

NAACP[®] **RESOLUTIONS**

2015

**SUBMITTED UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 2 OF
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NAACP**

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NAACP

2015

ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1. (PURPOSE OF THE CONVENTION)

1. *(Purpose of the Convention)*

The Annual Convention of the Association shall establish policies and programs of action for the ensuing year. All actions of the Convention on questions of policy and programs, which are not contrary to this Constitution, shall be binding on the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, the Officers and all Units, except as hereinafter provided. No resolution for change of policy or program of action shall be in order unless it shall have been favorably voted upon at regular legislative meetings of a Unit in good standing, or has been submitted by the President and CEO. The resolutions for policy or program change must be certified by the President and the Secretary of the Unit, and received by the President and CEO in the National Office by May 1st, annually. The Convention shall act on all such proposed program or policy changes during its Legislative Sessions.



All resolutions contained in this packet was reviewed by the 106th Convention of the NAACP, held July 11 through July 15, 2015 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. These resolutions were ratified by the National Board of Directors and are now the Official Policy of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

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CIVIL RIGHTS

1. *Celebrating Black History Month in the NFL*

WHEREAS, Frederick Douglas “Fritz” Pollard (January 27, 1894 – May 11, 1986) was the first African-American coach in the National Football League (NFL); and

WHEREAS, Frederick Douglas Pollard, along with Bobby Marshall, were the first two African-American players in the NFL in 1920; and

WHEREAS, the NFL league office continues to maintain and introduce diversity initiatives each year such as the Women’s Interactive Network, partnerships with leading diversity advocacy organizations such as the Fritz Pollard Alliance and Women in Sports and Events, diversity training across the league office, establishment of diversity accountabilities for all senior leaders, enhancement of diversity recruitment resources, and the creation of talent management programs; and

WHEREAS, former players formed the Fritz Pollard Alliance to add pressure to the league and create more momentum for change; and

WHEREAS, the mission statement for the Fritz Pollard Alliance is “We promote diversity and equality of job opportunity in the coaching, front office and scouting staffs of the National Football League (NFL) teams”; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco 49ers hired Gideon Yu as the first president of color in the history of the NFL; and

WHEREAS, the Jacksonville Jaguars became the first NFL franchise to have a majority owner of color, Shahid Khan, a Pakistani-born American businessman that finalized his stake in ownership on January 4, 2012; and

WHEREAS, the total number of people of color serving as vice presidents on NFL teams has risen from 13 in 2011 to 19 in 2012 and the number of female vice presidents increased from 23 in 2011 to 37 in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Lezcano Del Campo, Miami Dolphins, and Kendyl Moss, Atlanta Falcons, were the only women of color who served as vice presidents in 2012; and

WHEREAS, there were six African-American general managers in both 2012 and 2013, this marks seven consecutive years with at least five general managers that are people of color. Ozzie Newsome became the second African-American general manager to win a Super Bowl when the Baltimore Ravens won in 2013; and

WHEREAS, nine out of the last 14 Super Bowls have had either an African-American head coach or general manager, the coaches were Tony Dungy (Colts), Lovie Smith (Bears), Mike Tomlin (Steelers, twice) and Jim Caldwell (Colts). The General Managers were Jerry Reese (Giants, twice), Rod Graves (Cardinals) and Ozzie Newsome (Ravens); and

WHEREAS, having an all-time record of eight people of color as head coaches in the NFL for 2011, the number decreased to four going into 2013; and

WHEREAS, the National Football League and its teams have celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 with a series of special events; and

WHEREAS, all NFL teams enhanced the celebration with local efforts throughout the month including designated home games in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month and local community outreach; and

WHEREAS, NFL teams perform in Breast Cancer Awareness attire during NFL football games. Players wear pink shoes, towels, hats, gloves and the game ball is fashioned with the NFL Breast Cancer Awareness logo; and

WHEREAS, referees officiating the game call penalties by throwing pink flags during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Officials also wear pink wristbands as well as use a pink whistle; and

WHEREAS, cheerleaders perform with pink pompoms and footwear for Breast Cancer Awareness.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP urges the NFL to acknowledge and celebrate Black History Month.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1. *Juvenile Justice*

WHEREAS, throughout its history the NAACP has been a strong advocate for and investor in the wellbeing of youth – in education policy, in employment policy, and in the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, 40% of students expelled from U.S. schools each year are Black, and 70% of students involved in “in school” arrests or referred to law enforcement are Black or Latino; and

WHEREAS, Black and Latino students are twice as likely not to graduate high school as white students often correlated with involvement with the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, 68% of all males in state and federal prisons do not have a high school diploma; and

WHEREAS, one out of three African American males will be incarcerated in his lifetime, and one out of six Latino males will be incarcerated in his lifetime, a path that often starts as a juvenile; and

WHEREAS, some states automatically seal certain types of juvenile records after the offender reaches a certain age, but in most jurisdictions, the records will not be sealed unless the offender files an official request with the court; and

WHEREAS, the “school to prison pipeline” produces millions of young men and women who have little chance of fulfilling their career potential or forming a stable family, and who in three states (Florida, Iowa and Kentucky) are permanently barred from being able to vote.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP will (1) work with state education departments, school districts and schools to eliminate expulsion, suspension and in-school arrest disparities; (2) the NAACP advocates and reaffirms that school teachers and administrators must have the primary responsibility for in-school discipline instead of sworn law enforcement officers; (3) seek to ensure that states will implement effective restorative justice or other diversion and school retention programs to end the “school to prison pipeline,” (4) seek to ensure that juvenile records are automatically sealed or expunged; and (5) advocate for legislation that bars employers; Federal, State, or local

government, and/or credit reporting agencies from discrimination based upon their juvenile record; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP will distribute this resolution to state and federal executive, legislative, and judicial officials with responsibility for education and juvenile justice.

2. Mental Illness Training or Law Enforcement

WHEREAS, encounters between the police and the people with mental illness have been rising in the last few decades; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement agencies should expand the training used to deal with the mentally ill; and

WHEREAS, prisons are now home to 10 times more mentally ill Americans than state psychiatric hospitals. And at least half of the people shot and killed by police in the U.S. every year have mental health problems, according to a 2013 report by the National Sheriffs' Association; and

WHEREAS, the recent shootings across the nation of unarmed victims who are mentally ill have become too common; and

WHEREAS, a lack of training by police departments on dealing with the mentally ill can lead to deadly consequences; and

WHEREAS, more resources are needed to train police officers, dispatchers and other criminal justice workers on how to interact with people with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, despite a proven track record, only 10 percent of the nation's 25,000 police departments require crisis intervention training regarding the mentally ill.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) urge all law enforcement agencies across the nation to aggressively enforce training on how to interact with the mentally ill and mandates that every officer in the department participate and fulfill a required amount of training; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP call upon the U.S. Department of Justice to identify police department standards for ongoing periodic mental health training and provide a toolkit for departments that do not have an adequate training program.

3. *Law Enforcement and the Use of Body-Worn Cameras*

WHEREAS, the NAACP has always stood against any form of police misconduct and advocated for greater police accountability, as outlined in these resolutions:

- **1978 – Prosecution of Police and Corrections Officers for Criminal Acts**
- **1978 – Police Brutality**
- **1979 – Police Brutality**
- **1980 – Indiscriminate Use of Firearms by Police**
- **1983 – Police Brutality**
- **1983 – Use of Chokehold by Police**
- **1987 – Police Brutality**
- **1991– Police Brutality**
- **1992 – Police Brutality**
- **1996 – Excessive Force by Law Enforcement Officers and Police Departments**
- **2007 –Establish Model Standards, Policies and Training to Prevent Police Misconduct and Excessive Use of Force**
- **2010 –Establish Model Standards, Policies and Training to Prevent Police Misconduct and Excessive Use of Force**
- **2013 – Police Misconduct and Abuse in the Performance of Duty**
- **2015 – Police-Community Accountability**
- **2015 – Investigation of Deaths Involving Law Enforcement Officers**

