

Our National Director serving as liaison to the Department of Justice, Dr. Amos Brown has been working tirelessly to express both concern and outrage to the powers that be regarding the Supreme Court's ruling on Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act. As information, section 4 was the enforcement mechanism used to ensure that discriminatory methods towards voting rights would be struck down and they were. But with the Supreme Court effectively striking down section 4 it eliminates the enforcement mechanism. Because of that one ruling, now North Carolina has passed legislation that will restrict minority voting. Law makers in other states like: Texas, Mississippi, South Carolina and Florida are looking to do the same.

I implore all State Presidents and District Moderators to appoint people to serve as Watch dogs on a Voting Rights Commission. We need people in every city, every State and every Hamlet to note any changes in voting language or any changes in voting procedures and/or any changes in voting practices and we report the same. We need an all hands on deck approach to this challenge because this challenge, if we go to sleep, this challenge, if we stand on the sidelines, this challenge will set people of color back to a time when our forefathers were considered 3/5 of a man. We must get fully engaged in this effort- all of us and we must do this now.

To all of our State Presidents, for the sake of our constituents you must get more involved here. The last 2 National Elections we have done a great job and now we must expand our reach to continue focusing on National elections but also State wide and local elections. We need people noting even changes in the way people are required to vote for members of the Board of education. Small changes in local elections can mushroom into big changes in State and National elections. The subject matter of Voting Rights will be an ongoing discussion and cause for collaboration. Therefore expect to hear more regarding our developing strategies to combat this disenfranchisement effort. Brothers and Sisters with our vigilance and our due diligence any and all misguided efforts to suppress and even to eliminate voting rights will not work.

Our National Director to Health and Human Services (HHS), Dr. Michael Minor and his team continues to work the Pilot Health Initiative led by Morehouse School of Medicine. The Pilot consists of some 9 participating churches in 3 jurisdictions grounded in improving health deficiencies in the African American Community. State Presidents you are highly encouraged to appoint a State Director specific to Health and all other disciplines. It will serve you and your constituents well as you participate in the information exchange.

Our National Director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Dr. Ivory Lyles, is working to develop Health and Nutrition Pilot Projects in Mississippi and Arkansas with hopes to establish some pilots in South Carolina and Alabama.

Our National Director for Department of Housing and Urban Development, Dr. Willie Gable and his Assistant National Director, Dr. Roderick Ware, has established a working concept for pilot projects with churches in 7 cities. The cities are: Memphis, TN; Chattanooga, TN; Atlanta, GA; Oklahoma City, OK; New Orleans, LA; Shreveport, LA and Washington, D.C. At this moment particular projects are being identified and the development of business plans are beginning to come to fruition. Funding sources are being identified by the HBCU's and through our ever increasing network of support contacts. The goal is to have each Pilot project developed enough to report on them by the Mid Winter Board Meeting 2014 in Birmingham.

Our National Director serving as Liaison to the Department of Labor, Dr. Jerry McAfee, is developing a robust pilot project designed to give young people a skill set and provide them with the opportunity to compete in jobs, careers and even

businesses of their own choosing. Young people will be exposed to five types of preparatory instruction:

1. Personal Development
2. Technical Training – students will learn how to operate and master a computerized sewing machine.
3. On the Job Training – students will learn to apply the skills in a real design production environment.
4. Sales training – students will learn sales and customer service basics as well as graduating students will receive business attire for their job interviews, if needed.
5. Entrepreneurial Training – students will learn how to start a fashion business as well as new companies to operate and grow their fashion businesses.

Small businesses are the economic engines which drive the American economy. This is our attempt to expose some of our young people to a discipline that might have passed them by. This pilot project is called “Stitches”.

Our National Director serving as Liaison to the Department of Education, Dr. Carol Mitchell and her Assistant National Director, Dr. Maxine Diggs, have both

worked extremely hard to build a fortified productive relationship with the Leadership within Education's Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. As a follow up to the presentations made to the Congress Plenary Session in June by Education's Dr. Brenda Girton-Mitchell and Dr. David Johns, there was a meeting with State Presidents from Oklahoma, Iowa, Louisiana and Texas. Discussions centered on Back to School activities, Effective Family Engagement, Improving Communication with parents, principals and pastors and lastly Early Childhood Education.

To assist State Presidents and our constituents even more, there is a need to assess our strengths and weaknesses among our churches. Based on National data collected from a survey, we look forward to creating a plan of services and resources that will assist our churches in engaging their communities to reduce the rate of children and young adults who are not provided educational resources and services needed to advance to schools of higher learning and/or Technical – Trade Schools. State Presidents, kindly help us assist you by receiving a survey today and having it filled out to be returned to either Dr. Carol Mitchell or Dr. Maxine Diggs before this week is out. Your cooperation in getting the survey completed is most appreciated.

Our National Director serving as Liaison to the Department of Veterans Affairs, Dr. Be Louis Colleton continues to labor striving to ensure that every Veteran associated with churches within the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. has the opportunity to receive pertinent information regarding V.A. benefits they have earned. During our Congress session in St. Louis over 250 Veterans or family members of a Veteran visited the V.A. exhibit space. The V.A. continues to see this partnership as greatly beneficial in their effort to serve people who have so nobly served this country.

Our National Director serving as Liaison to U. S. Agency for International Development - USAID, Dr. John Rhodes is working to ensure that our Foreign Missions Board becomes a recipient of funds used to assist in developing countries on the African Continent. This effort is being worked in conjunction with Dr. Alvin Love, our White House Liaison.

Our National Director Serving as the Liaison to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Dr. Bowyer Freeman presented Director Richard Cordray to address us regarding the inter-working of the Bureau and how it impacts our constituents. Director Cordray addressed the body on Thursday during the President's hour.