

# **BLACK & AFRICAN-AMERICANS REPUBLICANS**

## **WEALTH AGENDA FOR URBAN AMERICA**

### **Upward Mobility for *ALL***

#### ***Submitted: RNC Platform Committee***

#### **REVERSING THE BREAKDOWN OF THE BLACK FAMILY**

The family is the most significant institution in American society. We believe that strengthening the family will result in a more prosperous nation. Unfortunately, after trillions of dollars have been spent on the War on Poverty, nearly 20 percent of America's children—and 13 percent of all Americans—live in poverty.<sup>1</sup> This is unacceptable for an economic power that is matched by no other country around the world. For the past 50 years, the welfare system has effectively created fatherless children raised by single mothers living in poverty. Five years before the onset of the mortgage crisis and almost a decade ago, statistics from the Department of Health and Human Services revealed that single black mothers headed 43 percent of all black families and that six in ten of them earned less than \$25,000 annually.

A study conducted by the Brookings Institute showed that the way for individuals to avoid poverty and join the middle class is to complete high school, work full time and

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<sup>1</sup> Brookings Institute. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/topics/u-s-poverty>

marry before having children. If these three things are done, then the person's chances of becoming poor fall from 12 percent to 2 percent, and her chances of joining the middle class or above rise from 56 to 74 percent.

The current welfare system has stripped the responsibility of parenthood from fathers of children whose mothers receive aid and therefore strips dignity from the entire family. We support a safety net system that encourages marriage, personal responsibility for both mothers and fathers, and work requirements which will strengthen the family and restore dignity to urban families.

#### **SAFETY NET PROGRAMS THAT ARE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE**

Urban recipients of government programs and services have seen extremely poor delivery of those services. We embrace making government more efficient and responsive to the recipient or customer just as a private company delivers services. The country and the recipients will benefit from streamlining processes and making government more effective. Good stewardship is at the heart of being conservative. Our objective is to support policies that empowers urban individuals to empower himself and ultimately become self sufficient.

#### **The Sanctity of Human Life in the Urban Communities**

The Republican Party and the Abolitionist movement both were originally established to defend those who could not defend themselves, mainly American slaves who were not considered human but were considered property. The principle of the sanctity of human life is a core value of the Republican Party which has advocated that the unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed.

From its inception, Planned Parenthood and its founder Margaret Sanger with the eugenicist movement which sought to contain the population of minorities through

abortion, sterilization and segregation. As a result, a disproportionate amount of sterilizations occurred in Urban American and abortions continue today.. One study indicated over 30 percent of all abortions performed in America are performed on black and hispanic women annually which accounts for nearly a half a million abortions per year. We oppose abortion, and any form of domestic and foreign modern day eugenicist that underpins the family and support efforts to defund Planned Parenthood, promote abstinence education, and modernizing the foster care system and adoptive services.

### **Modernization of Foster Care**

African-American children make up approximately two thirds of the foster care population and remain in care longer.<sup>2</sup> Because we treasure family, we support pro-family policies that limit the separation of siblings, weed out abusive foster parents, advocate for children in foster care and provide more incentives for adoption of foster care children.

### **EDUCATIONAL CHOICE: Empowering Parents in Urban Communities**

In 1995, 74 percent of African Americans ages 25 and over had at least a high school diploma up from 51 percent in 1980. Today, only 35 percent of African Americans ages 25 and over have at least a high school diploma, according to the U.S. Census Educational Attainment statistics<sup>3</sup>. Today, black children are 17 percent of students nationwide – but they are 42 percent of the students in our worst-performing schools. Because of the dire conditions in urban America, 50 percent or more of African-Americans favor vouchers for students to attend private schools, versus just 23 percent

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts\\_for\\_families/foster\\_care](http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/foster_care)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2011/tables.html>

or fewer who oppose the idea<sup>4</sup>. Republicans support empowering parents of at-risk students in the inner cities to escape persistently failing schools by allowing federal dollars to follow their children to the school of their choice. Governor Romney would require that federal tax dollars to the States be conditioned upon States creating a voucher type system for K-12 education whereby parents(or legal guardians) would receive a voucher that will FOLLOW THE STUDENT to any PRIVATE, CHARTER OR PUBLIC school of the parents' choice.