WHEREAS, African-Americans and people of color are targeted and racially profiled by law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the cascade of recent incidents of police misconduct – Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray and many others – illustrate the urgent need for immediate reforms that will save lives and restore public confidence in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the availability of audio, video, and surveillance evidence of law enforcement interactions with civilians through body cameras, cameras mounted on dashboards of police vehicles, and cameras mounted to guns and tasers can lead to significant improvements in police accountability and trust among a community; and

WHEREAS, as of January 2015, at least 72 law enforcement agencies in the United States have adopted body cameras or established pilot programs for their

use and President Obama has announced federal funding to help purchase 50,000 body cameras for law enforcement agencies across the United States; and

WHEREAS, if used properly, recording and surveillance devices can help deter law enforcement misconduct and use of force, provide evidence to hold officers accountable when misconduct does occur and to exonerate wrongly accused officers, and help the public understand how law enforcement operates; and

WHEREAS, without carefully crafted policy safeguards in place, there is a real risk that these new devices could become instruments of injustice, rather than tools to further the goal of improved transparency and accountability, better policing, and greater trust in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, there are no uniform federal or state practices and policies addressing the implementation of recording and surveillance devices by law enforcement.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) will support legislation ensuring law enforcement issued audio, visual, and surveillance devices such as vehicle dashboard cameras, body cameras, weapon and taser cameras, etc. to become universal law enforcement equipment; and that sufficient funding be made available for this purpose; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all audio, video, and surveillance recorded on these devices shall be preserved and unedited in a central and secure depository except that portions may be obscured in the interest of protecting the identity of a minor and that any and all recordings shall be promptly made available to the person subject to the stop, prolonged detention or arrest, or to his or her designee or representative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that law enforcement shall not be permitted to use personal or any other audio, visual, or surveillance device in lieu of law enforcement audio, visual, and surveillance devices and law enforcement personnel must retain these recordings until the matter is dismissed by a judicial officer or the conclusion of the adjudicatory process, the recordings may not be used to secure a conviction in another matter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that clear and concise compliance policies be established pursuant to which law enforcement officers shall face severe consequences for impermissibly turning off their recording devices or attempting to manipulate the footage in any way; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to help ensure that law enforcement-operated recording devices are used to enhance and maintain an individual's civil rights,

law enforcement departments must develop appropriate policies with the input of civil rights advocates and the local community; the policies must be readily available to the public, and any changes to the policies must also be made with input from the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP call upon the U.S. Department of Justice to codify best practices and procedures and promulgate regulations for the use of law enforcement recording and surveillance devices so that they may be used in the administration of justice and preservation of civil rights; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP urge all law enforcement agencies across the nation to adopt procedures for the use of audio, visual, and surveillance devices such as vehicle dashboard cameras, body cameras, weapon and Taser cameras, etc. that are in line with the constitutional rights of U.S. citizens.

4. *End Youth Incarceration by Investing in Alternatives*

WHEREAS, the NAACP has previously resolved that prevention and rehabilitation are vital components of any juvenile justice policy, and that equal protection for youth be guaranteed under the law; and

WHEREAS, the United States is the largest incarcerator of children in the world with more than 90,000 youth detained or confined in juvenile prisons and detention centers, juvenile correctional facilities, adult jails and adult prisons, and other out-of-home placements; and

WHEREAS, African-American youth disproportionately receive more punitive treatment by the justice system than their white peers for the same offenses at all stages of the justice system and are 4.6 times more likely to be incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, youth are often imprisoned in facilities so far away that their families cannot afford to visit and they are subjected to intolerable levels of physical and mental abuse, sexual violence, physical and chemical restraints, excessive isolation and solitary confinement; and

WHEREAS, research shows that the failure of the juvenile justice systems to provide an adequate, effective education of incarcerated youth contributes to a 60% more likelihood of being incarcerated as adults than individuals who have not been in prison or jail; and

WHEREAS, youth imprisonment disparities could be remediated through prison closures and reinvestment of the savings into community-based, non-residential alternatives to incarceration; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP reaffirm its resolutions from 2000, 2002, and 2008, which strongly oppose having youth offenders in adult facilities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP call on the U.S. Attorney General, the Office of Justice Programs Administrator, the Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Administrator, the nation's governors and legislators to support policies to end youth incarceration by closing youth prisons and detention centers, reducing out-of-home confinement of youth, and investing resources in community-based, non-residential alternatives to incarceration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP call on Congress to further support policies to end youth incarceration by reauthorizing and providing adequate resources for the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) and to invest in efforts such as the Smart on Juvenile Justice initiative to close youth prisons and detention centers, reduce out-of-home confinement of youth, and invest resources in community-based, non-residential alternatives to incarceration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all units and members educate themselves as to their state's use of incarceration for youth and community-based, non-residential alternatives to incarceration and avail themselves of opportunities to educate others about the impact of and alternatives to the incarceration of youth; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP will advocate to end youth incarceration, reduce the disparate treatment of African-American youth in the justice system, and increase investments in programs and services in the community for youth in the justice system that support their overall well-being including educational, health, mental health, and vocational needs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. *Monitoring an Oversight of Amtrak Minority Business Participation on Facility Construction and Upgrades*

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives has passed the "Passenger Rail Reform Investment Act of 2015" which included Amendment 67, specifically requiring the participation of socially and

economically disadvantaged businesses in the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for Amtrak Station development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Transportation has established specific Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) participation goals ranging from 6% to 12% participation based on availability and utilization; and

WHEREAS, the purpose and intent of Amendment 67 of H.R. 749 is to have a positive impact on the economic health of MBEs and inner city communities where the majority of Amtrak stations are located; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, by resolution, the NAACP has expressed its support of a national effort to address the disparity in minority hiring and contracting with respect to transportation issues.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP supports final Congressional passage and implementation of the "Passenger Rail Reform Act of 2015" (which includes Amendment 67 calling for participation of MBEs in the Request for Proposal process for Amtrak Station development opportunities) with the full funding to implement the Small Business Participation Study outlined in the Act to determine disparities in the opportunities afforded to MBEs in intercity rail projects administered by the Federal Rail Administration; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that, at the end of the study period, the NAACP calls upon the US Department of Transportation and the Federal Rail Administration to provide semi-annual MBE utilization progress reports to review MBE utilization and to ensure their intended success.

2. Support for Black Workers & Good Union Jobs

WHEREAS, the NAACP is committed to enhancing opportunities for Black construction workers in the areas of education, training, mentorship, leadership development and networking in the construction industry; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP will continue to engage in promoting social, economic, and political justice for construction workers within their workplace, our communities, our state and our nation; and

WHEREAS, there is a job crisis of Blacks working in the construction industry including 50% Black unemployment or underemployment and job salaries making less than \$12.00 an hour; and

WHEREAS, the State of California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement has Labor Standards Enforcement offices across the State of California which enforce labor laws and ensure that public works contractors comply with prevailing wage regulations, with goals of making tangible positive differences in the fight for racial justice, and elimination of income inequality by monitoring and advocating for more diversity and quality in union jobs; and

WHEREAS, the creation of additional Labor Standards Enforcement Offices in states and cities across the country provides the greatest opportunity to lead the way in providing support to Black workers to make a real concrete difference in solving the economic and racial inequality in the lives of its members and the Black community; and

WHEREAS, creating these types of offices separate from affirmative action office efforts ensures that federal civil rights and equal opportunity language, including enforcement and monitoring, be applied to both locally and federally funded projects covered by project labor agreements; and

WHEREAS, U.S. cities across the country will have building projects in our communities including buildings, schools, homes, roads, bridges, and shopping centers where we live, work and spend our money. Black workers must be a part of those projects.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP reaffirms its advocacy for the establishment of Project Labor Agreements and the establishment of state and local Labor Standard Enforcement Offices that will monitor the Project Labor Agreements to ensure the hiring of African American construction workers.

