regulation, liquor control, consumer affairs,

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workers' and unemployment compensation, food and drug inspection, utility regulation, professional licensure, lottery, weights and measures; and is treated as a state in over 500 federal laws, including operating its own police force, school system, and has its own legal code; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides all citizens of the United States of America with the guarantee of equal protection of the laws, and gives Congress the power to enforce such guarantee.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP affirms its support for full voting representation for all citizens, including the residents of the District of Columbia by endorsing the DC Voting Rights Act, the bipartisan consensus bill sponsored by Rep. Tom Davis (R-VA) and Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), that was passed by the House on April 19, 2007; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, in order to ensure bipartisan support in the U.S. Senate for the "DC Voting Rights Act," that we strongly encourage NAACP members from every state to contact their Senators to urge them to pass this important legislation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP through its national, regional and local offices and its members will continue to raise awareness and educate the American citizenry about this injustice and to take action towards a solution.

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## 1. Promoting Restorative Justice

**WHEREAS**, despite the fact that African-Americans make up less than 13% of the U.S. population, half of the two million Americans incarcerated in the nation's jails and prisons today are African-Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, the effects of this mass incarceration on the imprisoned individuals and the families they leave behind are nothing short of devastating; as children are left without parents, parents without their children, and communities robbed of promise as well as federal and state resources based on that community's population; and

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**WHEREAS**, the tragedy is magnified when severe prison terms are dispensed for poor choices made by very young people; such as the case of Genarlow Wilson who, at the age of 17, was sentenced to ten years in prison for consensual sex with a classmate; and

**WHEREAS**, the aims of *restorative justice* programs are defined by putting key decisions into the hands of those most affected by crime, making justice more healing and transformative and reducing the likelihood of future offenses; and

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice programs achieve these goals by ensuring that offenders accept responsibility for their actions and make reparations through:

- 1) Involving victims in the process of holding offenders accountable;
- 2) Focusing on the outcome of repairing harms done and;
- 3) Creating context specific plans to meet the needs of the victim and to allow the offender to provide restitution and become reintegrated into the community

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice programs offer an alternative to the traditional justice system by implementing consequences at the community level that ensure safer neighborhoods, restitution for victims, lower recidivism rates, fewer families torn apart; and

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice programs focus on rehabilitation of offenders who, without such services, are extremely challenged to find work, secure housing, and manage day-to-day needs and thus become more likely to re-offend and perpetuate the cycle of harm to the community; and

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice programs empower victims by offering them the opportunity to play a role in the resolution of the crimes by which they were affected; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 90% of those who go to prison will eventually be released and two-thirds of individuals released from prison will eventually find their way back into the justice system; and

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice is a way to hand justice back to communities, apply common sense and equity to sentencing and ensure that people with the potential to be contributing members of society, especially juvenile offenders, are not thoughtlessly sacrificed by a system that does not consider the long term consequences of incarceration without rehabilitation; and

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice offers a path for the possibility of reinventing the dysfunctional American justice system and is known to reduce the recidivism rate of offenders, resulting in safer communities and fewer African Americans behind bars; and

**WHEREAS**, restorative justice programs are disproportionately available to those in wealthy and non-minority communities, despite the crucial potential they have to be particularly beneficial to low-income and minority communities.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will advance a long term strategy to educate its membership and others on restorative justice principles and programs; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will promote restorative justice principles wherever possible, seek expansions in restorative justice programs at the local, state and national level, and hold state governments accountable for collecting data on the status and quality of restorative justice programs to ensure that these programs are equally accessible to communities without race or class bias.

## **2. Task Force on Long-Term Prisoners**

**WHEREAS**, the United States incarcerates a greater proportion of its citizenry than any other nation, imprisoning one-quarter (25%) of the world's inmates, while composing only one-twentieth (5%) of the planet's population; and

**WHEREAS**, there are over 200,000 long-term prisoners in the United States, including 132,000 serving life sentences; and

**WHEREAS**, the numbers of prisoners serving life sentences have increased eighty-three (83%) percent in the last ten years alone; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1992, there were only one-in-six lifers serving no parole sentences, today there are one-in-four serving natural life sentences; and

**WHEREAS**, research demonstrates that the explosive penal population increases have not been the result of violent crime, which has markedly decreased, but rather the result of longer mandatory sentences, and more restrictive parole and commutation policies; and

**WHEREAS**, the recidivism rate for those having served long-term sentences is the lowest of any term-serving cohort of prisoners (20% compared to 67%); and

**WHEREAS**, it costs upwards of one-million (\$1,000,000) dollars to incarcerate a person sentenced to life in prison for 40 years; and

**WHEREAS**, unprecedented in world history, the United States has now incarcerated the largest population of prisoners who will die of old age behind bars; and

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**WHEREAS**, Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy states, “Our resources are misspent, our punishments are too severe, our sentences too long.”

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that NAACP Units urge their state and local governments to create “Task Forces on Long-Term Prisoners” to recommend state strategies involving the prison and parole agencies and other partners as appropriate; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Task Forces’ recommendations ensure the achievement of the highest reasonable level of public safety; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Task Forces consider the negative long-term opportunity costs to the states resulting from their present zealous incarcerative policies, such as the shift of public higher education from being “state-supported” to “state-assisted” systems because of the reallocation of public funds to expand and operate their penal systems necessitating excessively burdensome tuition increases; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that among other options, the Task Forces examine successful and socially-economically efficient long-term release programs, such as Life Line in Canada; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Task Forces be appointed by Governors and the legislatures and complete their work within 18 months of their formation.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that branch prison support committees, and where applicable, state conference prison project committees, monitor and report annually on the progress of the Task Force on Long Term Prisoners in its year-end unit activity report.

### **3. Restoration of Prisoners’ Pell Grant Eligibility**

**WHEREAS**, incarceration rates are at historic highs, with the majority of prisoners in the United States being persons of color; and

**WHEREAS**, recidivism rates are increasing, with nearly seven—out--of—ten of all paroled prisoners being rearrested within three years of their release; and

**WHEREAS**, Post-Secondary Correctional Education has repeatedly proven to be one of the most effective rehabilitation opportunities in corrections, routinely reducing recidivism to less than 20% and many times to less than 10% for graduates; and

**WHEREAS**, Post-Secondary Correctional Education is one of the most

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economically efficacious program opportunities in corrections; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to their Pell Grant eligibility exclusion in 1994, prisoners of color composed approximately half of all Post-Secondary Correctional Education enrollments, thus people of color were disproportionately negatively impacted when prisoners were arbitrarily expelled from the Pell Grant program; and

**WHEREAS**, there are more black males incarcerated in the nation's prisons than are enrolled on American college and university campuses; and

**WHEREAS**, higher education is the most important determinant to economic and professional success with degree-possessing parolees having the highest employment and wage rates of released prisoners; and

**WHEREAS**, the exclusion of prisoners from the Pell Grant program did not provide a single additional grant to traditional students, but expelled tens-of--thousands of prisoner--students from Post--Secondary Correctional Education programs, resulting in wholesale program closings and opportunity reductions across the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, restoration of prisoner Pell Grant eligibility will not deprive a single qualified traditional student of funding, will not substantially affect students' grant awards nor cause an overall program cost increase, while allowing thousands of prisoner-students to return to the edifying experience of college classrooms; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Higher Education Consortium, the Hispanic association of Colleges and Universities, and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education endorse the restoration of eligibility for financial aid for "disenfranchised populations, including *prisoners*"; and

**WHEREAS**, the Correctional Education Association, Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants, and the Institute for Higher Education Policy also advocate the restoration of prisoners' Pell Grant eligibility; and

**WHEREAS**, Pell Grant funding eligibility is crucial to expanded and equitable Post-Secondary Education opportunities in United States' prisons.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls upon the Congress of the United States of America to enact legislation to restore prisoners' Pell Grant eligibility; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all units and members meet with, educate and urge Congress to restore prisoners' Pell Grant eligibility; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all units also educate their members to the encompassing socio-economic benefits of providing higher education

opportunities to prisoners; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that these units avail themselves of opportunities to educate others to these benefits.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 1. Resolution to Establish a National Program to Empower Families and Communities

**WHEREAS**, African American communities currently face a disproportionate number of destructive forces that threaten to erode the very existence of these communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the poverty rate for African Americans is approximately 24% compared to the poverty rate for White Americans, which is approximately 8.6%. Additionally, the poverty rate for African American children is approximately 33% compared to 10% for White children; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the US Census Bureau, African American households currently have the lowest median income among race groups. In 2004, for example, African American households had a median income of \$30,134 compared to the median income for Hispanic households (\$34,241), White households (\$48,977), and Asian households (\$57,518); and

**WHEREAS**, according to projections, 33% of all young African American men are involved with the criminal justice system and will spend some time in prison or jail during the course of their lives; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2005 the NAACP affirmed its support for U.S. Congressman Mel Watt's proposed legislation (H.R. 4197) that called for the United States President to present a plan to eradicate poverty in the United States by the year 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, experts believe that poverty is at the root of many social problems, from crime to disrespect for, and lack of knowledge of, one's culture to the deterioration of the nuclear family.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP strongly reaffirms its commitment to the 1993 “National Program to Abolish Poverty,” which urged the Association on both a national and local level to join with local organizations to help build a movement to end poverty in America; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP launch a national Empowerment Campaign focused on addressing and eradicating poverty. The Empowerment Campaign will provide a comprehensive approach to addressing the destructive forces mentioned above, and focus on the following target areas:

- 1) Family and Community Financial Empowerment
- 2) Educational Empowerment
- 3) Health Empowerment
- 4) Civic Engagement/Voter Empowerment

## EDUCATION

### 1. NAACP Resolution for Decreasing the Dropout Rate for Minority Students

**WHEREAS**, nearly one third of all high school students and approximately half of all minority high school students drop out of school before graduation from high school; and

**WHEREAS**, many of the students drop out of school with an average of just two years of high school remaining; and

**WHEREAS**, rising dropout rates among minority students have far reaching consequences including a variety of health, economic, and social problems, including a greater probability of becoming a part of the criminal justice system; and

**WHEREAS**, recent research has demonstrated that, over the course of a lifetime, on average each new high school graduate would contribute an additional \$139,100 in income tax revenue; would save \$40,500 in public health care costs; and would reduce crime-related costs by \$26,600 in comparison with a non-high school graduate; and [include source]

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**WHEREAS**, states currently define dropouts, calculate dropout rates, and report on dropouts in widely varying ways leading to ineffective services being rendered to students in danger of dropping out; and

**WHEREAS**, rising dropout rates are directly related to educational quality; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on the federal government to require every public school district in the nation to define dropouts, calculate dropout rates, and report on dropout rates in a standardized manner; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on states to publicly report their dropout rates disaggregated by race, gender and ethnicity; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on states to devise measurable plans to decrease their dropout rates and increase their graduation rates for minority students; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on federal, state, and local policymakers to devise means of rewarding schools for decreasing dropout rates and increasing graduation rates for minority students.

### 2. NAACP Resolution for Increasing National Board Certified Minority Teachers

**WHEREAS**, there is an increasing shortage of African American and minority teachers in public schools; and

**WHEREAS**, only 13 percent of teachers nationwide are African American and more than 40 percent of all U.S. schools have no teachers of color on staff; and

**WHEREAS**, research shows when teachers of color are missing, minority students are more likely to be identified for special education classes, have higher absentee rates, and tend to be less involved in school activities; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 2.7 million new teachers will be needed to join the teaching workforce over the next decade; and

**WHEREAS**, the No Child Left Behind legislation requires that all schools have access to highly qualified teachers for their students; and

**WHEREAS**, teacher certification offered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offers a nationally accepted sign of quality in the teaching profession and a nationwide standard for evaluating and encouraging quality teaching; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on the federal government to establish a special fund to provide states with the means to support African American teachers seeking certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the federal, state and local governments will provide financial and other incentives to encourage African American students to enter the education profession; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on HBCU's and other colleges of education nationwide to work with NAACP state conferences to develop a range of appropriate cultural competency development opportunities for teacher education students prior to graduation.

