

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Resolution BED-19-41

A RESOLUTION PROMOTING THE ECONOMIC AGENDA OF BLACK WEALTH 2020

WHEREAS, the Black Wealth 2020 Coalition works to advance a plan to increase wealth for Black families nationally through a three-pronged strategy aimed at Increasing Black homeownership, expanding opportunities for Black-owned businesses and enhancing support for Black-owned financial institutions;

WHEREAS, legislators have a significant role to play in key components related to empowering, organizing and mobilizing constituents to develop a sustainable ecosystem that will lessen the social problems plagued by the rapid decline of Black wealth in any community;

WHEREAS, the Center for American Progress reports that African-Americans are more vulnerable to economic insecurity and therefore are in greater need of wealth;

WHEREAS, well-documented history of mortgage market discrimination, employment discrimination, and other discriminatory practices has aided in the persistent wealth disparity among Black Americans and has continued to create a vicious cycle of economic struggle;

WHEREAS, racial wealth disparity indicators are analyzed to illustrate the urgent economic needs of a historically marginalized race in America;

WHEREAS, the National Black Chamber of Commerce reports that there are only 2.6 million Black-owned businesses in the United States, whereas the U.S. black population is estimated to be over 40 million;

WHEREAS, the National Association of Real Estate Brokers noted that 27.6 percent of black applicants for conventional mortgage loans were denied in 2013 while white applicants were denied only 10.4 percent of the time;

WHEREAS, the number of Black-owned banks operating in the U.S. has been dropping steadily for the past 15 years and fell to 23 this year, the lowest level in recent history, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp;

WHEREAS, Black Wealth 2020 aims to unite some of the most historic national economic, civic and civil rights organizations with a goal to impact economic outcomes in Black America through the year 2020 and beyond;

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WHEREAS, the economic goals of Black wealth 2020 have historic roots, referencing to when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had launched the "Poor People's Campaign", an economic justice movement that had begun in Memphis; the founders of Black Wealth 2020 view their work as a continuum of Dr. King's vision, with a unique contemporary strategy for sustainability;

WHEREAS, the coalition members are the heads of organizations with strong economic interests and roots in the African-American community regularly meet to discuss ways that Black Wealth 2020 can close the racial wealth divide in the country and spur economic growth for Black people; and

WHEREAS, a specific type of government supported "grass root" initiative can be implemented throughout the nation with strategic planning and economic market analysis.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL), encourages state policymakers and their membership to establish a Black Wealth 2020 economic task force designed to develop economic building blocks for the African-American population to address racial wealth gap;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages state policymakers and their membership to analyze the geopolitical landscape of their respective districts with statewide and national data to create an economic assessment of their area by evaluating factors from race, age, workforce, unemployment, businesses by industry, types of households, income, banked and underbanked population, and number of black-owned financial institutions in an effort to assess the feasibility of a Black Wealth 2020 agenda;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages state policymakers and its membership to set clear goals based on the economic assessment by identifying initiatives that foster growth and sustainability within the three-pronged strategy targeted at homeownership, small business and banking;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports the Black Wealth 2020 economic agenda as a "solution-oriented" initiative designed to be driven by community stakeholders including but not limited to clergy, nonprofits, business owners, civic associations, block associations, community boards, school clubs to HBCUs;

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL urges state representatives to develop and implement state and community-based intervention programs aimed to address historical and systematic barriers to homeownership, small business and access to capital;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL urges Congress to fully support and fund the Minority Business Development Association, which is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce that promotes the growth of minority-owned business through the mobilization and advancement of public and private sector programs, policy, and research;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL members introduce effective legislation that will address the systemic inequality in the real estate industry, banking industry, the small business industry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports the need for minority and women-owned banks to have direct access to legislators and regulators who have significant influence over the framework of authority, powers and general responsibilities of the financial services industry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages banks to increase lending in Black communities by investing in homeownership and entrepreneurial opportunities to current residents and emerging local businesses;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages banks to support neighborhoods with rehabilitation loans, microlending for small businesses and Community Reinvestment Act homeownership products to serve the needs of the communities identified as communities of color stressed by gentrification;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL urges banks to make deposits or significant Investments to set numeric goals and commitments to low-income and minority communities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL work with banks to release their small business lending data on loan applications, approval and refusals to minority and women-owned businesses;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages states to increase investments in partnerships with housing, consumer finance, small business counseling agencies and organizations that provide counseling and technical assistance to prepare community members for homeownership, entrepreneurship, educates Black communities on the value of generational wealth accumulation;

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL investigate policies that promote the unequal distribution of wealth by race and institutionalized obstacles Blacks face in building wealth;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL urges federal, state and local elected officials to support funding for public land grants for African-Americans for residential and commercial use; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

SPONSORS: Representative Gregory Porter (IN) and Senator James Sanders Jr. (NY)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Business and Economic Development Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Chair: Representative W. Curtis Thomas (PA)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is November 30, 2018

Ratification is certified by: Representative Gregory W. Porter (IN), President