By creating a market-based, freedom-of-choice system, President Romney will both improve the education of all of our children, increase the number of charter schools, encourage competition and drive down the cost of education at the K-12 level. While Republicans support accountability measures to ensure high academic achievement, the current system, which fosters teaching to the state test, has not proved to increase student learning. Governor Romney's educational choice initiative will raise academic standards through increased local control and accountability to parents who will make their local school boards responsible for student achievement. Since over 90 percent of public school funding is state and local, those institutions should be accountable to parents. The role of the federal government should be limited and should provide parents with the data they need to make informed decisions on the schools in which to enroll their children.

#### **Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (S.T.E.M.)**

Enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace is critically important to the future of our country and the stability of the world. We endorse the elevation of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education as a national priority as reflected through education reforms that will transform curriculum and teaching methodologies throughout k-12 education system.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/school-choice-right-focus-for-african-americans/>

### **Historically Black Colleges and Minority Serving Institutions**

We are proud of our Republican heritage as being the party whose members established many pro-civil rights organizations such as the Abolitionists, the Freedmen's Bureau, the NAACP and Historically Black Colleges such as Howard University and Spelman College. We support increasing the capacity of historically black colleges and universities to compete effectively for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements and to encourage historically black colleges and universities to participate in Federal programs. Additionally, we endorse strengthening the infrastructure of these institutions by collaborating with its leadership and providing supportive strategies to increase voluntary private-sector contributions to support the enhancement of endowments and the overall financial stability of such institutions.

### **FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC LITERACY**

The African-American community needs a "Wealth Agenda" that will be the foundation for wealth creation in the urban centers of America. Governor Romney believes the African American Community starting with the youth need to learn and understand the principles of free enterprise, free market economics, ownership, financial literacy and stewardship which will empower them by giving them the tools and knowledge base that have paved the way for so many Americans to achieve the American Dream. Governor Romney knows first-hand that most state history standards include a section on economics starting as early as kindergarten but is not aggressively included in textbooks nor taught in the classroom. As President he will encourage teaching economics starting in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade instilling innovation, competition and a deep understanding of the American free enterprise system that has been the envy of the free world and has created enormous wealth in our country. Urban students should have access to knowledge that can serve as a catalyst of upward mobility.

Beyond K-12 education, we encourage the new administration's facilitation of community-based education series sponsored by banks, churches, small and large businesses, school systems and colleges to educate urban communities about the importance of credit worthiness, debt reduction, investment, banking and money management.

### **IMPROVING INMATE REHABILITATION**

Studies have shown a correlation between literacy and incarceration. Republicans believe that society, as a whole will benefit from the successful rehabilitation of inmates. Sadly, African-Americans make up 40.1% of the almost 2.1 million male inmates in jail or prison.<sup>5</sup> This is unacceptable. It is critical that our prison system provide quality education, to include economic literacy for inmates. Governor Romney will require state institutions that receive federal funding to follow the same policies and principles of "Financial and Economic Literacy" and the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Additionally, recognizing the success of faith-based initiatives, a Romney Administration will encourage faith-based and community groups to compete for grants to increase the economic literacy of those incarcerated in our federal prison system.

### **COLLATERATION SANCTIONS**

Equality before the law and redemption for those who have paid their debt to society has been a cornerstone of the Republican Party. Therefore we support the efforts of

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<sup>5</sup> (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistics\\_of\\_incarcerated\\_African-American\\_males](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistics_of_incarcerated_African-American_males)

Republican Governors who have advocated for and codified the elimination of barriers to employment and have provided ex-offenders a place in society that is productive and rehabilitative. We also support minimum federal standards for restoring voting rights to ex-offenders while protecting states' rights and their right to protect and preserve the integrity of every American's vote.

## **CREATING WEALTH BY SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES AND DIVERSE BUSINESS ENTERPRISES**

### **Black Unemployment**

The Black community's unemployment rate, the duration of unemployment, average income, and median family wealth are worse than the national average and other communities. In June, while the overall unemployment rate remained stuck at 8.2 percent, the unemployment rate for African Americans actually went up, from 13.6 percent to 14.4 percent.

According to the Labor Department, the unemployment rate for black youth reached a high of 49.1 percent in November 2009 and even though as of January 2012 it has fallen to 38.5 percent, these numbers are dangerously high.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, a large number of black teens are no longer in the labor force because they have given up.