3. *Protecting the Elderly from Financial Fraud*

WHEREAS, the elderly are the fastest growing segment of our society and are vulnerable to financial abuse; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans are 3 times more likely to become victimized; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that only 1 in 10,000 elderly fraud victims reports the crimes to authorities due to embarrassment, lack of awareness about the enormity of the problem and the toll that age takes on their cognitive abilities and health; and

WHEREAS, financial fraud whether perpetrated by a stranger or trusted aid or “loved one” can destroy the financial well-being of its victims, as well as the financial well-being of the entire community; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 5 million seniors annually fall victim to these crimes according to the FTC (that’s one in five seniors) and they are losing an estimated

3 billion annually various financial frauds including telemarketing fraud, inheritance fraud, grandchild in trouble scam, identity theft, health insurance fraud, fraudulent charity, sweetheart scams, repair service scam and foreclosure rescue scam.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) work with the local, state, and federal legislative and judicial processes to make sure that such crimes are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP will urge all of its units to work to educate seniors on how to avoid these frauds and assists victims of financial fraud, and take action necessary to expose and halt those who perpetrate the financial fraud in our communities.

EDUCATION

1. *School Vouchers and Tax Credits Scholarship Programs*

WHEREAS, the NAACP has always fought for strong, integrated, quality public schools; and

WHEREAS, 51% of children who attend public schools live in poverty; and

WHEREAS, school vouchers are promoted as a means of increasing academic gains for students from low socio-economic backgrounds by enabling them to attend a private school, but research shows there is no clear academic advantage to attending a private school; and

WHEREAS, school vouchers funnel valuable funds into private schools by diverting funds from public schools; and

WHEREAS, school vouchers impede communities from creating stronger relationships among public schools, parents, and teachers because of the stigma attached to the public school system; and

WHEREAS, school vouchers give parents the false idea that public schools are inadequate to meet their child's needs; and

WHEREAS, school vouchers violate some state constitutions because they redirect tax funds to provide financial support to sectarian schools; and

WHEREAS, in Florida, for example, approximately 71% of the private schools which participate on the Scholarship Program are sectarian, and 82% of all students receiving school vouchers attend sectarian schools; and

WHEREAS, certain state voucher programs avoid direct funding of private schools only by the ruse of channeling taxpayer funds through tax expenditures.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP reaffirms its 2003 and 2010 prior opposition to school vouchers and to the privatization of public schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People stands opposed to the government dissemination of school vouchers as a means of undermining public education and using tax dollars for vouchers that will subsidize private and sectarian education; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP will continue to encourage all of its Units to work to provide support for the public school system, to encourage community members to provide services and support to parents, teachers, and students in public schools, and to promote the public school system as the most effective way of providing high quality education to all children.

2. *Reducing Post-Secondary Education Remediation*

WHEREAS, high school graduates are often not academically prepared for college. Some estimates suggest that only about one-quarter of high school graduates complete a rigorous academic curriculum and while academic preparation is a problem for many students, it especially affects low-income and minority students; and

WHEREAS, many students who are underprepared in high school will need to enroll in remedial courses upon entering an institution of higher learning; and

WHEREAS, many institutions require students complete their remedial courses before they are allowed to enroll in college-level courses, a process that could mean more than a year of coursework prior to progressing to college-level material; and

WHEREAS, the Alliance for Excellent Education estimated that the cost of delivery of remediation nationwide totaled \$1.4 billion in direct costs to students and institutions; and

WHEREAS, the need for post high school remediation is one symptom of the broader failure of systems to provide a high quality public education for all; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP Education Game Changer is that every child will receive a free, high quality, equitably funded, public pre-K and K-12 education followed by diverse opportunities for accessible, affordable vocational or university education; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) reaffirms prior resolutions calling for high quality public school education for all students, e.g., Support of Common Core State Standards (2013), Preserving the Federal Role in Safeguarding Education (2011), Promotion of High Standards for All Public Schools (2010), Low Performing Schools (2009) and Education Improvement (2008); and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that, the NAACP advocates for the creation of an Office of Ombudsmen in the U.S. Department of Education to receive and act upon general complaints and that the Office should be widely publicized.

3. In Support of Expanding Young Scholars Programs

WHEREAS, our nation and the world currently faces a wide range of challenges around sustainable, affordable, accessible and adequate food production; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to encourage, recruit and increase the number of young African-American men and women who are educated and trained in the sciences and in particular, the global environmental crisis, which has adversely effected agricultural food production; and

WHEREAS, youth internships, such as the Young Scholars Apprenticeship Program, at the University of Georgia and other universities, have afforded minority high school students, in particularly, African-Americans, opportunities to work with university scientists on research projects, visit scientific research facilities, defend their research during videoconferencing and at graduation, participate in weekly college preparatory workshops, conduct research in rain forests, bays, estuaries, etc., along with exposure to the cultural and languages of different countries around the world; and

WHEREAS, the enormously successful Young Scholars Program was initiated by a small grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and previously provided students with modest stipends to supplement income loss from summer employment while fulfilling their apprenticeship obligations and requirements until affirmative action legislation prohibited the much needed financial subsidies; and

WHEREAS, young scholars, who have spent multiple years in the internship program grow intellectually, have an improved self-image, and have a better appreciation for higher education, resulting in a higher percentage college

enrollment, with a majority majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to prepare African-American students in their formative, most impressionable years, for careers in the sciences; and in particular, underrepresented occupations in agricultural food production and the environmental sciences which address causes of food scarcity and quality; by duplicating and expanding Young Scholars Apprenticeship program models; and

WHEREAS, the USDA offers several scholarship programs for careers in service, teaching, management, or research in the life sciences and related sciences that support and enhance the environment and or food production.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) advocates for expansion of the Young Scholars Program models at public land grant institutions in every state and U.S. Territory, with the mission of improving the quality of lives of all citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP urges the United States Congress to appropriate the necessary funding to expand and duplicate Young Scholars Program models nationwide in an effort to ensure research and remedies in sustainable and adequate food production and alleviation of contributing environmental factors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP urges and assists land grant colleges to recruit and educate African-American students seeking or using USDA scholarships and grants; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that all units of the NAACP will promote the recruitment of African-Americans to Young Scholars Apprenticeship program models with the goal of curing the number of underrepresented minorities in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers.

4. A Call for Teacher Diversity in Elementary and Secondary Education

WHEREAS, in the 1954 landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the NAACP played a pivotal role in persuading the U.S. Supreme Court to affirm the goal of equality of educational opportunity for all children. Today, over 60 years after the *Brown* decision, the Association recognizes that severe racial inequities, including vast disparities in the hiring of teachers of color, still persist in many of our nation's schools; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP reaffirms previous resolutions designed to ensure teacher diversity, teacher quality and resource equity; and

WHEREAS, of the 3.2 million public school teachers educating the nation's children, as of 2014 only 6 percent are Hispanic and 7 percent are African American; and

WHEREAS, of more than 13,500 public school superintendents in the United States, as of 2014 only 363 are African American and estimated 250 are Latino; and

WHEREAS, by the year 2020 the United States Census predicts that the shared African American and Hispanic student population is projected to increase from the 2014 level of 38 percent to 52 percent; and

WHEREAS, recruiting male teachers has been a challenge in public schools, with the proportion of male teachers decreasing from 31 percent in 1986 to 16 percent in 2014.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that all NAACP units work with their local teacher unions and teacher recruitment associates, specifically American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and National Education Association (NEA), as well as historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and other minority-serving institutions to promote diversity in local teacher recruitment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NAACP units collect and publish summaries of research analyzing best practices as well as, impediments to teacher diversity; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that NAACP units work through the local, state and federal legislative processes to ensure that teacher diversity will be closely monitored and reformed for a more equitable educational system.