### **3. Inaccuracies in the Depiction of Africans and African Americans in Social Studies Textbooks**

**WHEREAS**, Strategic Initiative Nine- Enhancing Educational Excellence, Goal 2 states: "Examine a broad range of educational structures and practices with the objectives of advocating for educational equity and student achievement"; and

**WHEREAS**, the practice of presenting and perpetuating the general perception of the Africans in school history texts as *innately inferior* as justification for slavery and the treatment of the freedmen following emancipation, does not advocate educational equity and student achievement of African-American students; and

**WHEREAS**, the omission of specific data in documents in today's school history textbooks disproving the statement of inferiority continues, and is a criminal assault upon the hearts, souls and minds of African-American students; and

**WHEREAS**, the omission of such data denies African-American students a knowledge of historical facts that would engender pride in their inheritance; and

**WHEREAS**, the skills of Africans brought to America with their forced entry upon America's shores are not given full credit in school history texts; and

**WHEREAS**, photographs, graphs, drawings, and other illustrations denoting the skills and abilities of slaves are omitted from school history texts, students are denied knowledge about the inventive and creative abilities of the Africans and their descendants in America during the Ante-bellum period in America; and

**WHEREAS**, school history texts glorify with many illustrations the product of slave labor, but not the unpaid laborers, describing it as "King Cotton" which made this country and countries abroad economically wealthy; and

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**WHEREAS**, the many skills, arts, crafts, and creative abilities in music, (examples, Negro Spirituals and names of singers, like Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, born a slave, a talented singer who performed for Queen Victoria) possessed by slaves and "free people of color" are not written about nor illustrated with photographs, therefore, blatantly omitted from school history texts; and

**WHEREAS**, the service of Africans and African-Americans in each of America's wars is presented only in statistical numbers without quotes from documents attesting to the extent of their leadership and battlefield courage and a description of the dire and unsatisfactory conditions under which their service was rendered are omitted; and

**WHEREAS**, the service of fugitive slaves in the Revolutionary War and the Civil War is not described with sufficient credit in school history texts, even though their service earned for thousands, freedom; and

**WHEREAS**, the service of fugitive slaves, called contrabands in the Civil War, fled to Union lines and by their presence in thousands forced attention to their plight and fight for freedom, served as scouts, guides and spies, and at times saved entire Union regiments from Rebel forces; and

**WHEREAS**, the contrabands enlisted when restrictions were lifted, also became like encyclopedias to Confederate territory with their knowledge of the topography of the land, its roads and bridges and with their eyes and ears gave reliable information to the Union unavailable from any other source, and with their strength and abilities gave service in non-combat tasks which freed soldiers to fight led the Union to victory, and earned their freedom; and

**WHEREAS**, blacks served in the United States Navy in great numbers, little space is given to this service in the Civil War; and

**WHEREAS**, persons in the racial likeness of Benjamin Bradley, a slave inventor, are included. Bradley, "at the age of sixteen, showed great mechanical skill and with pieces of steel and other materials constructed a working model of a steam engine and after the sale of his first steam engine, built an engine large enough to drive the first cutter of a sloop-of-war at the rate of sixteen knots an hour." (Katz, Eyewitness, The Negro in American History, 1967, pp.115-116).

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that an active protest movement begin with the examination and evaluation of the school history textbooks of Scott Foresman, Houghton-Mifflin, Harcourt and other publishers for omissions, distortions, bias, and insufficient coverage of the contributions of Africans and African-Americans in America with emphasis upon the ante-bellum period, and that efforts be made to affect changes in the books; and

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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this committee demand that publishers' textbooks include the skills brought to America by Africans, and that the craftsmanship of persons such as Horace King, a slave bridge builder; Thomas Day, a free man of color and furniture maker, and Gilbert Hunt, a slave carriage maker and blacksmith, and numerous others, are included in their books, and if available, their photographs are included; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the committee demand that the inventive ingenuity, and creative abilities of slaves and "free persons of color" be included in their books to the extent that the "inferiority perception" is entirely disproved with documentary evidence; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, Norbert Rillieux whose invention revolutionized the production of sugar; slave Henry Blair, inventor of a seed planting machine; and Benjamin Banneker, an astronomer, mathematician and planner for the location of the Capitol and other federal buildings in the nation's capitol-- along with other inventors' biographical summaries are included in school history texts to further substantiate the fact that the black race is not an inferior race, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the committee demand that textbooks admit the wrongs of slavery even though the proponents of freedom declared in documents that "all men were created equal..." and furthermore that both George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and most presidents prior to Abraham Lincoln owned slaves; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that all students and especially, African-American students, will be able to read in their school history texts an accurate account of the contributions of African-Americans (in all fields of endeavor) to the settlement, growth and development of this country.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

### 1. Climate Change and Discriminatory Practices

**WHEREAS**, the impacts of climate change are global, the effects are not spread evenly across the world. Instead, climate change is likely to have different impacts on people of different socioeconomic and racial groups; and

**WHEREAS**, The US Congressional Black Caucus issued a report entitled “Black Americans and Global Warming: An Unequal Burden” which details the fact that minorities in America and African Americans specifically are most likely to suffer disproportionately as a result of the foreseeable impacts of climate change which include flooding, heat waves and high energy prices; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of lower average income and wealth, African Americans and other people of color are more vulnerable to environmental policies with regressive impacts. African-Americans spend a higher proportion of their income on carbon intensive purchases and therefore are more likely to be impacted by changes in the higher prices of energy. In as much as market mechanisms reduce the overall costs of emission control, these methods can reduce the transmitted costs to African Americans and other people of color; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans are already *disproportionately burdened* by the health effects of climate change, including deaths during heat waves and from worsened air pollution. Similarly, unemployment and economic hardship associated with climate change will fall most heavily on the African American community; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans are generally more vulnerable to pollution impacts because of their spatial distribution and may be disproportionately worse-off with the use of market mechanisms for pollutants that cause local hot spots, unless additional safeguards are added to limit the impact of local concentrations; and

**WHEREAS**, climate change is an issue of global significance and will disproportionately affect African Americans, people of color, and disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods across the United States and around the globe;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP shall take a leadership role in advocating for socially just solutions for the environment and global warming that will have the impact of reducing racial and ethnic economic disparities; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People will educate communities on the impact of global warming as well as advocate for legislative policies at the local, state and federal level, and urge its international affairs department to promote policy as a non-governmental organization (NGO) that aims to meaningfully reduce climate change which impacts communities of color.

## **2. Support Call for Recompense for Victims of Environmental Racism**

**WHEREAS**, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has long been an advocate against environmental racism; and

**WHEREAS**, the effects of environmental racism are normally found in areas inhabited by the poor, minority, and disenfranchised people who are disproportionately harmed by the elements associated with the pollutants that are germane to the chemical causing elements; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), since 1970, has been and is to protect human health and the environment; and to work for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people; and

**WHEREAS**, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states: No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, findings from the 2007 *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty* report show African Americans and other people of color make up the majority (56%) of those living in neighborhoods within 1.8 miles of the nation's commercial hazardous waste facilities, nearly double the percentage in areas beyond 1.8 miles (30%); people of color make up more than two-thirds (69%) in neighborhoods with clustered facilities; percentages of African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and Asians/Pacific Islanders in host neighborhoods are 1.7, 2.3, and 1.8 times greater in host neighborhoods than non-host areas (20% vs. 12%, 27% vs. 12%, and 6.7% vs. 3.6%), respectively; and

**WHEREAS**, our communities are impacted by the discharge of Tri-Chloro Ethylene (TCE) and other toxic wastes which decrease the health and increase the incidence of harm to individuals in our communities.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirms its 1993 policy on

environmental justice; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People strongly advocate before federal, state and local policy-making bodies as well as those government agencies charged with enforcement and protection under these laws to secure economic and environmental justice for African American families and communities of color adversely impacted by the discharge of Tri-Chloro Ethylene (TCE) and other toxic waste including nuclear waste; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People demands that the Congress of the United States of America enact laws that will hold government agencies at all levels totally accountable for harm caused to citizens whether through omission or commission; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People hereby demands that the Congress of the United States of America with cooperation from other legislative bodies move expeditiously to identify solutions, enact laws, appropriate funds and set policy that will eradicate the blight of environmental racism across the nation.

## HEALTH

### 1. NAACP Anti- Tobacco Policy

**WHEREAS**, tobacco use remains the number-one cause of preventable disease and death in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, active and passive exposure to tobacco smoke is projected to contribute to approximately 440,000 deaths in the United States each year; and

**WHEREAS**, despite lower exposure to tobacco, African-Americans are still more likely than Whites to develop and die from heart disease, lung cancer, and other lung diseases; and

**WHEREAS**, over the years, there has been enormous progress made with encouraging people to try to quit, largely through the implementation of various

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smoking cessation policies that underscore the message that smoking is bad;  
and

**WHEREAS**, several states have shown that spending between 50 cents and \$1.50 per person presenting carefully crafted messages can lower adult smoking rates by 20 to 35% in one year, and decrease the “start smoking” rates among youth by 25 to 50%; and

**WHEREAS**, seventy-two percent of African Americans are exposed to secondhand smoke, compared to 50 percent of whites, and 45 percent of Mexican Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, about 40 percent of people in the U.S. are protected by legislation such as smoke-free workplace laws and clean indoor air acts; and

**WHEREAS**, many cities and states have enacted increased cigarette taxes and launched public health media campaigns highlighting the negative health consequences of smoking; and

**WHEREAS**, exposure to tobacco is proven to contribute to a number of chronic diseases including cancer, heart disease, lung disease, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and ultimately death; and

**WHEREAS**, despite these policy changes and the growing recognition of the dangers of nicotine, about 25 percent of Americans still smoke; and

**WHEREAS**, African American high school students are increasing their start-smoking rates more rapidly than young whites; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP recognizes the need to prevent the sale of tobacco products to minors; and

**WHEREAS**, the results field studies conducted showed that retailers are continuing to sell tobacco products to minors; and

**WHEREAS**, the most likely way to prohibit sale of tobacco to minors is the enforcement of existing state laws; and

**WHEREAS**, more needs to be done to ensure that people know WHY to quit, HOW to quit, and WHERE to get support to help with the quitting process; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been found that tobacco companies disproportionately market their products to the African American community; A one-year study found that major African-American publications received proportionately higher profits from cigarette advertisements than did other magazines. The study also found that

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these publications had 12% more cigarette advertisements than widespread publications.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP be strongly opposed to the use of smoke and smokeless tobacco products; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP, through its national, regional and local units, and its members will work to better raise awareness, educate and develop policy and programs on the economic, social and health effects associated with tobacco use in the African American community; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP instruct its state and local units in techniques to direct more of the state “tobacco settlement monies” to decreasing tobacco use; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP formally develop a comprehensive and long-term strategic plan for sanctions to include fines, restitution and incarceration, to be included in any legislation and or regulation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP encourage legislatures to require retailers selling tobacco products to secure and renew a license annually with a fee set high enough to fund programs and enforcement against tobacco sales to minors.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that, the NAACP formally develop a comprehensive, long-term strategy to advocate for maximum use of “Best Anti-Tobacco Practices” that would achieve the goal of a smoke-free country by employing evidence-based methods to reduce initiation and continuance of the addictive practice; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP discourage the targeted and disproportionate marketing of tobacco products to African Americans and other minorities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all NAACP units work at the state and local levels to assure Medicaid funding for nicotine replacement, smoking cessation products, drug abuse services and counseling services; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP support the development of policy that would impose severe sanctions to include fines and restitution for retailers that are caught selling tobacco to minors; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP commit to eliminating disparities in access to tobacco prevention and cessation services.

## 2. Psychiatric Drugs & Foster Care

**WHEREAS**, children of color are disproportionately represented in the Child Welfare System with African-American children representing the biggest segment within the Child Welfare System; and

**WHEREAS**, the FDA has now published strong warnings about the dangers of psychiatric drugs being administered to children with side-effects such as aggression, mania, heart attacks, suicide and sudden death; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1997 funding for children with “special needs” became linked to psychiatric labeling and drugging with studies now showing the number of children labeled as “special needs” jumped from pre-1997 levels of 10% to now over 60% of foster children labeled as “special needs” ; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Youth Connection has stated that a group home can be paid an additional \$2,000 to \$6,000 per foster youth for overseeing and administering psychiatric drugs to children; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Rules of Court, #1432.5(g) states, in emergency situations, psychotropic medications may be administered to a dependent with or without court authorization or court delegation of authority to a parent in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code section 369, with no clear definition of what constitutes an “emergency”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 established a special \$2,000 bonus for a County to be paid for each “special needs” child whose family rights are terminated and the child is adopted out of the home; and

**WHEREAS**, Guardians and Foster Parents have inherent conflicts of interest when additional monies are made available to them should they consent to the use of psychiatric drugs of foster youth in their care; and

**WHEREAS**, without a recent past history of psychiatric medication use, any new label and prescription becomes suspect as to the legitimacy of the medical need for foster youth to consume dangerous psychiatric drugs; and

**WHEREAS**, the San Francisco Chronicle also reported on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2006 that the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Foster Care heard multiple reports from foster youth complaining about their terrible experiences with psychiatric drugs; and

**WHEREAS**, investigations in Texas, Florida and Minnesota have also discovered a startling percentage of foster youth on mind-altering drugs, with the State Controller of Texas reporting that of the 12,000 foster youth who received

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psychotropic drugs in 2004, each child averaged 21 psychotropic drug prescriptions a year.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the State and Federal Government pass legislation to end the use of psychiatric drugs for behavior control of foster youth where there has been no medical or mental health finding that indicates a need for such medication; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that foster youth should be given full and searching physical examinations by non-psychiatric medical professionals to search for underlying physical illnesses or deficiencies in addition to a mental health evaluation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP demands that while in the custody of the state, a foster home, or other non-family-of-origin care, no child should be prescribed or otherwise be compelled to take psychiatric drugs until full informed consent is obtained; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that in all cases where parental rights have not been terminated, parents will have the right to demand due process in controlling all attempts to medicate their children for previously undiagnosed psychiatric conditions. Their rights shall include, but not be limited to, second opinions, legal guidance and support from the advocacy agency of their choice.