Another segment of society that is suffering through this weak economy is the Black veteran. The unemployment numbers from the Labor Department show that employment numbers among Black veterans are dismally low. Black veterans, who make up only 11.9 percent of the entire veteran labor force, accounted for 17.5 percent of overall veteran unemployment in 2010. The data also showed that unemployment

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.dol.gov/\\_Sec/media/reports/blacklaborforce/](http://www.dol.gov/_Sec/media/reports/blacklaborforce/)

among Black veterans has steadily increased from 2007 to 2010, rising seven points and landing at 12.7 percent. There is a disparity in the employment rate between Black veterans and other ethnicities with Black veterans having the highest overall rate of unemployment three percentage points more than the next highest group which is Hispanic veterans at 9.2 percent.<sup>7</sup> We must address these issues with innovative ideas to improve the marketability of our veterans which might start with devising a system in which the military job classifications are more easily transferable to civilian jobs.

Our overall goal is to improve the economic condition of urban centers in America by supporting policies that will grow the economy as a whole and particular by stimulating growth in the private sector and small businesses in the urban communities through enterprise zones, small business financing, capacity building and small business utilization in government contracting.

### **Reduce urban unemployment with enterprise zones**

We affirm the establishment of Enterprise Zones which was a concept created by the late Secretary Jack Kemp. These Enterprise Zones are geographic areas of high unemployment that would qualify for special tax and regulatory relief to encourage investment and establishment of businesses. The four components that the economist Arthur Laffer has proposed would operate in these areas are: 1) no payroll tax on the employee or employer, 2) suspend federal and state minimum wage, 3) eliminate regulatory impediments to construction and setting up businesses, and 4) profits on businesses operating in these zones would be taxed at one-third the regular rate. We believe enterprise zones will bring businesses into areas that badly need enterprise and employment and would reduce the unemployment rate and specifically for black youths.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bet.com/news/national/2011/11/04/black-veterans-suffer-high-unemployment.html>



## **Access to Capital for Small Businesses**

Small businesses, the engines that drive the American economy, are responsible for the job creation that makes America the land of opportunity. Access to capital is critical for all Americans who dream of owning a business and creating wealth for themselves, their families, and their employees. In 2007, 1.9 million, non-farm, black-owned businesses operated in the fifty states and the District of Columbia, an increase of 60.5 percent from 2002. Black-owned businesses accounted for 7.1 percent of all nonfarm businesses in the United States, employed 921,032 persons (0.8 percent of total employment), and generated \$137.5 billion in receipts (0.5 percent of all receipts).<sup>8</sup> Even before the onset of the recession and ongoing economic downturn, many black-owned businesses struggled to gain access to capital that would enable expansion or fund operating costs. A lack of access to capital caused many small businesses to fail. I establish a “Business Credit Building Program” in the Small Business Administration designed to assist Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) and Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) with accessing capital through lines of credit, loans, leases, and trade credit. Small DBEs and MBEs will learn how to build a credit profile that will help to build the capacity of their small businesses. Small businesses will no longer only have access to enough capital to make the next payroll; instead, the goal will be assured access to enough capital to scale. The new “Small Business Capacity Building” program will be geared towards providing assistance so that small businesses can attract and retain the right talent, access and manage capital resources, and implement the best practices on the road to achieving success and fueling the America dream.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.census.gov/econ/sbo/get07sof.html?13>

### **Small Business Capacity Building**

In the spirit of teaching a man how to fish, we propose a new approach to “Capacity Building” which will build the Diverse Business Enterprises (DBEs) capacity to grow and scale from a point of excellence. No more will these small businesses generate just enough to make a payroll but not enough to scale. We propose the development of a new “Capacity Building” program geared toward developing World Class Organizations delivering World Class Performance and able to compete for and perform on contracts utilizing best business practices, knowledge, systems and capital.

### **Creating Opportunities for Small Businesses**

For the purpose of improving and stimulating small business segment, we support a review of the Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) and the U.S. Small Business Administration to ensure that large businesses and prime contractors are meeting their small business goals. We support the OSDBU in its responsibility to encourage greater economic opportunity for minority entrepreneurs and advocate for greater utilization of small disadvantaged business enterprises in government contracting especially since it is the tax base of the small business owners of America that fund the government contracts.