5. Accountability and Assessment: Measuring Student Learning

WHEREAS, for over a century the NAACP has sought to close the education achievement gap and improve education for all Americans, and to seek an end to school segregation and other methods of imposing educational inequality and injustice; and

WHEREAS, all children must receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success in college and in a global competitive economy; and

WHEREAS, at its July 2013 Annual Convention in Orlando, Florida the NAACP adopted the *Common Core Resolution* which states in part that "the Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort that establishes a single set of clear educational standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts and mathematics that states voluntarily adoption to ensure that all students have access to high-quality educational content, supports, and

opportunities that research demonstrates are essential to ensure post-secondary success;" and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama's Blueprint for Reform concludes that assessments better inform classroom instruction to respond to academic needs and measure how schools, principals, and teachers are educating students; and

WHEREAS, parents should have a significant role to play in students making academic gains; and

WHEREAS, assessments with results reported to teachers and parents in a timely manner during the academic year can be an objective tool to ensure equity and sustain a high quality education system for all students; and

WHEREAS, assessment instruments must be designed, pre-tested and validated on student populations representing diverse multicultural, racial and multilingual groups; and

WHEREAS, without meaningful assessments of student learning, neither the parents nor the teachers will know whether individual students are receiving the education they need and deserve; and

WHEREAS, teachers must provide instruction in all of the subjects important for student success and should not sacrifice teaching of standards to the teaching test-taking skills; and

WHEREAS, accountability shines a light on what is working and what needs improvement in order for teachers and individual students to receive the necessary support to be successful; and

WHEREAS, academic tests provide crucial data that reveals where struggling students need help in order to receive the support to learn at grade level, and where struggling schools need additional resources and support; and

WHEREAS, tests must measure learning, not test-taking ability; and

WHEREAS, good teaching also includes social, moral and aesthetic information that is not and often cannot be tested.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP holds state policymakers accountable to increase their awareness of the implications of assessments and accountability for their respective states, and ensure collaboration with their state boards of education and state-level departments; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Education Committee of the National Board of Directors shall convene an Education Summit within one year of approval of this Resolution in order to train and mobilize branches nationwide on academic assessments, Common Core, and other essential issues of education and social justice policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

1. *Advancing Clean Energy Resources*

WHEREAS, the NAACP has adopted Resolutions and Action Items on Environmental and Climate Justice in 1993, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2009, 2011, 2012 and by action of the board in 2015; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel based energy production has a disproportionately negative impact on communities of color and low income communities as pollution emitting and health harming facilities such as coal fired power plants and oil refineries are more likely to be located in these communities; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP has recognized that the continued use of non-renewable energy is stressing the planet, causing extreme weather conditions through increasing climate change across the globe that continues to threaten livelihood and lives; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP has resolved to commit to bringing clean energy resources to including wind, solar, and geothermal energy power, to the mainstream of the U.S. economy and lifestyle through research and communications programs and membership committees, and work in renewable energy resources including wind power, solar energy, and geothermal energy and to set a goal of 25 percent of clean energy by 2025, and

WHEREAS, a recent executive order was issued by the President of the United States calling for actions by executive departments and agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent over the next decade while fostering innovation, reduced spending, and strengthening of the clean energy economy; and

WHEREAS, rapid advancements have been made in making clean energy more affordable and accessible to all, especially since the prices of clean produced energy are decreasing in the areas where usage is increasing; and

WHEREAS, there are also large areas of the United States with wind volume conducive to the effective and efficient use of wind turbines for producing power and with sunlight conducive to the effective and efficient use of solar energy; and

WHEREAS, energy efficient and clean energy resources will continue to improve our economy while also protecting our environment; and

WHEREAS, African Americans currently spend a greater proportion of their incomes on energy while being underrepresented in energy sector jobs and wealth building opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the manufacture, distribution, installation and maintenance of wind turbines and solar panels will create tremendous increase in employment opportunities, many of which will be local in nature as systems are designed for local ownership rather than industrial, power-company owned systems; and

WHEREAS, according to a report by the Department of Energy, wind power is on track to provide 20 percent of United States (U.S.) electricity needs by the year 2030 while providing 230,000 new jobs and delivering nearly \$200 million to communities from coast to coast, and cutting carbon pollution by 16% and the solar energy sector is on track to provide 30% of US energy by 2050, currently has a job growth rate of 10 times the national employment rate, and includes 2.3 million jobs globally now and 20% growth annually; and

WHEREAS, largely due to the Production Tax Credit, the Department of Energy reports that more than 550 manufacturing facilities located in 43 states produce 70 percent of the wind turbines and components installed in the United States, up from 20 percent in 2006 – 2007.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) will support the continued deployment of clean energy resources to include solar and wind power; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP will continue to support programs or policies that provide and ensure affordable access to clean energy options for all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP will promote policies that mandate specialized and targeted educational programs, preparation and training, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), as well as accommodation for special circumstances, to ensure that systems prioritize access for African American adult and youth capacity building and engagement in clean energy jobs and business opportunities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP will advocate for comprehensive and equitable job training and job placement in the clean energy field for African Americans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP urges government and private sector funding for clean energy job training and placement and supports opportunities for African American business development and ownership in the clean energy sector; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP supports the adoption of legislation supporting the Production Tax Credit for clean energy resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP will continue to monitor the growth and development of clean energy and advocate that utility companies be required to allow individuals to install and consume their individual energy needs as a supplement to or as a single source of energy; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP will transmit this resolution to state legislatures and public utility commissions that are considering clean energy cost allocation policies.

2. Support Strong Commitments by President Barack Obama in Adherence to the United Nations Framework Conference of Climate Change

WHEREAS, climate change is a complex problem, which, although environmental in nature, has consequences for all spheres of existence on our planet as it impacts or is impacted by poverty, economic development, population growth, sustainable development and resource management; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP has passed resolutions on environmental and climate justice in 1974, 1976, 1977, 1981 1983, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2014; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, countries joined an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to cooperatively consider what they could do to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with whatever impacts were, by then, inevitable; and

WHEREAS, by 1995, countries realized that emission reductions provisions in the Convention were inadequate and they launched negotiations to strengthen the global response to climate change, and, two years later, adopted the Kyoto Protocol; and

WHEREAS, the Kyoto Protocol legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets with The Protocol's first commitment period starting in 2008 and

ending in 2012, and the second commitment period beginning on January 1, 2013 and set to end in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America is one of the 195 Parties to the Convention and 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, acknowledging what is at center of the response to climate change-the need to reduce carbon emissions. In 2010, governments agreed that emissions need to be reduced so that global temperature increases are limited to below 2 degrees Celsius; and

WHEREAS, coal burning power plants are the largest single source of carbon pollution, and fossil fuel based energy production accounts for nearly 40% of the emissions that cause climate change by trapping heat in the atmosphere and dangerously warming the planet; and

WHEREAS, though United States is only 4% of the global population, it is responsible for 25% of the emissions that cause climate change and has the highest per capita rate of emissions of any nation in the world; and

WHEREAS, ahead of the 2015 UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Paris, France, President Barack Obama has demonstrated leadership with historic regulations issued in a 2014 Executive Order, which aims to reduce carbon pollution emitted from coal producing power plants by 30% from 2005 levels by 2030, which, if implemented effectively and equitably will set the United States on track to meet its target set forth in the United Nations (UN) accord and combating climate change, while supplying America with reliable and affordable energy; and

WHEREAS, in March of 2015, President Obama issued another Executive Order that will cut the Federal Government's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions 40 percent over the next decade from 2008 levels - saving taxpayers up to \$18 billion in avoided energy costs - and increase the share of electricity the Federal Government consumes from renewable sources to 30 percent, prompting several major Federal suppliers to announce commitments to cut their own GHG emissions.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), advances environmental and climate justice as a civil rights issue as its imperils and disproportionately impacts low income and minority communities, and thus the NAACP applauds the efforts of the United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change in demanding global accountability in addressing and combating the world's climate crisis and will continue its engagement and participation with UNFCCC to ensure that the economic and environmental interest of our constituents are represented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP encourages President Obama to ensure that his historic issuance of the first-ever Executive Order which establishes carbon pollution standards for existing power plants will result in a

strong rule that features ambitious targets on emissions reduction energy efficiency and shifting to clean energy (solar, wind, and geothermal) in order to protect the health of our children and put our nation on the path toward a significant reduction in carbon pollution from the power sector by 2030; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP applauds President Obama's Executive Order to maintain Federal leadership in sustainability and greenhouse gas emission reductions over the next decade; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP's units continue to advocate for substantial emissions reduction, aggressive timetable on energy efficiency and 100% clean energy (solar, wind, and geothermal), and significant US investment in equitable adaptation domestically and in the global south.