## HOUSING

### 1. National Call to Action to Address Housing Affordability

**WHEREAS**, home equity is a critical component of wealth building and currently accounts for approximately 70% of wealth in the African American community; and

**WHEREAS**, the availability of affordable housing is decreasing across the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the homeownership rate for African Americans is approximately 26 percentage points less than the homeownership rate for White Americans; and

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**WHEREAS**, the current shortage of affordable housing in most metropolitan areas across the nation creates severe problems, especially for minority workers, even in key occupations, such as, police officers, teachers, and healthcare workers that are essential to every community; and

**WHEREAS**, Housing Trust Funds are dedicated sources of public revenue at the state, city or county-level that must be spent on affordable housing; and

**WHEREAS**, Housing Trust Funds currently exist in 42 states and are being used to address the affordability problem in communities across the nation.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** that the NAACP, in partnership with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), will host a large-scale housing affordability summit to discuss affordable housing solutions such as Housing Trust Funds that can be implemented at the local level; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NAACP work with partner organizations such as NAHB and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) to produce a state level index that assesses the need for affordable housing in every state in the nation, disaggregated by race and age of prospective home seekers, to distribute to NAACP units and affiliates; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the NAACP provide information and training materials about Housing Trust Funds to units and engage branches, Women in the NAACP and the NAACP Youth and College Division to include information about Housing Trust Funds in existing and new programming.

### **2. Resolution for the National Convention to Address the Homeownership and Foreclosure Crisis Facing the African American Community**

**WHEREAS**, many sub-prime lenders, and specifically those promoting the so-called “exploding ARMS” loans, disproportionately targeted African Americans, Hispanic Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities; and

**WHEREAS**, these loans are characterized by a huge “payment shock” two to three years after the initial loan is made in which an individual’s monthly mortgage increases dramatically, usually by 40% and often times more; and

**WHEREAS**, this “payment shock” is often accompanied by a prepayment penalty, often of around \$6000; and

**WHEREAS**, the impact of these loans, which were once touted as dramatically increasing homeownership among our nation’s racial and ethnic minorities, will in fact be devastating to our families and in too many cases, entire communities; and

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**WHEREAS**, too many Americans, a disproportionate number of whom are African American and Hispanic American, risk losing their homes and their attempts at building wealth and equity for themselves in their golden years or to pass on to their children; and

**WHEREAS**, homeownership has historically been, and continues to be, one of the most effective ways Americans can build wealth; and

**WHEREAS**, home ownership in our country can oftentimes provide the capital necessary to educate our children through colleges and universities, in this day and age, a necessity for success and prosperity in America. Home ownership can be the single most important determinate for aging Americans, as to whether we will live out the sunset years of our lives in grace and dignity, or squalor and poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, all over our nation, houses once occupied by African American and Hispanic men, women and children will be boarded up and sold. The impact on our communities will be nothing short of devastation, demoralization and destruction; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans currently have a median net worth 1/15<sup>th</sup> of white families, \$5,598 to \$88,000; and

**WHEREAS**, 52% of African American borrowers and 40% of Hispanics receive sub-prime loans. Even when income is taken into account, African American and Hispanics receive a disproportionate number of sub-prime loans; and

**WHEREAS**, conservative estimates seem to agree that 56% of all foreclosures on sub-prime loans made in 2005 will be against African American or Hispanic households; and

**WHEREAS**, fifty-six percent (52%) of ALL loans made to African Americans in 2005 were sub-prime loans (Home mortgage Disclosure Act data); and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association, sixty percent (60%) of all sub-prime loans made in the third quarter of 2005 were Non-traditional mortgages; and

**WHEREAS**, by disproportionately foreclosing on African American and Hispanic homeowners, the sub-prime lenders are ruining families and the dreams of people who just wanted some security for their future as well as for the future of their children; and

**WHEREAS**, the future appears very bleak as hundreds-of-thousands of African Americans who once pursued the American dream of owning a home and having financial security in the future.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP joins with other civil rights, housing rights and consumer rights advocates in calling on lenders, loan services and investors who may hold these reckless sub-prime loans in which the mortgage holder finds his or her monthly payment suddenly increased, by 30 or even 40%, after the initial “teaser” rate has expired to abide by a moratorium on foreclosures until borrowers can craft a solution to avoid the horrors of losing our homes and our communities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP Housing Committee immediately address this problem as one of their highest priorities; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the NAACP call for the elimination of early payment penalties on all sub-prime loans which make it difficult for moderate income Americans to refinance their mortgages in order to receive more advantageous and manageable payment terms.

## INTERNAL AFFAIRS

### 1. Unit Use of Credit Card/Debit Card

**WHEREAS**, for the purposes of renting vehicles and reserving hotel rooms and making airline reservations most businesses are requiring a credit card or a debit card, and

**WHEREAS**, recognizing the need for fiduciary responsibility and accountability, credit or debit transactions should have to go through the same vetting process as checks, and

**WHEREAS**, a requisition should be required and transactions should be authorized during Executive Committee meetings, and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and CEO and the Chief Financial Officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People shall review the Association’s current policies concerning credit or debit transactions for the purpose for securing hotel reservations and airline tickets and online service providers; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Finance Department shall develop and distribute appropriate guidance for the use of Credit and Debit Cards by the Units for the Association no later than January 1, 2008.

## **2. NAACP Organizational Effectiveness Survey**

**WHEREAS**, surveys have been shown to be reliable instruments for gauging the attitudes and opinions of a group of individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP has thousands of members and individuals within the leadership ranks of the organization, and thus, a vested interest in gauging their levels of satisfaction and accord with the policy areas and initiatives articulated by the National Office, and assessing general feedback on the organization's advocacy efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, no resolution currently exists on periodically surveying internal stakeholders (i.e. members, leadership) on their levels of satisfaction and accord with the policy areas and initiatives articulated by the National Office, and the organization's advocacy efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association now has a research department that includes a director and a policy manager capable of engaging in this type of surveying; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association has successfully conducted a survey of this nature involving members and leadership attending this year's Civil Rights Advocacy Training Institute (CRATI); and

**WHEREAS**, surveys and/or polls may be conducted by various methods including, but not limited to, mail, telephone, in-person, and computer/internet-based technology; and that the data gathered there must be analyzed, summarized, and reported out; and that the scope of the survey and the population to be surveyed is the best determinant of the most effective method to be used; and that modern survey techniques make the best use of computer/internet-based technology from design, through issuance, analysis, and to final report; and

**WHEREAS**, the conduct of surveys on staff, and/or membership, and/or the general public may be subject to existing "Human Subjects Research" requirements as governed by the "Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Public Welfare, Department of Health and Human Services, Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects," as periodically revised, and it is in the best interest of the NAACP to abide by an applicable requirements.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP employs computer/internet based technology as its method of first choice for surveys/polls; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP National Office complies with any applicable “Human Subjects Research” requirements; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP National Office conduct a survey of its internal stakeholders (i.e. members and leadership) at least every 3-5 years via self-administered questionnaires during the CRATI and that the results be reported to the Branch leadership.

### **3. Reaffirming the NAACP Commitment to Voter Empowerment and Election Protection**

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP is the largest and oldest civil rights organization that has fought for voting rights, and the protection of such rights for all members of our society; and

**WHEREAS**, there are an estimated 24 million African Americans who are eligible to vote in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, an estimated 64.4 percent of all eligible African Americans are registered to vote; and

**WHEREAS**, an estimated 56.3 percent of all registered African Americans report voting on Election Day; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 report the lowest percentages in voter turnout; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to bridge the gaps in voter registration and voter turnout among African Americans, with special attention to young voters; and

**WHEREAS**, the members of the NAACP stand poised to mobilize and address the disparities in African American and youth voter registration and turnout.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that NAACP stands committed to the development, implementation, and documentation of the Voter Empowerment 365 Plan that includes voter registration, voter education, election administration, election protection and Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) efforts that target African Americans and young voters; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will pursue funding to develop an innovative and massive mobilization effort to register voters and maximize GOTV efforts on Election Day; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will strategically plan for voter education activities that will contribute to a more informed electorate by providing voters with informational tools and resources; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will support local, state, and federal election reform practices that increase voter registration and participation by ensuring that elections are administered in a manner that is inclusive, accurate, and accountable; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Association implement voter education, voter registration and voter motivation programs in all of its regular activities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirms its commitment to continuing to partner with organizations and individuals to promote a far-reaching effort that is focused on increasing voter participation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will investigate election suppression and election fraud, and continue to build strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations.

#### **4. Remove Article I, Section 1(d) Name and Jurisdiction in the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP**

**WHEREAS**, Young Adult Councils as a unit of the NAACP dilute the strength of Branches; and

**WHEREAS**, there currently exists a standing Young Adult Committee of Branches that serves the same function of Young Adult Councils; and

**WHEREAS**, Young Adult Committees are a better mechanism to integrate and increase the activities and interests of young adults in the Branches;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Young Adult Council shall be deleted as a standing unit of the NAACP and Young Adult Council shall be deleted from the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP in the following sections:

- Article I, Section 1(d)-page 1
- Article II, Section 1(e)-page 4
- Article III, Section 3(d)-page 11
- Article IV, Section 6-page 17-18
- Article V, Section 3(d)-page 22
- Article V, Section 4(e)-page 24
- Article VI, Section 2(d)-page 30
- Article VI, Section 3(d)-page 32

- Article VII, Section 3(10-a) page 36
- Article VIII, Section 1(d)-page 39
- Article VIII, Section 4(f)-page 43
- Article IX, Section 5-page 74-77

**5. Change Article II, Section 1(b) Objectives in the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP**

Article II , Section 1(b) Objectives

Purpose of Units

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, to change Article II, Section 1(b) in the Bylaws for the Units for the NAACP to read as follows:

*In addition, its objectives shall be to: stimulate the Branches, Prison Branches, Youth Councils, High School Chapters, College Chapters, Authorized Committees and any and all Units of the Association in its jurisdiction to greater activity in the fight for freedom; to revive dormant Units in the State or State/State-Area Conference; to organize new Units; to assist the Association in the conduct of the work of the NAACP by increasing support for the Association by the various Units; to coordinate the activities and secure the cooperation of Units within the State/State-Area Conference; to eliminate discrimination and injustice against minority people in the area; to seek the enactment of laws in the state legislature which will advance the programs and policies of the Association. With respect of the Youth Units, these objectives should be carried out through the Youth and College Division of the State/State-Area Conference.*

**6. Change Article III, Section 3(e) Organizational Structure Charter Eligibility Criteria of College Chapters in the Bylaws for the Units of the NAACP**

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, to change Article III, Section 3(e) in the Bylaws for the Units of the NAACP to read as follows:

***Charter Eligibility Criteria for College Chapters. College Chapters shall contain at least 25 members under the age of 25 and/or who are currently enrolled as a student in college or university.***

**7. Change Article III , Section 3(f) Organizational Structure Charter Eligibility Criteria of College Chapters in the Bylaws for the Units of the NAACP**

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, to change Article III, Section 3(f) in the Bylaws for the Units of the NAACP to read as follows:

Charter Eligibility Criteria for Youth Councils. Youth Councils shall contain at least 25 members who must be under 25 years of age.

**8. Article IV, Section 4(a) Membership in the Bylaws for the Units of the NAACP**

Article IV, Section 4(a) Membership

Membership in the Branch

**CURRENT**

Any person who is a permanent resident or works within a Branch jurisdiction may become a member of said Branch.