### **Healthcare**

We acknowledge that there are healthcare disparities that exist in the healthcare system. What is lost in this debate is the stated awareness that this debate is not primarily about health care but rather the broader matter of the role of government in American life. The question is not whether we should cover the poor and vulnerable with healthcare, but rather, whether the federal government is the most appropriate and most efficient means by which to do so. Urban centers are full of government run healthcare facilities that ration care and provide poor care for urban citizens through the

Medicare system. Lack of access to care, poverty levels, education and poor treatment all contribute to poor health outcomes in our community – all of which are better addressed on the state and local level.

We are opposed to a healthcare mandate and support the repeal of the Affordable Health Care Act. We support empowering states to develop the health care solutions that best meet the needs of their residents as a way to localize health care. Health care concerns are different from state to state and even from community to community.

States should rely on free market solutions for health care that lowers cost and increases consumer choices by allowing consumers to purchase health insurance nationwide and across state lines.

We propose that the federal government introduce concise, smart legislation that reduces unnecessary impediments to access to health care, provides more security and stability to those who have health insurance and slows the growth of health care costs. We also support enhancing individual options for affordable health care by making it portable for the individual without regard to employment. Small businesses will be crushed by the current legislation and therefore we support flexible programs such as small business insurance pools and those directed at vulnerable population groups such as children and the elderly which is important to ensure all citizens have access to affordable healthcare.

Finally we call for efficiencies as opposed to waste therefore we support reforms that will capitalize on the modernization of the health care system including prevention models for greater efficiency and cost savings. We endorse the following as a starting point:

- Address the dwindling numbers of 18- 24 year olds that meet the military's physical and health requirements

- Include prevention models and reinstate physical fitness programs in the K-12 system
- Ensure that caregivers have the resources to care for their loved ones at home when financially they cannot afford nursing home care
- Investigate gross abuse of the elderly which occurs in many nursing home facilities
- Reform Medicare to eliminate the rationing of medical services to protect the elderly from neglect and premature death

### **HIV/Aids-**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, “while the HIV epidemic has not had a broad impact on the general U.S. population, it has greatly affected the economically disadvantaged in many urban areas”.<sup>9</sup> We support the fight against the global epidemic of HIV/AIDS by strengthening prevention and treatment programs and partnering with the faith community to curtail the epidemic from spreading any further.

### **Energy**

The United States has the world’s largest reserves of natural gas and coal. Advance an energy policy that secures America’s energy security and expands job creation and infrastructure development of domestic resources. Fully support the Keystone XL Pipeline, Shale Gas Exploration and development and the proper and prudent placement of renewable energy resources. The Department of Energy under President Obama has picked renewable energy as its winner to the detriment of America advancing threats to the reliability of our electric grid. I Advance smart energy infrastructure that will create jobs and deliver to American families and businesses clean low cost energy that will return America to its economic competitive advantage in the global markets by reducing costly and duplicative environmental regulations,

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/other/poverty.htm>

expanding hydraulic fracturing of oil and gas resources including off-shore drilling, investing in clean coal research and improving oil, gas and electric infrastructure. African American Republicans supports Governor Romney's energy policies that will put a greater emphasis on small businesses including disadvantage business enterprise engagements in domestic energy resource development.

## **Broadband**

Governor Romney supports a stronger and faster broadband infrastructure that will move America from number twenty six in the world in broadband speed and access to number one. To do this GI rollback regulations of the Obama Administration and allow markets, not the FCC, to narrow the digital divide. Broadband is a transformative resource that will advance education, science and industry. Black and African American Republicans supports Governor Romney's vision of utilizing broadband to advance charter and faith based education, reduce health care cost in the elimination of Obama Care and expand fiber, wireless and satellite infrastructure to bring advanced communication technologies to underserved rural and urban communities. This will spawn market based economic growth.

## **Infrastructure**

African American Republicans support Governor Romney's policies of returning environmental control to the states and preventing the Federal EPA from continuing to kill economic growth based upon biased and unfounded environmental policies. By limiting the authority of the EPA direct infrastructure development opportunities that will strengthen America's middle class including African American families often most harmed by EPA excessive review and control of project development. African American Republicans support Free Enterprise Zones, investment and production tax credits for projects that benefit underserved communities to generate market based solutions to unemployment and economic blithe.

## Africa

Africa has become a strategic partner in our defense on the Global War on Terror, thus we must adopt trade policies to treat Africa as a full fledge trading partner.