3. *Advancing Equity in Climate Adaption Planning*

WHEREAS, the NAACP has established resolutions addressing the disproportionate impact of climate change, sea level rise, disasters, housing discrimination, voter disenfranchisement, etc. on low income communities and African American communities; and

WHEREAS, climate adaption, climate-smart community building, sea level rise response, sustainability planning, urban renewal, community revitalization risk the unintended consequence of gentrification and displacement; and

WHEREAS, historic and modern day practices of race-based redlining perpetuated by banks, insurance companies and realtors, as well as subsequent disinvestment have resulted in racial segregation, urban decay, and blight; and

WHEREAS, post-disaster redevelopment in places such as New Orleans, Louisiana, Mobile, Alabama, and elsewhere has resulted in further disproportionate displacement and loss of land for low income communities and African American communities; and

WHEREAS, extensive displacement and disinvestment have resulted in deepening voter disenfranchisement, redistricting, school closures, job loss, small business loss, crime, food insecurity, and loss of healthcare infrastructure particularly for low income persons and communities of color.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) conducts research and policy analysis to: 1) determine displacement risk in the range of models of development; and 2) design effective measures in climate adaptation/housing/zoning policies that will prevent displacement and 3) assess the civil rights implications of the impact of climate adaptation on racial and ethnic minority communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP will establish and implement a policy platform to prevent and/or eliminate displacement of African American and low income communities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP ensures that all units are equipped with the research, analysis and template of policy demands that will support their leadership in injecting and upholding equitable policies and practices in regional, state, and local planning processes.

HEALTH

1. *Insurer Practice Impacting Healthcare Access*

WHEREAS, The Affordable Care Act has significantly increased the number of Americans with health insurance; however, insurance companies are engaging in practices that are targeted toward decreasing their costs and increasing their profit margins. Many of these cost cutting practices can interfere with access to quality and effective health care to persons with chronic medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, many of the newly insured persons may be unfamiliar with policy details making them vulnerable to the practices that are not in their best interests transparent in the insurance policies; and

WHEREAS, one such practice is step therapy; this is a tool insurers use to limit how much they spend covering patients' medicines. Under step therapy, a patient is prescribed one or more medicines, including off-label medicines in some instances, chosen by their insurer – usually based on financial considerations – before coverage is granted for the drug prescribed by the patient's health care provider; and

WHEREAS, another insurer practice of prior authorization; before filling a prescription for some medications, the insured may have to get approval from their insurance company to confirm coverage under that plan. If prior authorization is required and approval isn't obtained before filling the prescription, a patient could be responsible for all charges associated with the medication. In addition, healthcare providers are burdened to submit prior authorization requests to get insurer approval prior to prescribing, while patients may have to wait multiple days to get access to the prescription; and

WHEREAS, insurance companies are increasing out-of-pocket costs through higher use of co-insurance for drug cost sharing, increases to co-pays and the creation of tier systems. The result is often patients' non-compliance with medication regimes. Bills are being introduced to cap out of pocket costs so families can better afford medicines that keep them healthy, because out of pocket costs should not be so large as to act as a barrier to care; and

WHEREAS, advocacy groups have reported that these cost-containment practices are being enacted by several insurance companies throughout states across the country and many of these advocacy groups are working with policymakers to pass laws that limit/regulate insurer practices that erect questionable barriers to accessing medicines; and

WHEREAS, the determination of the most appropriate medical treatment is best accomplished by open and transparent communication between the healthcare provider and patient. Only healthcare professionals familiar with a patient's personal medical history, including drug utilization, known sensitivities and past complications should make treatment decisions; and

WHEREAS, several advocacy groups including, but not limited to, the Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc. and U.S. Pain Foundation, have committed to a legislative advocacy campaign; and

WHEREAS, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) recognizes the sanctity of the Doctor- Patient relationship.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that units will engage in activities to educate their respective communities on the Patient's Bill of Rights, help patients understand their insurance benefits and policies and encourage its communities and members to take charge of their health by researching their prescriptions and having detailed discussions with their physicians; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that units working in partnership with any insurance companies on service projects will vet their coverage policies in an effort to collaborate with companies that are truly committed to improving public health and ensuring positive health outcomes for communities of color; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that insurance companies that sign up people in the fall with one formulary of prescription drugs maintain the same formulary throughout the following year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that insurance companies be required to fill the first three months of a prescription, as prescribed, before requiring use of less costly medications; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP encourages units to join coalition and advocacy groups in opposition to said practices.

2. *Encouraging Minority Participation in Clinical Trials*

WHEREAS, minority participation, in particular African Americans, in medical clinical trials as sanctioned by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is extremely low compared to representation of the United States (U.S.) population; and

WHEREAS, African Americans and other minority populations have a higher prevalence of various diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, sickle cell and high blood pressure; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 100,000 African American individuals with Sickle Cell disease in the U.S. and the trait is common among African Americans, occurring in approximately 1 in every 12 individuals; and in the United States, it's estimated that Sickle Cell Anemia affects 70,000–100,000 people, mainly African Americans. The disease occurs in about 1 out of every 500 African American births and about 1 out of every 36,000 Hispanic American births. More than 2 million Americans have sickle cell trait; and

WHEREAS, few treatment options have been developed and approved for Sickle Cell Anemia and 63% of clinical trials for Sickle Cell disease were terminated due to inadequate enrollment; and

WHEREAS, medical research has discovered that some medicines and treatments impact African Americans and other minorities differently than their white counterparts; and

WHEREAS, there is a call from the medical research community for more African Americans to participate in clinical trials in order to provide generalized trial results to this population.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP supports and encourages its members to seek out opportunities to participate in medical clinical trials where appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED we strongly urge the NAACP to adopt Sickle Cell Disease as a priority health initiative; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP launch a national campaign to inform and educate communities about the need for more African Americans participation in Clinical Trials Studies.

3. *Resolve Pertaining to the Human Rights and Health Care for Women in Prison and the Dangerous Policies and Inconsistent Practice of Shackling Women Prisoners During Labor and Delivery*

WHEREAS, shackling incarcerated pregnant women is a common degrading practice in the United States. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, out of the 200,000 women in United States prisons or jails each year, approximately 6% (12,000) are pregnant at the time they are incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, eighteen (18) states have laws that prohibit or restrict the shackling of pregnant prisoners (AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, HI, ID, LA, MA, NM, NV, NY, PA, RH, TX, VT, WA, and WV); and

WHEREAS, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, along with leading experts in maternal, fetal and child care all strongly oppose it; and

WHEREAS, in regards to formulating policies and restrictions on the use of shackles, the American Medical Association has decided to support the restriction on the use of restraints of any kind on a women in labor, delivering her baby or recuperating from delivery unless the woman is an immediate risk and/or a serious threat to herself or a substantial flight risk; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association also supports restrictions on the shackling of pregnant prisoners in the second and third trimesters; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association also recommends that women never be shackled during labor and delivery; and during the final stages of labor it is important for the physician to act quickly in order to avoid potentially life-threatening emergencies for both the mother and the unborn child. Shackles severely limit the physician's ability to expeditiously act and as such pose a threat to the survival of the fetus; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Marshals Service, and the American Correctional Association all have policies that limit the use of shackles, these policies tend to interfere with the medical staff's abilities to appropriately assist in childbirth. When or if a C-section is required a five-minute delay to remove shackles could possibly cause permanent brain damage to the baby.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP opposes the dangerous, degrading, and abusive practice of shackling women prisoners during labor and delivery; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP encourages all units to work closely with their Municipal, State and Federal officials and the U.S. Bureau of Prisons to identify current shackling policies during labor and delivery; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that NAACP units advocate for administrative changes and legislation to correct the dangerous and harmful effects that shackling has on pregnant prisoners and their babies.

4. To Educate and Prevent Further Spread of Hepatitis C Within the African American Communities

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is a serious liver disease that comes from infection with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). Hepatitis C disproportionately affects the African American community. Blacks are twice as likely to have been infected with the Hepatitis C virus than whites and other ethnic groups. Most are not aware that they have been infected; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) analysis there was a significant increase in Hepatitis C deaths between 1999 and 2007. The CDC estimates that there are approximately 3.2 million persons living in the United States who were likely infected during the 1970s to the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, there is no vaccine for Hepatitis C, but there is treatment that many African Americans and other ethnic groups are unable to afford.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP encourage units to work with health care partners to promote events to educate and prevent further spread of HCV in African Americans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP urge insurers to provide affordable coverage and greater access to available treatments for consumers; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP utilize this resolution to encourage legislators to enact legislation to address affordable treatment options for Hepatitis C.