**CHANGE**

*Any person who is a permanent resident or works or is in the roll of a church within a Branch jurisdiction may become a member of said Branch, providing they have paid the annual requisite Regular Adult Membership fee.*

**9. Membership Resolution to Amend Article IV, Section 12 of the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP**

**10. Membership Resolution to Amend Article IV, Section 13 of the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP**

**11. Membership Resolution to Amend Article IV Section 14 of the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP**

**12. Membership Resolution to Amend Article IV, Adding Section 15 to the Bylaws for Units of the NAACP**

**The Board of Directors removed these resolutions from the packet considered for ratification because Membership Fees and Fee structure is**

the legislative province of the Board of Directors. These resolutions were in the resolutions committee report because they had to be placed in the Bylaws for Units for information. During the Convention these resolutions were amended in a manner that does not comport with the Constitution of the NAACP. The Board of Directors completely understood the sense of the Convention with respect to these resolutions and therefore proper and timely notice will be provided to the Board and these resolutions will be on the agenda for consideration at the February Meeting of the National Board of Directors.

### **13. Article VII, Section 1(2) Duties of Officers of Units**

Article VII, Section 1(2) Duties of Officers of Units

President

The duties of the President shall be:

#### **CURRENT**

To appoint the Chair and members of all Committees not otherwise elected by the General Membership of the NAACP Unit or the Executive Committee.

#### **CHANGE**

To appoint the Chair and members of all Committees not otherwise elected by the General Membership or the Executive Committee of the NAACP Unit; except the Chair of the Youth Work Committee of a Branch or State/State Area Conference.

### **14. Article VIII, Section 4(d) Standing Committees and Special Committees of Units**

Article VIII, Section 4(d) Standing Committees and Special Committees of Units

Standing Committees of Branches

#### **CURRENT**

Standing Committee of Branches. The Standing Committees of the Branch shall be: Communications; Press and Publicity; Community Coordination; Education; Finance; Freedom Fund; Health; Legal Redress; Membership and Life Membership; Political Action; Religious Affairs; Youth Work; Women In the NAACP (WIN); Committee of Armed Services and Veterans Affairs; Economic Development; Housing; and Labor and Industry.

**CHANGE**

Standing Committee of Branches. The Standing Committees of the Branch shall be: Communications; Press and Publicity; Community Coordination; Education; Finance; Freedom Fund; Health; Legal Redress; Membership and Life Membership; Political Action; Religious Affairs; Youth Work; Women In the NAACP (WIN); Committee of Armed Services and Veterans Affairs; Economic Development; Housing; and Labor and Industry; Young Adult Committee; Prison Branch Support, and ACT-SO.

**15. Article VIII, Section 5(s) Duties of the Standing Committees**

Article VIII, Section 5(s) Duties of the Standing Committees

The duties of the Standing Committees shall be:

**CURRENT**

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*All Standing Committees shall report in writing each month to the Executive Committee at its regular meetings.*

**CHANGE**

All Standing Committees must have at least three (3) appointed members. All Standing Committees shall report in writing each month to the Executive Committee at its regular meetings.

**16. NAACP Resolutions and Action Item Policy Sun-Set Provision**

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP Annual Convention and Board of Directors establishes the Association's national policy positions through resolutions and action items; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP has passed over 5,000 national policy resolutions and action items since its founding in 1909; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP National Staff is charged with executing plans of action to build the NAACP units' capacity to enforce each of the passed resolutions and action items; and

**WHEREAS**, limited fiscal resources and capacity at the national, regional, state, and local levels make it very difficult to execute and monitor the large number of resolutions and action items passed since 1909; and

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**WHEREAS**, several of the policy positions are outdated which precipitates a need for an internal process to review previously passed resolutions and action items; and

**WHEREAS**, a “sun-setting” provision causes the enforcement period for a policy to set after an identified time period unless the policy is reaffirmed for a new time period.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that NAACP “non-internal affairs” (those not impacting the NAACP Constitution and Bylaws), resolutions and action items should remain active for a period of ten years---after this period, if the resolution or action item is not reaffirmed, it will no longer be active; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all existing policies shall be reviewed by the President and CEO, and those that should remain active shall be referred to the National Resolutions Committee for reaffirmation and submitted to the Annual Convention for approval during the NAACP 2008 Annual Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that following the reaffirmation of the past policies at the 2008 Annual Convention, annually, in addition to the newly submitted resolutions and action items, the President and CEO shall recommend to the National Resolutions Committee those resolutions or action items that are subject to the ten-year sun-setting provision, that should be reaffirmed; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that every two years, the national staff should produce and update a policy database, accessible to the membership, which sets out the Association’s policy on key issues.

### 17. NAACP Hospitality Report Card

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, there has been an alarming trend recently where there has been an increase in employment in the hotel industry overall, but has declined for African Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, the African Americans that are employed in the hotel industry are subjected to de facto segregation, where they are relegated to “back of the house” jobs, and out of more visible “front of the house” jobs; and

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**WHEREAS**, UNITE HERE has taken proactive steps to ensure these two alarming trends in the hotel industry are reversed and also has a comprehensive industry knowledge base which can be useful in determining which hotel corporations contribute to these problems; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP Hospitality Report Card is a means to promote transparency within the hotel industry, so that those hotel corporations that are respectful of the African American community are recognized for their good efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP Hospitality Report Card is a prestigious publication, read widely by many groups across a broad ideological spectrum, which informs the buying patterns of individual hotel consumers and industry meeting planners; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that for the reasons stated above, the NAACP will more heavily and carefully weigh the treatment of workers – which includes (but is not limited to) access to living wages, access to affordable healthcare, access to pensions/affordable retirement savings plans, discrimination and freedom to join a Union in an environment free from intimidation and harassment – when determining grades for hotel operators in its hospitality report card; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will use UNITE HERE's broad institutional knowledge base, and will partner with the Union to help gain an understanding of these issues and to help inform the grades of the hotel corporations in the portions of the hospitality report card outlined above.

### **18. Retain the Original Name of the ACT-SO Program as Defined by its Founder, Vernon Jarrett**

**WHEREAS**, in 1978 Vernon Jarrett, founder and creator of Afro Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics hereinafter referred to as ACT-SO; and

**WHEREAS**, Vernon Jarrett recognized that African American youth were without a venue to develop and showcase their scholastic talents and abilities; and

**WHEREAS**, ACT-SO has been very successful as a mentoring tool for youth in preparing them for various professions, such as the sciences, humanities, performing arts, visual, arts, and entrepreneurship; and

**WHEREAS**, the National NAACP has successfully operated the ACT-SO (program) for 29 years; and

**WHEREAS**, at the 97<sup>th</sup> annual ACT-SO competition during the orientation, it was observed that the term "Afro" was eliminated from the title of ACT-SO; and

**WHEREAS**, during the week of ACT-SO activity, it was further observed that ACT-SO collateral, including bags, t-shirts, and additional items failed to include any reference to the term “Afro”; and

**WHEREAS**, the full name of the ACT-SO, “Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological, and Scientific Olympics” was absent from the award ceremony souvenir booklet, nor was it referenced during the actual award ceremony; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1978 the term “Afro” has been an integral part of the name ACT-SO and has always been the prelude to our national convention.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, to remain constant with the vision of the founder, the late Vernon Jarrett and, as adopted by the National Board of Directors in 1978, that the NAACP ensures that the word “Afro” is always spelled out in all Afro Academic, Cultural, Technological, and Scientific Olympics literature and paraphernalia, and that the program forever maintain its identity and relationship as a NAACP program and all ACT-SO collateral maintain the NAACP branding.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will always remember the legacy of Vernon Jarrett, founder and creator of the ACT-SO program as the Afro-Academic Cultural, Technological, and Scientific Olympics.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### 1. Clean Water

The NAACP Calls on the United States, Multilateral Organizations, Foreign Countries, and companies to commit to increasing the number of people in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean who have access to clean water and sanitation by 50%.

**WHEREAS**, according to World Health Organization, a total of 1.1 billion people do not have access to clean water and 2.6 billion do not have access to adequate sanitation. Three hundred thirteen million of those who do not have access to clean water and sanitation are in Africa, 100 million are in Latin America and the Caribbean; and

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**WHEREAS**, according to Loïc Fauchon, President of the World Water Council, in 2005 “lack of water or its poor quality...caused 10 times more deaths than all the wars waged on the planet together”; and

**WHEREAS**, access to water is mainly a crisis for the poor and more than two-thirds of those without clean water survive on less than \$2 a day. Either poor people are excluded because of a lack of legal rights to claim adequate water, or they fall outside the scope of limited water infrastructure that serves largely the rich; and

**WHEREAS**, inadequate access to safe water is the primary cause of many of the diseases that afflict Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. For example, 1.6 million children under age 5 around the world died from the consequences of unsafe water and inadequate hygiene; and

**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization recognizes 25 major diseases as water related. The death toll as a result of the water related diseases is from 3-6 million a year. One water related disease, diarrhea, causes an estimated 2,187,000 deaths a year, and four billion bouts of illness. An additional six million people are blind due to the effects of trachoma. Over 80% of hospital beds in the developing world are occupied by patients with water borne diseases; and

**WHEREAS**, unsafe water and inadequate sanitation most negatively affect women and children. Women and children bear the primary responsibility for collecting water and making it safe to drink in many cultures; and

**WHEREAS**, women in Africa spend 40 billion hours every year collecting water. As demonstrated by the genocide occurring in Darfur, Sudan, women and children carrying heavy water containers are afflicted by serious health problems, and are exposed to attacks when walking to remote water sources. Women are often raped and killed as a result of transporting water. Women and girls suffer from inadequate sanitation during childbirth and menstruation. The lack of privacy causes girls to drop out of school, and many girls do not attend school because they do not have access to clean water; and

**WHEREAS**, unlike many of the problems that the world’s poor face, the lack of water and sanitation is a problem that is preventable. In 2005, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act which was enacted with the stated goal of helping to reduce by one-half the proportion of the world’s people unable to reach or afford safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to meet the goal, nearly 100 million additional people need to gain access to safe drinking water each year. The U.S. Government can lead

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this effort by committing to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation for an additional 10 million people of the world's poor each year – 10% of the total; and

**WHEREAS**, clean and sanitized water crosses all problem areas. If proposed aid is targeted to reach at least 1 million children, it would address one of the most common reasons for non-attendance in schools (50% of the schools in the world lack access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation); and

**WHEREAS**, everyone deserves access to clean water and improved sanitation and the United States can play a strong leadership role in making clean water a reality for all.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on the United States to appropriate in each fiscal year \$500 million to help reach the target of providing water and improved sanitation to an additional 10 million people a year. As part of the 10 million, the target for Africa should be 4 million and Latin America and the Caribbean should be 1.5 million a year. One million school children should be included in the 10 million goal; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the appropriations legislative language in each fiscal year until 2015 should specifically state, "That of the funds appropriated under this Act, not less than \$500 million is hereby appropriated for the Development Assistance Account for safe drinking water and sanitation supply projects and shall be expended to implement the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005 (P.L.109-121)."; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the outlay should be expressed through a line item for "Drinking Water and Sanitation" in the Development Assistance Account for USAID. The funding to implement *The Water for the Poor Act* should be seen as additional to U.S. Government water and sanitation investments made primarily to address emergency relief or strategic concerns of the U.S; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, there should be no demands on countries to privatize water supply; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, in order to ensure the sustainability of these projects, development will be coordinated with ongoing efforts to encourage local governance reform, local capacity training, innovative financing, enhanced technical capability, and long-term monitoring and evaluation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, this issue will be coordinated through the NAACP's International Affairs Department and will ensure that these issues are presented to the appropriate government agencies, policy makers, and multilateral institutions.

**2. Establishment of a Point Person for International Affairs that will Link Local Units to the Work of the NAACP in that Area**

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP has a long history of involvement in international issues from the Pan Africanism of Dr. W.E.B. DuBois and the efforts to have U.S. Marines withdraw from Haiti, of James Weldon Johnson through the founding of the United Nations and the calls to end colonialization, through the fight against apartheid in South Africa, to today's efforts to stop the killing in Darfur; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP has recently been re-accredited as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) to the United Nations and established an Office of International Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, the strength of the NAACP is in the efforts of its local units; and

**WHEREAS**, presently only a few local units are active in international issues; and

**WHEREAS**, the local units look toward the State Conferences for guidance.

**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that each Unit may appoint a liaison for International Affairs who can serve to link the work of the National International Affairs Office with the state or local units to increase the involvement of those units with international issues.

**LABOR**

**1. Source of Income Discrimination**

**WHEREAS**, the average low income American family cannot afford decent housing for their families. Specifically, in 42 states, two workers who earn the federal minimum wage do not make enough to afford adequate housing; and

**WHEREAS**, as real estate prices skyrocket, lower income workers have been priced out of the housing market. Today more than one in eight Americans spend more than half their income on housing and one in three Americans spend more than 30% of their income on housing; and

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**WHEREAS**, the number of affordable housing units available to low income Americans is rapidly declining. Since 1993, the number of affordable rental units has decreased by 1.2 million; and

**WHEREAS**, the demand for federal Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers far outpaces the supply. The program serves only one in four families eligible for Section 8 housing vouchers. Many families have spent years on the waiting list. Under the Bush Administration, the number of new vouchers has fallen sharply; and

**WHEREAS**, landlords discriminate against tenants with Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. Federal law prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status and disability. In most states, landlords are permitted to discriminate against prospective tenants based on their source of income; and

**WHEREAS**, studies have shown families in need of housing gain greater access to decent, affordable housing when source of income discrimination is prohibited; and

**WHEREAS**, economically diverse communities are created by the wide acceptance of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and such communities have the resources to provide better schools, social services, job opportunities and are better able to help low income families break the cycle of poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, twelve states, (CA, CT, ME, MA, MN, NJ, ND, OK, OR, UT, VT, WI) have amended their laws to prohibit housing discrimination based on the source of income. Other jurisdictions that have similar enactments are Montgomery County, MD, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D C.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP advocates to add, “source of income” to the list of unlawful bases for discrimination in the sale or rental of housing under the Fair Housing Act (i.e. Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968); and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP strengthen existing campaigns, such as the NAACP STOP Campaign and any other subsequent initiatives that support balance and diversity of content in the entertainment industry to create positive role models for young people and by demanding more African Americans and other people of color in decision making positions in the entertainment industry.

### **2. Anti-Discrimination Resolution in the Construction Industry**

**WHEREAS**, the construction industry has experienced considerable growth in

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building construction and or refurbishing, creating a boost in the industry's job market for contractors and subcontractors; and

**WHEREAS**, the disparity that exists in the awarding of contracts to local African-American building developers and contractors suggests discriminatory unethical practices in how these contracts are awarded; and

**WHEREAS**, the disparity that exists in the utilization of African-American trades people in public and private construction projects suggests discriminatory and unethical practices in how these jobs are awarded; and

**WHEREAS**, such practices have a devastating impact on the well-being of African American communities due to the lack of job training and job placement opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, the employment of local citizens would aid in lessening the unemployment and poverty that now exists in African American communities, and other communities of color that are economically depressed; and

**WHEREAS**, the awarding of contracts to African American contractors and sub-contractors would increase the amount of resources available to them and would assist in the uplifting of communities.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will monitor such practices that systematically exclude African American contractors and sub-contractors from consideration in the awarding of these contracts; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will advocate before local, state and federal policy-making bodies and appropriate governmental regulatory agencies for fairness for African-American contractors and sub-contractors by insisting on geographic or affirmative methods specifically bonding to ensure that contracts are awarded to African-American firms to address under-utilization and the expansion of economic opportunities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will insist on and work to secure prevailing and livable wages for construction jobs performed by contractors and/or sub-contractors performing work; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will advocate for the implementation of local hiring practices that include, (1) extensive and timely community outreach that ensures the widespread distribution of information concerning job availability, (2) the creation of a balanced workforce by recruiting more African Americans for apprenticeship and training programs and providing them with support programs to help ensure successful completion; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP calls on national, state and local banks, developers, other financial institutions and those public and private agencies and organized labor involved in the construction industry and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Labor and its office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs to affirmatively support these efforts and measures.

### **3. Support a National Minimum Wage Increase**

**WHEREAS**, there are currently more than 4.4 million households in this country that can be classified as “working poor.” A large percentage of these households are supported by individuals who work full time at minimum wage jobs and yet remain unable to rise above the government established poverty line. This issue is of central importance to the NAACP as a disproportionate number of minimum wage workers are racial and ethnic minority Americans, and

**WHEREAS**, a minimum wage is established by the government as the lowest, or minimum, amount that an employer may pay an employee living in a particular jurisdiction. A living wage is a term used by advocates to indicate a fair standard of financial self-sufficiency that should be expected by a person who works full time at a year round job. An income 30% above federally established poverty guidelines is often considered a living wage because it is the level at which a person is determined to no longer be in need of government assistance to provide essentials like food and healthcare to themselves and their family. A living wage ordinance is a bill passed at city level, like the one passed recently in Chicago, which usually applies only to workers in particular industries, and

**WHEREAS**, the federal minimum wage is currently set at \$5.15 an hour, but 24 states have passed legislation to raise wages above the federal minimum. Washington State has the highest state minimum wage at \$7.63. Dozens of cities have also implemented increases in the minimum wage which are often specific to particular industries (such as the recent living wage ordinance in Chicago which applies only to big box retailers such as Target and Wal-Mart), and

**WHEREAS**, Princeton economists David Card and Alan Krueger conducted a study on minimum wage increases in the fast food industry in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and found that an increase in minimum wage did not negatively impact fast food employment in these states. This research is widely cited by the Economic Policy Institute and other credible Think Tanks to support the notion that increases in minimum wage do not cause significant job loss or reduction of work hours for existing employees. Other researchers have found that companies paid for increases in wages through increased efficiency, reduction in spending for training and recruiting efforts and some loss of company profit. However, it is possible to find supporters on both sides of this issue, and

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**WHEREAS**, the federal minimum wage has held steady for a decade while the cost of living has increased. This means that the buying power of minimum wage workers has decreased dramatically in that time and the number of full-time workers living in poverty has increased. Campaigns to raise the minimum wage have also proven to be a catalyst for political activism in low-income communities. A study of living wage initiatives in Nevada and Florida by the community activist group ACORN, showed that living wage campaigns in those states resulted in the registration of record numbers of new low-income voters and motivated many “low-propensity” voters to make their voices heard at the polls, and

**WHEREAS**, at the current minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour, a worker who works 40 hours a week for 52 weeks a year earns \$10,712. This is almost \$2,000 below the 2003 poverty level for a family of 2 (a parent and a child).

- The Economic Policy Institute estimates that an additional 8.3 million workers would benefit indirectly from a minimum wage increase. This means that workers who currently earn close to \$7.25 would likely see a pay increase if federal minimum wage increased.
- An increase of \$2.10 over two years adds \$4,400 to the income of a full-time, year-round worker. Minimum wage workers need an aggressive approach to increasing their salaries.
- The number of full-time workers living in poverty has increased over the last decade as the minimum wage has held steady and the real value of the minimum wage has actually declined because of inflation. This shows an increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of the few, which is unacceptable in a country with the democratic ideals of the United States.
- Research indicates that raising the minimum wage has not had a negative impact on jobs, employment, or inflation. Rather, since the last increase in the minimum wage in 1996 and 1997, the economy has continued to grow.
- The benefits of an increase in the minimum wage are limited if the increase is spread over too many years. The buying power of a wage increase decreases each year as the cost of living and expenses such as energy, housing, education and food continue to climb.
- An increase in the minimum wage should not harm some of our nation’s most vulnerable hard workers: those who depend on tips to survive. Minimum wage ballot initiatives and legislation should not count tips against the fair minimum wage for these jobs.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports the passage of legislation that increases the minimum wage from \$5.15 to a minimum of \$7.25

and ties to the Consumer Price Index in order to keep real wages in line with increases in the cost of living.

**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP National Office in coordination with state and local units urge local, state, and federal elected representatives to sponsor minimum wage legislation that raises the minimum wage in their respective localities, work in coalition with labor unions, faith groups and other community groups to support current initiatives at the state and local level and, if there is not a current initiative to support, work to get a living wage initiative on the ballot.

## LEGAL

### 1. National Call to Action to End Illegal Federal Government Spying on American Citizens

**WHEREAS**, in 1978 Congress enacted, and President Jimmy Carter signed, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), Pub. L. 95-511, Title I, 92 Stat. 1976 (Oct. 25, 1978) in response to revelations in 1976 of the federal government's widespread abuse of surveillance and intelligence powers against Americans during the Cold War; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP was investigated for more than twenty-five years because it might have "had connections with" the Communist Party—despite the fact that nothing was ever found to rebut a report from the very first year of the investigation that the NAACP had a "strong tendency" to "steer clear of Communist activities." *Senate Select Comm. to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans (Book III), S. Rep. No. 94-755, at 4-5 (1976)(Church Committee Book III)*; and

**WHEREAS**, during that time, the government gathered extensive inside information about NAACP lobbying and advocacy efforts through electronic surveillance, *id.* at 232, while the FBI's extensive reports on the NAACP were shared with military intelligence, *id.* at 81 n. 350; and

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**WHEREAS**, warrant less surveillance prompted the government to take actions that undermined the NAACP and its work. For example, an FBI memo submitted to President Dwight D. Eisenhower containing misstatements about communist influence on the NAACP “reinforced the President’s inclination to passivity on civil rights legislation.” *Id.* at 251; and

**WHEREAS**, other targets for FBI and/or Army intelligence collection included Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Council for Racial Equality (CORE), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Urban League, the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (ADL) and other activist organizations. *Id.* at 105, 167; and

**WHEREAS**, FISA prohibited any electronic surveillance of Americans for national security purposes except pursuant to carefully calibrated statutory protections; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2001 President Bush authorized a new classified National Security Agency (NSA) program under which that agency intercepts international telephone and Internet communications by American citizens and residents without judicial warrant or other judicial sign-off; and

**WHEREAS**, the First Amendment provides that “Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or the press;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Fourth Amendment provides that “the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized;” and

**WHEREAS**, individuals have a constitutionally protected privacy interest in the content of their telephone calls. *Katz v. United States*, 389 U.S. 347 (1967); and

**WHEREAS**, FISA is the statute that governs NSA’s spying and it authorizes the government to conduct surveillance in certain situations without meeting all of the requirements of the Fourth Amendment that apply under criminal law. Instead, FISA requires that an independent FISA Court oversee that surveillance; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the objectives of the NAACP is to “educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof.” Constitution of the NAACP, Article II; and

**WHEREAS**, without immediate corrective action, the same pattern of abuse will reoccur.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP, in partnership with organizations and persons of like mind, urge the President, and Congress in its oversight role, to take such actions as to ensure that any government program of spying is structured and implemented in a manner that complies with constitutional protections of privacy, speech and association, as well as protections against unreasonable searches and seizures.

## **2. National Call to Action to Reduce Judicial and Regulatory Circumvention of Title VI of Civil Rights Act**

**WHEREAS**, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. Section 2000d, was enacted by Congress to prohibit discrimination based on race or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, Title VI empowers Federal agencies to refuse funding to and terminate funding for any recipients found in violation of Title VI regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, federal courts had also allowed plaintiffs to litigate Title VI claims, including claims based on alleged violations of discriminatory “impact” or “effect” regulations of federal agencies charged with enforcing Title VI; and

**WHEREAS**, in *Sandoval v. Alexander*, 532 U.S. 275 (2001), the Supreme Court closed an important door to enforcement of Title VI “impact” or “effect” regulations, by reinterpreting Title VI to no longer provide a private right of action or private cause of action (*i.e.*, the right of a person to file a lawsuit) to enforce such “impact” or “effect” regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Supreme Court since *Sandoval* now allows a private right of action to enforce Title VI only where the plaintiff can demonstrate “intent” to discriminate, a more onerous evidentiary burden; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court rationalized its position in *Sandoval*, in part, by arguing that Title VI establishes an optional administrative enforcement scheme in which a complainant can still obtain enforcement of Title VI by filing an administrative complaint with the federal agency or department providing the financial assistance to the state, local or nonprofit entity; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a problem with some federal agencies properly enforcing their Title VI regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, many individuals who believe they have been discriminated against based on their race or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance are unable to prove “intent” to discriminate and thus cannot sue, but they are also unable to obtain federal regulatory relief; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court indicated that Title VI did not clearly and unambiguously indicate the intent of Congress to allow a private right of action to enforce regulatory impact or effect standards; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the NAACP, in partnership with organizations and individuals of like mind, issue a national call to Congress to pass a bill, and on the President to sign such bill, to clarify Title VI to so indicate Congressional intent to authorize a private right of action to enforce regulatory “impact” or “effect” regulations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NAACP, in partnership with organizations and individuals of like mind, issue a national call to the President, and to Congress in its oversight capacity, to take such measures necessary to ensure that all federal regulatory agencies enforce their Title VI regulations evidencing an “impact” or “effect” standard.