5. Promotion of Good Mental Health

WHEREAS, with good mental health, a person will feel in control of their emotions, will have good cognitive functioning, and will have positive interactions with people around them. This state allows a person to perform well at work, in

their studies, and in family and other social relationships, allowing them the ability to make a contribution to his or her community; and

WHEREAS, mental health problems are more common than heart disease, lung disease and cancer combined, and in some way shape and form, affect *all* of society; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that one in five Americans will experience a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year, such as depression, anxiety, substance use, trauma, eating disorders, psychosis, and deliberate self-injury. Others will experience distress or face a mental challenge that may require support and assistance, but not medical intervention; and

WHEREAS, many mental health disorders are effectively treated in a professional setting, access to mental health care is a significant issue, especially for those without insurance or who are not able to take advantage of the limited public funds that, in most states, are prioritized for those with serious mental illness, leaving out those who can benefit from behavioral health services; and

WHEREAS, co-morbidity, or a mental health condition along with another medical condition, is also a problem. The co-existence of mental illness and substance abuse is common. For example, it is common for those with mental illness to “self-medicate” with alcohol or other drugs. The seriousness of other co-morbidity examples such as substance abuse and diabetes, or depression and hypertension, are often forgotten, along with the impact one condition and its treatment can have on the other health issue. Therefore, it is imperative that for whatever type of condition a person seeks help, clinicians must assess the need for medical, mental health, and substance abuse services. It is even more desirable that the ability to treat all of these conditions be seamless, preferably co-located; and

WHEREAS, the release of ex-offenders from correctional institutions has increased the need for behavioral health services. It has been well-documented that many of those who find themselves incarcerated suffer from untreated or undiagnosed mental health issues. Many ex-offenders require substance abuse services upon their re-entry, to deal with addiction problems that were only “interrupted” by their incarceration, not cured. The same conditions leading to the prior abuse very likely continue after release from incarceration; and

WHEREAS, stigma, a cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate the public to fear, reject, avoid and discriminate against people with mental illness, is another barrier to many individuals in distress to accept offers of help and/or to avoid seeking help because of the widespread stigma surrounding mental health. Stigma assumes many subtle and overt forms that can affect all areas of a person’s life. Stigma may also prevent individuals from acknowledging they need

help, may affect access to care and the quality of such care and may result in the person internalizing negative attitudes about themselves. It has been said that, “fighting the shame and stigma of mental illness is more difficult than battling the illness itself”; and

WHEREAS, experience and research show that individuals living with mental disorders and mental health problems can lead full lives and be contributing members of society, can recover being able to live, work, learn, and participate in their communities; and

WHEREAS, with increased awareness of the need for mental health services comes greater identification of those who can benefit from such services, and ultimately increased need. Federally Qualified Health Centers and other urban providers are confronted by these realities each day; and

WHEREAS, in the Affordable Care Act, it is fortunate that mental health care is as important as physical health care. The increased need for services is somewhat addressed by states that have expanded Medicaid rolls in keeping with the Affordable Care Act. For others, increased awareness is simply drawing more attention to the lack of much needed services; and

WHEREAS, *Mental Health First Aid* is an outstanding program for teaching the general public to recognize the need for mental health services, and proper understanding and response to those who may have behavioral health problems and/or mental health crisis. It is appropriate for youth and adults—anyone who has an interest in learning how to respond with compassion and the ability to de-escalate potentially volatile situations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP continue to strongly advocate through legislation for Medicaid expansion in the 22 states currently without and maintain expansion in the 28 states and the District of Columbia that currently have it; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NAACP units participate in training such as *Mental Health First Aid (USA)* that teaches the general public how to recognize symptoms of mental health problems, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person toward appropriate treatments and other supportive help; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP engage in an ongoing approach to and remain staunch advocates for increased culturally competent mental illness awareness and recovery for persons within the communities that we serve.

HOUSING

1. *Home Appraisal and Mortgage Lending Discrimination*

WHEREAS, discriminatory practices in the areas of home appraisals and mortgage lending in African American and some other minority communities have an adverse impact on the household wealth, neighborhood stability and upkeep, and the ability to save for retirement by the residents of these communities; and

WHEREAS, homeownership plays an integral role in a household's accumulation of wealth since nationally the primary residence represents a significant portion (thirty percent) of the total assets held by households; and

WHEREAS, discriminatory home appraisal and mortgage lending practices present economic barriers that impede the ability of African American homeowners in particular to fully benefit from owning their own home; and

WHEREAS, the data from thorough investigations of appraisal companies and mortgage lenders show that property values in the predominately African American communities of this nation continue to be depressed because of unfair mortgage lending and appraisal practices; and

WHEREAS, research based on a comparison of home values to homeowner incomes in the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas shows that homes in majority black neighborhoods do not appreciate as much as homes in overwhelmingly white neighborhoods and that the black-owned homes are valued eighteen percent less than the white-owned homes; and

WHEREAS, many real estate agents can cite examples of obtaining sale contracts for homes in African American communities from qualified, ready, willing and able buyers only to learn that the appraiser and mortgage company determined that the house was not worth the price the buyer was willing to pay, where the lender has then stated that the price must be reduced by tens of thousands of dollars before they will approve the loan, causing depressed home values; and

WHEREAS, homeowners in majority African American communities continue to suffer financial loss from artificially depressed property valuations; and

WHEREAS, the depressed home prices have caused an invasion of corporate investors, turning once beautiful owner-occupied communities into neighborhoods full of rental properties, substantially owned by non-residents; and

WHEREAS, this trend has caused many negative side-effects in commercial development, school performance, property tax base and public safety in majority African American communities; and

WHEREAS, property owners who are upside down in their loans are trapped in their homes because they have collectively lost billions of dollars in wealth that normally would be used for retirement, relocation or to leave to the next generation; and

WHEREAS, residents must demand that our government officials act and/or support efforts in taking the required corrective actions to end the practices which can most accurately be labeled "redlining" of communities with populations predominately people of color; and

WHEREAS, Redlining appears to be widespread in all American inner cities, and this coordinated disinvestment plays an important role in cities' decline, contributes significantly to overall population losses, contributes to the deterioration of cities' housing stock, and plays an important role in America's urban crisis; and

WHEREAS, individual property owners in minority communities are legally entitled to receive just remedies and compensation for the massive loss of wealth suffered during the Great Recession, and this loss is exacerbated by homeowners who are unable to obtain refinancing of their loans due to unfair practices by appraisers and mortgage lenders.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) calls for the full enforcement of Fair Housing laws and that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) should be fully funded to ensure compliance; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP will urge all of its units to work to identify and assist victims of discriminatory appraisal and mortgage lending practices, following NAACP procedures, and take action necessary to expose and halt those who engage in unfair, discriminatory appraisal and mortgage lending practices.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1. *In Support of Establishing Environmental and Climate Justice as a Standing Committee of Branches*

WHEREAS, the NAACP had determined that Environmental and Climate Justice advocacy is a civil rights issue and has developed a comprehensive and holistic agenda to reduce pollution, advance energy efficiency and clean energy, build disaster resilient infrastructure policies and practices.

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP commit to address environmental inequities at the local level by establishing Environmental and Climate Justice as a Standing Committee of all Units.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS & IMMIGRATIONS

1. *Extension of Temporary Protected Status to All Haitians*

WHEREAS, Haiti was hit in 2010 with a disastrous earthquake which killed over 300,000 people and destroyed much of the country's infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, there has been significant recovery much remains to be done; and

WHEREAS, the social infrastructure recovery is struggling and is far from being fully operational; and

WHEREAS, a recent study by the law schools of the University of Miami and the University of Chicago has shown the re-entry structure in Haiti set up by the United States is woefully inadequate; and

WHEREAS, deportation can result in both physical and mental harm to detainees particularly those that are mentally ill; and

WHEREAS, some legal opinion believes that deportations under post-earthquake conditions violate international law.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP urges the United States to halt deportations of Haitians putting everyone under temporary protection status until conditions improve; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as conditions improve so that some deportations of Haitians may be warranted, the NAACP should urge that deportations should be decided on an individual basis considering crime committed and the individuals condition in the context of conditions in Haiti; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that these decisions should be made by a judge with due process not an immigration officer.

2. *Support for Equality for the New Cubans and African-Americans US - Cuba Relationship*

WHEREAS, the subjugation of Afro-Cubans has a long historical base including slavery until its ending completely in 1886, through the massacre by the Cuban Army of Afro-Cubans in a Black Political party in 1912 despite the fact that forces of the revolution against Spain were over 50 percent Afro-Cubans, through segregation and discrimination initiated during the years of United States (US) influences to the present situation where despite the official forbidding of segregation related practices by the revolutionary government, Afro-Cubans are under-represented in key sectors of society and are on average at the bottom economically; and

WHEREAS the United States is re-establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba and lessening the restriction on US-Cuban interactions; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP has historic concerns about Cuba, and in recent times has sent a mission there, and supported opportunities for American Black Farmers to export to Cuba; and

WHEREAS, as Cuba becomes more open some gaps currently existing between Afro and non Afro Cubans can be expected to increase such as the access to capital available to those with families in the United States of which the percentage of Afro Cubans is far less than their percentage on the island where they may well be a majority.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP urges the US government to pay particular attention to the issues of civil, social, economic and political equity for Afro-Cubans as well as African Americans exiled or residing in Cuba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP bring this issue to the attention of the Congressional Black Caucus urging action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP develop a mission to Cuba to establish linkages with Afro-Cuban organizations; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP involve its Branches in these linkages.

3. *NAACP Joins the United Nations in Promoting and Celebrating the International Decade for People of African Descent*

WHEREAS, in December 2013, the General Assembly of the United Nations (U.N.) officially adopted a resolution proclaiming the decade beginning in 2015 and through 2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent; and

WHEREAS, in making this proclamation, the U.N. cited “the need to strengthen national, regional and international cooperation in relation to the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent, and their full and equal participation in all aspects of society;” and

WHEREAS, the primary objectives of this decade are: 1) to promote respect, protection and fulfillment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people of African descent, as recognized in the U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 2) to promote a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies; and 3) to adopt and strengthen national, regional and international legal frameworks according to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and to ensure their full and effective implementation; and

WHEREAS, accordingly the U.N. has developed a set of policies and programs of actions at the national, regional, and international levels to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance faced by people of African descent.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP joins the United Nations in celebrating and promoting the International Decade for People of African Descent; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP shall learn of and appreciate the challenges faced by people of African descent throughout the Diaspora through its workshop at its 106th NAACP Annual Convention; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that beyond exploring challenges, the NAACP workshop should imagine and delineate possibilities for collaboration among people of African descent that could strengthen communities, countries, and the world; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that local NAACP units can also be engaged by holding similar workshops or symposiums at some point in the next decade.

LABOR AND INDUSTRY

1. *Justice for Tobacco Farm Workers*

WHEREAS, for more than two hundred years African Americans worked as slaves in the tobacco fields of the South and then as oppressed and powerless tenant farmers; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP wants to ensure that farm workers in the tobacco fields of the South never face these conditions again; and

WHEREAS, many farm workers often live in labor camps with inadequate or non-functioning toilets and showers and other substandard conditions, suffer from illnesses resulting from nicotine poisoning and exposure to dangerous pesticides and work long hours for below poverty wages; and

WHEREAS, child labor is also a problem in some tobacco fields; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in his last days with us, spoke of "... going beyond the purely civil rights to questions of human rights," and said, "Now our struggle is for true equality, which means economic equality;" and

WHEREAS, the surest path to economic equality for all workers has been the exercise of their internationally-recognized human rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining without retaliation; by forming and/or joining a union, and collectively bargaining for a fair share of the product of their labor; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spent his last days in Memphis with workers who were seeking to exercise their human right to freedom of association and to bargain collectively; and

WHEREAS, farm workers are excluded from the worker protections of the National Labor Relations Act; and

WHEREAS, large tobacco companies and union organizers have been in discussions for nearly three years over an agreement guaranteeing freedom of

association and collective bargaining to tobacco farm workers on contract farms as of yet no agreement has been reached.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP calls on all tobacco companies to work with union organizers and representatives to develop a written agreement that guarantees freedom of association and worker representation without retaliation on contract farms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP calls for the collection of data on the detailed impact of tobacco farming and health of workers in the fields; the data is to be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, age and other appropriate characteristics; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP will contact associations representing convenience stores and other retailers that sell tobacco products and call on the retailer to directly communicate with the tobacco companies that their consumers want them to establish a process that guarantees freedom of association and worker representation for tobacco farm workers in the tobacco supply chain; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP will join with other allied groups to demonstrate consumer support for union laborers at the local store level by participating in group visits to store managers and other lawful actions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NAACP will communicate directly with large tobacco companies by letter and other means and call on them to work with union organizers and representatives until a written agreement is reached, and continue these activities until union officials are satisfied with the company's response; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the NAACP commits itself to bring justice to tobacco farm workers.

2. NAACP Reaffirms its Support for a Living Wage for All Workers

WHEREAS, the NAACP has supported a minimum wage and a living wage since the concept of a federal minimum wage was first introduced through federal legislation in the late 1930's; and

WHEREAS, since the late 1970's, delegates to the NAACP national convention have passed resolutions reaffirming our support for a national minimum wage, a living wage, or both, at least 15 times; and

WHEREAS, most recently, the NAACP supported an increase in the minimum wage in 2013; and

WHEREAS, the current federal minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour, and contrary to stereotypes, low-wage workers whose pay scales are affected by the federal minimum wage are overwhelmingly adults, many who support families; and

WHEREAS, the minimum wage does not provide a living wage for most American families; and

WHEREAS, a “living wage” is defined as a “a wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living”; it is often higher than the minimum wage, and it also varies from state-to-state, depending on the cost of living and applicable taxes in each state; and

WHEREAS, a typical family of four (two working adults, two children) needs to work more than 3 full-time minimum-wage jobs (a 68-hour work week per working adult) to earn a living wage; and

WHEREAS, the living wage varies based on the cost of living and taxes where families live. Families of four (with two working adults, two children) in the North (\$56,179) and West (\$53,505) have higher median living wages before taxes than the South (\$49,167), and Midwest (\$48,496).

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP reaffirm its long-standing support of a living wage as a minimum wage for all workers.

LEGAL

1. *Appointment of Special Prosecutors Where Death or Serious Bodily Injury is Caused by a Law Enforcement Officer*

WHEREAS, the perception that law enforcement officers receive favorable treatment from the criminal justice system is wide spread; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 high profile cases occurred in Ferguson, Missouri following the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown, and in Staten Island, New York, following the police “choke hold” death of Eric Garner; and

WHEREAS, large public demonstrations followed grand jury decisions not to indict those officers; and

WHEREAS, in 1992 Los Angeles faced major riots when a trial jury acquitted the officers caught on tape beating Rodney King; and

WHEREAS, some wondered whether the prosecutor had really sought a conviction at all; and

WHEREAS, there have been other cases, both historic and recent, too numerous to name in which police violence has lead to community unrest and distrust of the law enforcement process; and

WHEREAS, a prosecutor might hesitate to prosecute a police officer on whom the prosecutor depends in other cases, especially so if the prosecution would require challenging the officer's credibility; and

WHEREAS, beyond that, a close working relationship between a prosecutor and officer can alter the prosecutor's perception of potentially criminal conduct; and

WHEREAS, regardless of the reality of a prosecutor's hesitancy to prosecute law enforcement officers with whom he works on a regular basis, the public certainly has a widespread perception that such a hesitancy is a major factor protecting officers from the treatment that poor people, especially poor people of color, are likely to receive from the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, laws in many states provide for appointment of a special prosecutor who is not the elected or appointed prosecutor of the involved jurisdiction to handle controversial cases in order to avoid the appearance of impropriety; and

WHEREAS, appointment of a special prosecutor removes the actuality of day to day dependence by the special prosecutor on the officer involved; and

WHEREAS, it can give the public increased confidence that there is not a conflict of interest and that an unbiased investigation and, if appropriate, aggressive prosecution will occur.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) supports legislation, in every state in the United States, requiring the appointment of an independent prosecutor, who is not professionally, or otherwise affiliated or associated with the law enforcement agency involved in the incident, to conduct a thorough and appropriate investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death or serious bodily injury of any individual that occurs in the custody of any law enforcement agency and, where warranted, criminally prosecute the law enforcement officer(s) for such acts.