## LEGISLATIVE

### 1. NAACP Supports Comprehensive Approach to Assisting Ex-Offenders Re-entering Society and Reducing Recidivism

**WHEREAS**, the United States is the world's leader in incarceration with 2.1 million people currently in the nation's prisons or jails; and

**WHEREAS**, this record number of prisoners, a 500% increase over the past thirty years can be directly tied to the “War on Drugs” and the political popularity of mandatory minimum sentences; and

**WHEREAS**, as of 2005, 1 out of every 136 Americans was incarcerated in prison or jail; the numbers are much worse if you are a racial or ethnic minority American – one in 8 African American males (12%) aged 25 – 29 was in prison or jail in 2005 as were 1 in 26 Hispanic males (4%) in the same age group. Comparatively, 1 in 59 Caucasian males in the 25 – 29 age group were incarcerated in 2005 (1.7%); and

**WHEREAS**, in 2005, 40% of prison inmates were African American and 20% were Hispanic; and

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**WHEREAS**, it is preposterous that many states have often been forced to choose between building new prisons or new schools, because of the federal mandatory minimum sentencing laws. Worse still, the country has created a growing felon caste, now more than 16 million strong and growing, of felons and ex-felons, who are often driven back to prison by policies that make it impossible for them to find jobs, housing or education, and

**WHEREAS**, of the 2.2 million persons housed in prisons today--an average annual increase of 3 percent in the past decade--97 percent will be released into the community; and

**WHEREAS**, over 600,000 prisoners are released each year, and given the disproportionate number of whom are African American and Hispanic, this is having dramatic and disparate repercussions on particular neighborhoods and communities of color; and

**WHEREAS**, states spend an average of approximately \$22,000 annually to house a prisoner, and taxpayers spend more than \$60 billion annually on corrections, more than six times the \$9 billion spent 25 years ago; and

**WHEREAS**, up to two-thirds of all released prisoners nationwide end up back in prison within just 3 years; and

**WHEREAS**, there are many reasons for this high recidivism rate – many ex-offenders can't manage to find and keep effective jobs to care for themselves and/or their families; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result, many ex-offenders become a drain on their families, their communities and the social services system; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result, they are more likely to resort to criminal activities and to perpetuate poverty and family dysfunction; and

**WHEREAS**, the current system still fails to adequately support the essential programs for health, housing, substance abuse, education, and employment that ex-offenders need to reintegrate into their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, upon release from prison, ex-offenders need to find safe, adequate, and affordable housing. 15 to 27 percent of prisoners expect to go to homeless shelters upon release. Figures published by the Volunteers of America in 2004 indicated that two-thirds of former prisoners who lacked adequate housing had committed crimes within 1 year of their release, compared to only one-quarter of those who had housing. Another recent study released by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service showed that 30-50 percent of parolees in urban areas such as Los Angeles and San Francisco are homeless, which compounds the profound hardship that re-integration already places on urban communities; and

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**WHEREAS**, upon release from prison, ex-offenders also need job training and, often, a basic education. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that only 46 percent of incarcerated individuals have a high school diploma or its equivalent. The limited availability of education and vocational training programs exacerbates the problem. Only 5 percent of jail jurisdictions offer vocational training, and 33 percent of jurisdictions offer no educational or vocational training at all. Research shows what a profound effect such programs have on decreasing recidivism rates. Recidivism for inmates who participate in prison education, vocation, and work programs have been found to be 20 to 60 percent lower than for non-participants. The Federal Bureau of Prisons found a 33-percent drop in recidivism among Federal prisoners who participated in vocational training; and

**WHEREAS**, upon release from prison, many ex-offenders also need mental health services, such as substance abuse counseling. Nearly a quarter of State prisoners and jail inmates with a mental health problem had served three or more prior incarcerations, yet two-thirds of State prisoners do not receive mental health treatment. In substance abuse treatment, more than two-thirds of State prisoners have been regular drug users at some point during their lives, and one-third had committed the crime for which they were imprisoned while under the influence of drugs. According to a recent Bureau of Justice Statistics report, of the approximately 50 percent of prisoners who met the criteria for drug dependence or abuse, less than half participated in drug treatment programs since their admission to prison; and

**WHEREAS**, the nearly 100,000 children who make up the juvenile prison population are among the most vulnerable and defenseless group in our criminal justice system. Too often, we fail to protect them. Many juvenile ex-offenders have learning disabilities and need substance abuse and mental health treatment. Many are incarcerated in overcrowded facilities, and these boys and girls are among the most likely to be sent back to prison or jail; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2006, the Department of Health and Human Services reported that 2 million children nationwide have an incarcerated parent. Studies suggest that these children are seven times more likely to end up in prison themselves. One study found that as many as 1 in 10 will have been incarcerated before reaching adulthood; and

**WHEREAS**, at the current rate of incarceration 3 in 10 of the next generation of African American males can expect to be disenfranchised at some point in their lifetime.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports and shall advocate in favor of legislation to assist the positive reentry of ex-offenders into society and to remove barriers from successful reentry; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP strongly supports legislation that is comprehensive in nature and addresses issues including housing, education, job training and placement, mental health and substance abuse services for ex-offenders; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that at the federal level the NAACP supports, along with other legislation, the *Second Chance Act*, H.R. 1593 introduced by Congressman Danny Davis (IL) and others and S. 1060, introduced by Senator Joseph Biden (DE) and others; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports legislative efforts to permanently expunge or seal the records of ex-offenders involved in non-violent offenses who have successfully reentered society after successful completion of their sentence.

## **2. NAACP Supports Legislation to Allow Workers Paid Sick Leave to Recover from their Own Illness or Care for a Sick Family Member**

**WHEREAS**, in the United States today, nearly half (48%) of private sector workers do not have a single paid sick day to use for themselves to care for a family member; and

**WHEREAS**, 94 million hard-working Americans do not have a single paid sick day they can use to care for a sick child or parent; and

**WHEREAS**, in 78% of today's families, both parents work for pay -- and the typical couple in America now works close to 90 hours a week; and

**WHEREAS**, nearly half (49%) of working mothers miss work when a child becomes sick with a common illness, and women are more likely to have low-wage jobs that do not offer paid sick days; and

**WHEREAS**, more than three out of every four low-wage workers (79%) do not have a single paid sick day for themselves; and

**WHEREAS**, half of all low-wage working parents report losing pay to stay home and care for a sick child or being forced to leave their sick children home alone; and

**WHEREAS**, a disproportionate number of workers without paid sick leave work with the public; 78% of food and hotel workers do not have a single paid sick day, nor do many of the men and women employed in child care centers, retail establishments and nursing homes. When these people go to work sick, their colleagues and all others with whom they come in contact face an increased risk of illness; and

**WHEREAS**, too often workers are often forced to choose between their health and their jobs, parents are often forced to choose between their children and their employers and adults are often forced to choose between their parents and their paychecks.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the NAACP supports legislation, The Healthy Families Act (S. 910, introduced by Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts and H.R. 1542 introduced by Congresswoman DeLauro of Connecticut) which guarantees full-time workers at least seven paid sick days a year and part-time workers a pro-rata amount of sick days to recover from their own illness or care for a sick family member.

### **3. NAACP Opposes Trying and Sentencing Youth as Adults**

**WHEREAS**, policies and practices providing “adult time for adult crime” are often harmful—rather than helpful—to community safety, as evidenced by research demonstrating that prosecuting juveniles in the adult criminal system increases, rather than decreases, the likelihood that they will re-offend, as compared with handling them in the juvenile justice system; and

**WHEREAS**, youth of color are disproportionately represented in cases sent to adult court—as shown in 18 of the largest court jurisdictions where 82% of juvenile cases filed in adult court involved youth of color; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 250,000 offenders under the age of 18 are sent each year to adult criminal courts across the United States, including an estimated 218,000 excluded from juvenile court jurisdiction, not because of the severity of their crimes, nor because they are habitual violent offenders, but because states have lowered the age of adulthood in the criminal code; and

**WHEREAS**, 75% of youth under age 18 sent to adult facilities will be released by the age of 22 and most will have been denied adequate education, mental health treatment, drug treatment and employment skills training; and

**WHEREAS**, trying and sentencing youth in adult court is not reserved for the most serious, chronic and violent juvenile offenders, but inappropriately includes more than half of the cases involving only nonviolent drug and property crimes; and

**WHEREAS**, there exist serious human rights concerns, as well as physical and emotional health concerns, when youth held in adult facilities are sexually assaulted five times more often, commit suicide eight times more often, and are assaulted with a weapon 50% more often than youth held in juvenile facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, research continues to establish and reaffirm that the adolescent brain—particularly the part that makes judgments, reins in impulsive behavior and engages in moral and ethical reasoning—is not fully developed until age 19 or 20, laying the foundation for laws that prohibit youth under age 18 from taking on major adult responsibilities such as voting, jury duty and military service; and

**WHEREAS**, the use of statutes or procedures that automatically exclude youth from the juvenile court without an assessment of individual circumstances deny them basic fairness.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the NAACP supports state and federal efforts to eliminate the practice of trying, sentencing and incarcerating youthful offenders in the adult system.

#### **4. NAACP Reiterates Support for Public Financing of House and Senate Campaigns**

**WHEREAS**, candidates for the US Senate and House of Representatives currently spend too much time courting big-money lobbyists and special interests; and

**WHEREAS**, in the last election, the cost of the top ten competitive Senate races averaged \$34 million per campaign – double what it was just four years ago; and

**WHEREAS**, one direct result of this race for campaign money is the perception by voters that candidates are too busy talking to Political Action Committees (PACs) or special interests to listen to their constituents; and

**WHEREAS**, public financing would allow candidates to stop having to spend so much time talking to special interests and allow them more time for listening to their potential constituents; and

**WHEREAS**, legislation has been introduced in the US House and US Senate which is based on working models in Maine and Arizona, and would create a voluntary system that gives candidates the option to stop spending time and resources attending fundraisers and dialing their “friends” for donations without risking a loss to a well-funded opponent. Under the legislation, entitled the *Fair Elections Now Act*, for those who choose to participate, fundraising would be limited to “seed money” in amounts of no more than \$100 per person to pay for campaign start-up costs. Participating candidates would also be required to show that they are serious contenders by raising qualifying contributions of \$5 each from a minimum number of state residents, based on the population of the state. Once they are able to prove their viability, candidates will then begin to receive money from the “Fair Election Fund.” The amount of money each candidate would receive would be based on the population of the state.

Candidates would also receive vouchers for a discount on television and radio time; and

**WHEREAS**, if enacted, the *Fair Elections Now Act* would restore the confidence of the voters that their federally elected officials were responsive to them. It would also allow candidates to spend less time talking to special interests and more time listening to their potential constituents.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports and will work towards the enactment of public funding of federal elections including the “*Fair Elections Now Act*” (S. 936 / H.R. 1614), introduced by Senator Richard Durbin (IL) and Congressman John Tierney (MA).

#### **5. NAACP Continues to Support Laws to Prevent Gun Violence and Increase Gun Safety Nationwide**

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP has a long and consistent policy in support of initiatives to end gun violence; and

**WHEREAS**, there are currently almost 200 million privately owned firearms in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, NAACP-supported initiatives would make it more difficult for people with questionable motives or diminished mental capacity to obtain firearms, both legally and illegally; and

**WHEREAS**, it is still much too easy for people with questionable motives or diminished mental capacity to obtain guns, either through legal or illegal means; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence continues to have a disparate impact on African American communities; although African Americans make up about 14% of the US population, 51% of all gun homicides are African Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans have a gun homicide rate more than 4 times the national average; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence has also had a tremendous impact on the youth of America; in 2004, nearly 8 children and teenagers, ages 19 and under, were killed with guns each and every day; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence also comes with a very high fiscal cost to the taxpayers of the United States; and

## 2007 Resolutions

**WHEREAS**, the average total cost of one gun crime can be as high as \$1.79 million, including medical treatment and the prosecution and imprisonment of the shooter; and

**WHEREAS**, medical costs of gun violence put a terrible burden on health service providers and governments. When indirect costs of gun violence - loss of productivity, mental health treatment and rehabilitation, legal and judicial costs - are figured in, gun violence costs the US over \$100 billion annually; and

**WHEREAS**, over 80% of the economic costs of treating firearm injuries are paid for by taxpayer dollars because the victims have no health insurance; and

**WHEREAS**, the assault weapons ban, which was signed into law in 1994, expired in September 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of inaction by the US House of Representatives and the President, assault weapons are again flooding our streets and neighborhoods and are being used to inflict the maximum amount of damage to lives and property with a minimal amount of energy on the part of the criminal; and

**WHEREAS**, the 1994 law prohibits the manufacture, sale and importation of new military-style semi-automatic assault weapons and rapid-fire ammunition magazines that hold more than 10 rounds; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the extreme threat assault weapons posed to police officers and public safety, the struggle for the ban was lead by the American law enforcement community; and

**WHEREAS**, the threat still exists: a 2003 study showed that almost 20% of the 211 law enforcement officers slain in the line of duty between Jan. 1, 1998 and Dec. 31, 2001 were killed with assault weapons.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP continues to support safe, sane and sensible gun safety legislative initiatives which would make it harder for people to obtain firearms, either through legal or illegal methods; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will support reinstatement of the 1994 Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, with a provision that makes it permanent.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP advocate to enact laws and/or strengthen existing state and federal laws aimed at those persons or interests that manufacture, sell, and distribute handguns and assault weapons within American communities.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP advocates a ban on the importation of handguns or of parts that are assembled into handguns in this country.

**6. NAACP Supports Legislative Initiatives to Make College More Affordable and Accessible to All Americans**

**WHEREAS**, in 1997, college graduates earned 1.7 times more than Americans with only a high school diploma; and

**WHEREAS**, over a lifetime, an individual with a college degree will earn more than \$1 million dollars than someone without their postsecondary degree; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the clear evidence that a college degree is a necessity for most Americans who want to get ahead, for years, college costs have risen at rates higher than inflation; and

**WHEREAS**, over the last 30 years, tuition at public 4-year colleges has increased by about 50%, and tuition at private 4-year colleges has increased by a whopping 110%. In 2003 the average costs were \$12,841 per year for students attending public colleges and universities, and \$27,677 per year for students at private colleges and universities; and

**WHEREAS**, given the importance of a college degree and the dramatic increase in the cost of obtaining a degree, federal financial student aid is perhaps more important now than ever before; and

**WHEREAS**, for most students financial aid makes a college education possible, even though it in 2005 covered less than 70% of the average student's college costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the importance of college financial aid is especially important to racial and ethnic minority students; 74% of African American college students, 69% of Hispanic college students and 60% of white college students were dependent on financial aid; and

**WHEREAS**, the typical student now graduates from college with \$17,500 in total federal student loan debt; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Senate Committee on Health, Education and Labor Pensions, as many as 400,000 potential college students are forced to delay or forgo attending college due to the cost; and

**WHEREAS**, for the past 15 years, Congress has not done much to help address the very real need for federal college assistance; and

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**WHEREAS**, on January 16, 2007, the full US House of Representatives passed legislation to reduce the interest rates on federal student loans by half over the next five years. Specifically, the legislation, *The College Student Relief Act of 2007* (H.R. 5), would cut interest rates on need-based federal loans for undergraduate students from its current rate of 6.8% to 3.4% by the year 2011. Once fully phased in, these cuts would save a typical borrower, with \$13,800 in need-based federal student loan debt, \$4,400 in savings over the life of the loan; and

**WHEREAS**, the bill is now in the Senate, where it is being considered as part of a larger bill, S. 359, which would also immediately increase the Maximum Pell Grant to \$5,100, make debt relief easier and a host of other initiatives which would make college more affordable; and

**WHEREAS**, it is estimated that half of the student-loan borrowers who would benefit from H.R. 5 and S. 359 have annual family incomes of between \$26,000 and \$68,000; and

**WHEREAS**, higher education opens the door to greater opportunities, and strengthens the country's economic well-being; nothing short of the American dream is at risk if we fail to make college more affordable.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP strongly supports H.R. 5, S. 359 and other legislative initiatives that would help potential college students afford their higher education; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP specifically calls on Congress to take actions to help students pay for college that will not result in the student ending his or her education with tremendous debt. This would include increasing Pell Grants and other programs that do not require repayment, as well as decreasing the amount of interest a student needs to pay on his or her loans and forgiving student loans in exchange for community, civic and social service.

### 7. Resolution Regarding Reasonable Efforts & Foster Care

**WHEREAS**, for several years the NAACP has been receiving numerous complaints about injustice, fraud and the destruction of families involved with Child Protective Services, Foster Care and the Child Welfare System; and

**WHEREAS**, the Child Welfare System costs \$22 Billion annually with California being the largest overall participant in and consumer of Child Welfare System funds; and

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**WHEREAS**, children of color are disproportionately represented in the Child Welfare System and African American children represent the largest segment within the Child Welfare System across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 established special adoption bonuses for a County to be paid \$4,000 - \$6,000 for each child whose family rights are terminated and the child is adopted out of the home; and

**WHEREAS**, several other monetary incentives from the Federal Government exist which reimburse state and county child welfare systems higher amounts to remove children from homes rather than equal or additional funds to keep a family intact; and

**WHEREAS**, state and federal laws governing child welfare mandate that, unless specific circumstances exist, "reasonable efforts" must be attempted or made to preserve the family and discourage the removal of children from the home; and

**WHEREAS**, from 1996 through 2003 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) has been billed at least \$1.2 billion which was used to reimburse local and state governments for providing out of home Foster Care.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the NAACP demands that Poverty should not be an indicator of abuse or neglect; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, Congress mandate that Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) be utilized to provide "reasonable efforts" to families and avoid the destruction of the family; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, the NAACP urges Congress to promulgate a set of definitions and standards of what constitutes reasonable efforts that all states must comply with; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT**, Congress be called upon to pass legislation which mandates proof be submitted to jurisdictional courts that "reasonable efforts" have been offered or attempted for a family to avoid the removal of children from their home.

### **8. Protecting Whistleblowers In America**

**WHEREAS**, The First Amendment protects speech on matters of public concern; and

**WHEREAS**, employees are often in the best position to know what ails the agencies for which they work; and

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**WHEREAS**, the current federal and, where applicable, state whistleblowers protection laws do not adequately protect employee whistleblowers; and

**WHEREAS**, the Congress of the United States has recently adopted realistic procedures necessary to protect employee whistleblowers; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress has made no effort to protect government employees who report misconduct, fraud and corruption, they still have not extended full protection to truth tellers; and

**WHEREAS**, to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the United States government, and the effective enforcement of federal laws, employee whistleblowers must be adequately protected; and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP advocate that Congressional and Senate Committee hearings be held to discuss the protections that whistleblowers are lacking, and no employer or authority over employers or contractors, including, but not limited to, contractors, public or private corporations, subcontractors or agents of an employer, may discharge, demote, harass, blacklist or discriminate against any employee because that employee disclosed what the employee reasonably believes constitutes a violation of a law or a public health and safety requirement; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports the whistleblower provisions found in H.R. 1317 and H.R. 5112.

### **9. NAACP Supports Myriad of Federal Legislative Initiatives to Fight the Emergency of Global Disease and Extreme Poverty**

**WHEREAS**, every three seconds a child dies from extreme poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, 1 billion people around the world live on less than \$1 a day; and

**WHEREAS**, every year, 10 million children die before their fifth birthday – that's one every three seconds – nearly all of them from preventable causes. Also, more than 500,000 mothers die each year from complications during child birth, and tens of millions more suffer from pregnancy related illnesses and injuries; and

**WHEREAS**, 12 million children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Africa and that number is expected to climb to 18 million by 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, education is a powerful investment we can make to fight poverty, yet worldwide over 77 million children are not enrolled in primary education programs, more than half of whom are girls; and

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**WHEREAS**, over one billion people lack access to clean water and 2.6 billion do not have access to basic sanitation. Every 15 seconds, a child dies from problems caused by lack of clean water; and

**WHEREAS**, for decades, many impoverished countries were spending billions of dollars each year repaying debts to donor countries and international financial institutions. Many of these loans were given for political reasons during the Cold War to prop up particular governments, and in many cases, were wasted by corrupt and unaccountable regimes. These large debts became a serious impediment to poverty reduction and economic development. Countries began taking on new loans to repay old ones; and

**WHEREAS**, for the world's most impoverished countries, the cost of debt overshadows their ability to provide access to clean water, education and basic healthcare. Some countries spent as much as 25-30% of their annual budgets servicing their debt, more than was spent on education and healthcare combined; and

**WHEREAS**, for every dollar African countries receive in aid, they still pay out \$2.30 in debt service; and

**WHEREAS**, women's share of the labor force is increasing in almost all regions of the world. However, although 60% of farm workers in Africa are women, they receive less than 1 percent of the total credit available to agriculture. Despite the key role women play in developing countries, women tend to work in the lowest paid sectors, have less stable incomes, work longer hours, have less access to training and education, and have fewer economic opportunities than men; and

**WHEREAS**, programs to treat these problems are relatively inexpensive; AIDS drugs can now cost as little as \$1 a day; a bed net can save a child's life for 5 years by preventing the contraction of malaria and costs only \$5; you can put a child in school for a month for \$13; a well provides clean, safe drinking water for 20 years at a cost of only \$20 a person; and

**WHEREAS**, increasing U.S. efforts to provide for basic needs like health, education, clean water and food would transform the futures of an entire generation in the world's poorest countries; and

**WHEREAS**, debt cancellation, making trade fairer, and anti-corruption measures in a comprehensive package to help Africa and poor countries everywhere beat global disease and extreme poverty would also have a tremendous impact on future generations globally; and

**WHEREAS**, international development assistance reflects the best American tradition of compassion, generosity, and helping others help themselves; and

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**WHEREAS**, only 1.2% of our Nation's federal budget is currently allocated for international affairs, which includes diplomacy and development funding. Less than ½ is used to alleviate extreme poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, America's international affairs funding is 17% less today than it was during the height of the Cold War, yet the current global challenges are far more complex; and

**WHEREAS**, by contributing our proportionate share – roughly 1% of the U.S. Federal budget - to an effective partnership with the world's nations, we can help put 77 million children into grade school; prevent the death of 5.4 million children from poverty-related illnesses and save 400,000 women from dying in childbirth each year; provide clean water to an additional 450 million people and basic sanitation to 700 million around the globe; and save 16,000 lives a day by fighting HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and

**WHEREAS**, directed to honest governments, private charities and faith-based organizations, this support would provide the tools and resources to really make a difference; and

**WHEREAS**, American efforts, where undertaken, are already paying off. Thanks to the leadership role the U.S. has taken in supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, as of December 2006, insecticide-treated bed nets were provided to more than 18 million families, an increase of 135% over the past year. These simple, inexpensive bed nets prevent the spread of malaria, a deadly disease, particularly among children; and

**WHEREAS**, by increasing our efforts, we will not only save the lives of millions of people – we will also transform our image globally. It will increase our national security, protect our economy and build a better, safer world for us all; and

**WHEREAS**, as a member of the ONE Campaign to Make Poverty History, the NAACP is actively engaged in the fight against global disease and extreme poverty.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports federal legislation and initiatives to fight global disease particularly global HIV/AIDS prevention strategies including medically based prevention strategies like condom distribution and medically supervised syringe exchange programs to also combat the rise in HIV/AIDS by drug addicted persons and extreme poverty; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP strongly supports the *Jubilee Act*, which is expected to be introduced in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress later this year, which calls on the U.S. Treasury to support 100% cancellation of bilateral and multilateral debts for those countries that need debt relief to meet the Millennium

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Development Goals; calls for an audit of other outstanding debt claims, to determine the odious and illegitimate origins of impoverished country debts; prohibits specific structural adjustment conditions including the imposition of user fees on health and education and mandated privatization of water; contains a provision that governments should allocate 20% of their budgets on social services and development, including education and health care; and finances debt cancellation through the IMF and World Bank's existing resources to the extent possible; supports responsible lending practices to make it impossible for future funds to sue countries with insurmountable debt; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports legislation introduced by Senators Clinton (NY) and Smith (OR) (S. 1259) and Congresswoman Lowey (NY) and Congressman Shays (CT) (H.R. 2092) known as the "*Education for All Act*" which would authorize additional funding for universal basic education – tied to strong standards of accountability and performance – to the tune of \$1 billion in fiscal year 2008, and growing to \$3 billion by fiscal year 2012; prioritize funding for eliminating school fees and expanding access to education, training teachers and building infrastructure, promoting civic education and life skills training and supporting initiatives that reach the most disadvantaged populations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NAACP supports the *Global Resources and Opportunities for Women to Thrive Act* (GROWTH Act), to be introduced in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress later this year by Congresswomen Lowey (NY) and Ros-Lehitenin (FL), which proposes important change to U.S. international assistance and trade programs to prioritize economic opportunities for women living in poverty worldwide and promote women's ability to start and grow businesses through continued support for women's enterprises after the initial microcredit loan, so their businesses will grow and employ other women; enhance women's land and property rights so they can use their assets as collateral for loans, even prove ownership rights if they need compensation in the event of a disaster; increase women's access to better employment and improve wages and working conditions for jobs dominated by women by increasing women's skills and informing them of their workplace legal rights, and ensure that the benefits of trade agreements reach poor women in developing countries through programs like trade capacity building and training for women entrepreneurs; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NAACP supports the *Global Child Survival Act*, which is expected to be introduced by Congresswoman McCollum (MN) and Congressman Shays (CT) in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress later this year. This important legislation would double current funding for child survival and maternal health programs, require an integrated U.S. strategy for improving child and maternal health, and establish guidelines for child survival programs. With an increase in funding and coordination, children and mothers would receive interventions like vaccinations, antibiotics, and vitamin A that can make a difference between life and death in developing countries; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP supports improvements and reforms in America's trade rules, the US commodity programs and strengthening US international food aid so people in poor countries can have the chance to earn their way out of poverty. These changes can be made in the reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Specifically, the NAACP is calling for changes to current policy to: provide a transition for American farmers to alternative forms of support that are more beneficial and equitable and do not distort trade in ways that fuel hunger and poverty in other countries, strengthen international food aid in ways that encourage local food security and increase international food aid to ensure the first Millennium Development Goal of reducing hunger by one-half is achieved by 2015.

## **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

### **1. Resolution in Support of Veterans Transitioning from the War in Iraq-Afghanistan back into our Communities**

**WHEREAS**, over one million veterans, men and women, of the United States armed Forces, have served in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom since the attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11/2001 in response to the War on terror declared by President George Bush, Jr.; and

**WHEREAS**, over 3400 veterans of the United States Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves have died in service to this country in Iraq and Afghanistan, 10% of whom were Black veterans, while over 22,000 have been severely injured or wounded and many of the 550,000 have incurred other disabilities, mental disorders, and stress; and

**WHEREAS**, many veterans often face bureaucratic obstacles and barriers in the process of being medically discharged from active duty under the Dept. of Defense (DOD) into the Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

**WHEREAS**, the number of veterans waiting for their first medical appointment in the veterans' health care system has doubled in the last year to 30,475 veterans; a 400% increase since 2004; and

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**WHEREAS**, the VA claims processing system for rating service connected disabilities is seriously backlogged, causing a veteran to have to wait a minimum of 6 months before they can receive any monetary compensation for their disability; and

**WHEREAS**, veterans returning from tours of duty overseas face dismal employment prospects due to false perceptions that all veterans are suffering from mental disorders like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and employers who want to minimize the risk of hiring a veteran who may be recalled to active duty in a few months; and

**WHEREAS**, more veterans and their families have increasingly been seeking counseling services to help counter the stress and disabilities incurred from military service during wartime and multiple deployments; and

**WHEREAS**, over 200,000 veterans, including some veterans from the War in Iraq, on any given night in this country are homeless, due to insufficient income, no family or community support, lack of affordable housing, substance abuse and/or alcoholism due to physical disabilities and mental disorder, often war-related; while Black male veterans are disproportionately more homeless and unemployed than any other ethnic group; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Defense and most of the civilian agencies continue to fall woefully short of meeting the mandatory requirement to award a minimum of 3% of all contracts to businesses owned by service disabled veterans as a part of the overall effort to provide entrepreneurship opportunities as a rehabilitative alternative.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP strongly encourage the public and its members to urge government leaders and Congress to alleviate barriers to treatment, resources, and rehabilitation necessary for our veterans of the Armed Forces, National Guard, and the Reserves, returning from wars in foreign lands, to re-enter society as close to or better than they were when they left.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirm its 2004 resolution to organize workshops to educate its members about the issues pertaining to all veterans, especially Black veterans, at each NAACP National Convention and State Conference Convention.

**EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### 1. The Road Home Program Application Deadline is July 31, 2007

**WHEREAS**, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita contributed to the overall devastation of communities throughout the State of Louisiana; and

**WHEREAS**, the kind of devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita has never been seen before; and

**WHEREAS**, never before in America's history has any state been forced to rebuild so many homes so quickly; and

**WHEREAS**, 780,000 Louisiana residents were temporarily displaced from their homes and evacuated to communities throughout these United States; and

**WHEREAS**, 123,000 homes and 82,000 rental units were destroyed throughout the State of Louisiana; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), its members and its units across the country have come to the aid of Louisiana residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of the State of Louisiana has created a housing recovery program implemented by the State of Louisiana for its residents through homeowner eligibility grants, from funding made available by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through its Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) funds; and

**WHEREAS**, eligible homeowners have until July 31, 2007 to submit an application; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of persons still displaced by hurricane Katrina and Rita were renters and not property owners and are not covered by the Louisiana Road Home Program application deadline of July 31, 2007.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP encourage its members and units to serve as an advocate and informational source to direct Louisiana residents and homeowners to make applications to The Road Home Program to determine their eligibility; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that they are made aware of the application deadline of July 31, 2007; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that all Units of the NAACP take up the action alert in support of HR1227 which passed the U.S. House of Representatives in March 2007 and needs to pass the Senate in order for the majority of those displaced to exercise their right to return to their homes in the Gulf Coast Region.

## **2. NAACP Supports the Severance of United States' Government Relations with the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma Until Such Time as the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma Restores Full Tribal Citizenship to the Cherokee Freedmen**

**WHEREAS**, on March 3, 2007, operating under an unapproved Constitution, the Cherokee Nation held an election to remove the Cherokee Freedmen from the Cherokee Nation. In a vote of less than 4 percent of the total Cherokee Nation population, the voters elected to remove Cherokee Freedmen not of particular blood rolls from the Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, in the 1830s, members of the Cherokee Nation were removed from their lands in the southeastern United States and forced to migrate to Oklahoma along a route known as the Trail of Tears. Among those persons forced to migrate were the Black slaves of Cherokees, free Blacks married to Cherokees, and the children of mixed-race families, known now as the 'Black Cherokees'; and

**WHEREAS** in 1861, the Cherokee Nation executed a treaty with the Confederate States of America, thereby severing its relations with the United States Government. Members of the Cherokee Nation held positions in the Congress and military of the Confederate States of America and waged war against the United States during the Civil War; and

**WHEREAS**, following the Civil War, the United States reestablished relations with the Cherokee Nation through the Treaty of 1866. The Treaty of 1866 declared that the Black Cherokees, also known as 'Cherokee Freedmen', were to be made citizens of the Cherokee Nation and to have all the rights of Cherokees; and

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**WHEREAS**, the manner in which the Cherokee Nation is conducting the relationship between the United States and the tribal entity is not in the best interest of the United States Government or citizens of the Cherokee Nation, and it violates existing treaties and laws governing the relationship between the United States Government and the Cherokee Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, current efforts of the Cherokee Nation to expel members of the Cherokee Freedmen from the tribal rolls and abolish Department of the Interior oversight, are being pursued in violation of the treaty rights extended to the Cherokee Freedmen in a treaty agreement between the United States and Cherokee Nation in the 1866 Treaty, as well as, in violation of Freedmen citizenship under the federally approved Cherokee Nation constitution of 1975; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP offers to facilitate a fair resolution to the claims of disenfranchised Cherokee Freedmen by means of education and fact finding to address the history and current impact of Cherokee Nation membership/citizenship and promote understanding of tribal sovereignty and the “trust responsibility” of the United States to Native Americans, strongly supports H.R. 2824, legislation introduced by Congresswoman Dianne Watson (CA) and 11 of her Congressional colleagues requiring that the United States government sever all ties and financial support with the Cherokee nation of Oklahoma until the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma reverses its decision and once again recognizes the full rights of the Cherokee Freedmen, or Black Cherokees, and gives them full rights as members of the tribe.

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## 1. Support of the Jena 6

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Jena, were granted a charter in May of 2007 forming the LaSalle Parish Branch of the NAACP in order to fight against racial discrimination in the trial of the Jena 6 and other acts of discrimination in this rural Louisiana community; and

**WHEREAS**, the NAACP has been informed of the plight of six African American teenagers in Jena, Louisiana, involving their lengthy pre-trial incarceration

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because of excessive bonds on attempted murder charges for allegedly fighting with one of their white schoolmates; and

**WHEREAS**, the fight was the culmination of a series of racial incidents at Jena High School, starting when white students responded to black students sitting under the “white tree,” where white students would sit, by hanging three nooses from the tree; and

**WHEREAS**, the Jena High School principal found that three white students were responsible and recommended expulsion; and

**WHEREAS**, the white superintendent of schools overruled the principal and gave the students a three day suspension referring to the noose incident as a youthful stunt; and

**WHEREAS**, the black students organized a sit-in under the tree to protest the light suspension given to the noose-hanging white students; and

**WHEREAS**, subsequently the District Attorney came to the Jena High School with law enforcement officers to address the school assembly and threatened the protesting students by allegedly saying if they continue to protest about this innocent prank, “I can be your best friend or your worst enemy. I can take away your lives with a stroke of my pen”; and

**WHEREAS**, one of these teenagers was recently convicted by an all-white jury of aggravated second degree battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated second degree battery based upon kicking someone with a tennis shoe under highly questionable trial circumstances involving jury selection and trial tactics; and

**WHEREAS**, this case reflects a national trend involving disparate treatment of African Americans within the United States criminal justice system; and

**WHEREAS**, these teenagers could potentially receive over 20 years in prison for these charges for a total of over 120 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the members of the LaSalle Parish Branch have requested the support of the NAACP in demonstrating to the local community that they are not alone in their fight for equal justice for the Jena 6; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP hereby passes this resolution expressing support and solidarity for the Jena 6, their families, and the LaSalle Parish Branch of the NAACP; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will demand the United States Department of Justice investigate and monitor the trial of these African American teenagers for any violations.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP will demand the United States Department of Education investigate allegations of discrimination against the Jena High School.

## EDUCATION

### 1. NAACP Responds to Supreme Court School Desegregation Cases

**WHEREAS**, on June 28, 2007 in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* and *Crystal D. Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education*, the United States Supreme Court established the possibility that public school systems' race conscience student assignment plans may be constitutionally permissible under the right circumstances; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court determined that remedying the effects of past intentional racial discrimination is still a compelling interest; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court acknowledged that if there is a finding of racial discrimination, then there is a compelling government interest in eliminating the effects of past intentional discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, we agree with Justice Kennedy's concurring opinion that "the plurality opinion is too dismissive of government's legitimate interest in ensuring that all people have equal opportunity regardless of their race."; and

**WHEREAS**, we further agree with Justice Kennedy's opinion when he said, "...in administering public schools, it is permissible to consider the schools' racial makeup and adopt general policies to encourage a diverse student body, one aspect of which is its racial composition."; and

**WHEREAS**, unfortunately, a fractured United States Supreme Court upheld 5-4 that the Jefferson County, Kentucky, and the Seattle, Washington, district plans failed to satisfy the Court's standard and their plans were therefore struck down as unconstitutional; and

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**WHEREAS**, the recent decisions also reiterated and expanded to K -12 earlier decisions that race cannot be used **solely** as a factor when determining students' school assignments; and

**WHEREAS**, unfortunately, the Supreme Court appears to be saying that while race-conscience plans may still be permissible under the right circumstances, school districts must first try race-neutral approaches; and

**WHEREAS**, public school integration is perhaps more important today than it has ever been; diversity in education can only help our Nation as we try to compete in a global economy; and

**WHEREAS**, *Brown v. Board of Education's* promise of inclusive, integrated, high-quality public schools for our Nation's children is in decline; after an initial period of resistance, our country made real progress in the integration of our Nation's public schools. Unfortunately, this trend has shown a disturbing reversal; America's public schools are now more segregated than they were in 1970; in fact, they are as segregated today as they were in the 1960's. Today more than 70% of racial and ethnic minority students nationwide currently attend public schools that remain segregated and under-funded; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NAACP shall work with its branches, allies and local school districts to develop plans that promote our goal of racial integration and racial and ethnic diversity; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP encourages all school districts across the Nation to carefully examine existing integration policies and, where necessary, work to improve and amend them to ensure that they meet constitutional muster rather than abandon them; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NAACP shall continue to advocate for the nomination and confirmation of fair minded, balanced judges to the Supreme Court as well as federal judges throughout the United States;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in states where there is a constitutional requirement for every child to receive a sound basic education, NAACP Units would seek to show how resegregation with all the accompanying negative variable inherently violate this constitutional right; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NAACP reaffirms its long standing advocacy for quality integrated education for all children, and shall also continue to use its local, state, regional and national resources to address the systemic racism that compounds the need for school integration.