LEGISLATIVE & POLITICAL ACTION

1. *Ensuring Adequate Water Infrastructure for All in the 21st Century*

WHEREAS, the western United States is in a severe drought, and water supply infrastructure is severely needed; and

WHEREAS, minorities tend to live in places that are worst hit by the impacts of climate change, and their poverty exacerbates their vulnerability; and

WHEREAS, water Quality and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Programs (RLF) receive federal funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The funds are used to provide low interest rate loans to finance water quality and drinking water capital projects; and

WHEREAS, as a condition of federal grant awards, EPA regulations require that loan recipients and sub-recipients (i.e., prime contractors and subcontractors) make a good-faith effort to award a fair share of work to disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE's) who are small business enterprises (SBE's), minority business enterprises (MBE's) and women's business enterprises (WBE's); and

WHEREAS, water infrastructure is vital to our nation's well-being for reasons that are well documented and known; and

WHEREAS, water infrastructure protects public health and the environment, supports the local and national economies, protects us from fires, creates jobs, and brings us a better quality of life. Moreover, the US Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) estimates that for every dollar spent on water infrastructure, about \$2.62 is generated in the private economy. In addition, for every job added in the water workforce, the BEA estimates 3.68 jobs are added to the national economy, and

WHEREAS, advanced purified recycled water is an essential element for the western United States economy, which supports the entire nation's economy, and advanced purification of recycled water produces water suitable for augmenting limited potable supplies; and

WHEREAS, in small towns like Midway, North Carolina, African American residents live with the vestiges of Jim Crow segregation and lack of basic services such as sewer systems (Parnell et al. 2004). Residents in the small, rural African American community struggle with sewage overflows while nearby,

white affluent communities are developed as major tourism destinations (UNCCR 2006); and

WHEREAS, discrimination in zoning and construction has denied low-income communities and communities of color basic infrastructure such as sewers and wastewater (Lichter et al. 2007 ; Troesken 2002 ; WERA 2002; Anderson 2008). And these same isolated rural areas are most likely to lack basic water and wastewater services (Snipp 1996) and access to, and the scale of, water financing is also often inequitable; and

WHEREAS, water distribution systems are generally financed and constructed at a local level, with some federal support, but such funding (primarily in the form of loans and grants for infrastructure construction) has a series of barriers for low-income water systems (discussed in the next section) and has traditionally failed to address the underlying persistence of water problems in low-income communities and communities of color; and

WHEREAS, the State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs have provided much-needed support for both drinking water and wastewater utilities, thus assisting in the fundamental protection of public health and the environment, particularly for small to medium-sized communities. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund have in fact been the primary tools for federal investment in water infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, while farmers fight to water their land and environmentalists fight to protect ecosystems, civil rights and social activists are advocating for disadvantaged and minority communities in parts of the nation where low-income minorities have poor quality drinking water. And furthermore, as farmers and ranchers cut back, their employees, who are predominantly Latino, lose jobs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP and its units will advocate for water infrastructure funding at the federal level which includes Title XVI funding for recycled water and desalination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP and its units will advocate for SRF funding as it sees that these funds are vitally important, and these programs should be maintained and strengthened for all communities, including communities of color that need this funding; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP and its units will seek opportunities to ensure that as the nation and the western United States deal with the worse drought on record, that the NAACP and its units will seek to ensure that African Americans and people of color are adequately represented, in any and all discussions of solutions of how to deal with the drought, so that minority and economically disadvantaged populations are not unfairly burdened in the pursuit of solutions.

2. *Support and Expansion of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)*

WHEREAS, the NAACP strives to promote economic equality of all people, particularly the most vulnerable and disenfranchised members of our society; and

WHEREAS, over 45.3 million Americans suffer from poverty, increasing by more than 5 million Americans from 2008 to 2013 according to the U.S. Census Bureau; and

WHEREAS, people of color suffer disproportionately from impoverished conditions; 25.8 percent of African Americans and 23.5 percent of Hispanics live in poverty, compared to 9.6 percent of White Americans; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, to ensure that no one will be forced to choose between heating or cooling their home and putting food on the table, Congress created the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP provides essential short term, long term, and emergency aid to prevent power being shut off for our nation's most underserved and vulnerable families; and

WHEREAS, LIHEAP provides essential assistance to approximately 6.9 million families struggling to meet their vital energy needs as a result of low wages or disabilities, and to the elderly subsisting on stagnant wages; and

WHEREAS, a portion of LIHEAP resources are allocated to residential weatherization and energy-related repairs that reduce households' energy needs by preventing air leakage into and out of the home, which can account for 30 percent of a home's energy costs; and

WHEREAS, close to 80 percent of LIHEAP recipients fall below the poverty level, and 75 percent of all homes in need of aid have at least one member who is disabled, elderly, or has a young child, according to the Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, 80 percent of those eligible for LIHEAP do not receive LIHEAP assistance because LIHEAP funding levels are so low; and

WHEREAS, increased funding for LIHEAP could provide opportunities to implement sustainable energy solutions, such as retrofitting existing homes and developments with solar and other renewable energy, thereby creating immediate relief to homes that may reduce monthly energy bills; and

WHEREAS, LIHEAP funding applied to long term sustainable energy solutions would increase jobs, decrease harmful environmental impacts, and eventually reduce the overall assistance needed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP support a substantial increase in LIHEAP funding to ensure that all families in need get the help that they need to meet vital energy needs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP support extending LIHEAP to provide renewable energy initiatives, thereby ensuring greater economic freedom as well as reducing the impact of climate change that disproportionately affects the underserved in our country.

3. *Drone Regulation*

WHEREAS, drones are capable of highly advanced surveillance, and drones already in use by law enforcement can carry various types of equipment including live-feed video cameras, infrared cameras, heat sensors, and radar while some military versions can stay in the air for hours or days at a time, and their high-tech cameras can scan entire cities, or alternatively, zoom in and read a milk carton from 60,000 feet; and

WHEREAS, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), also known as drones, are gaining popularity among the general population and public agencies such as the military and law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administrative (FAA) estimates as many as 30,000 drones could be flying in US skies by 2020; and

WHEREAS, several jurisdictions have already purchased drones with very little, if any, public announcement or discussion; and

WHEREAS, routine aerial surveillance would profoundly change the character of public life in America and rules must be put in place to ensure that we can enjoy the benefits of this new technology without bringing us closer to a “surveillance society” in which our every move is monitored, tracked, recorded, and scrutinized by the government; and

WHEREAS, with the passage of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, Congress has directed the FAA to establish regulations by 2015 to allow for the commercial use of drones; and

WHEREAS, six test sites have been approved to allow the FAA to develop research findings and operation experiences to help ensure safe integration; and

WHEREAS, drone privacy bills have been introduced by state legislatures across the country and as of January 2015, 8 drone privacy bills have been signed into law in Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia; and

WHEREAS, commercially used drones can serve many societal benefits including assessing hostage situations, addressing bomb threats and detecting forest fire and while boasting the benefits of drone usage, there is potential for misuse if there are no clearly established policies that protect our privacy rights as American citizens; and

WHEREAS, there is no federal law or regulation governing the use of drones and no guidelines on how public agencies can acquire them.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that drones (UAS) operated by any government and/or law enforcement agency shall not be armed with any weapons or spray devices and that all drones have surveillance oversight to avoid intrusion in our civil rights and that all information captured be retained for no longer than three months unless it involves the use of force, leads to detention, arrest or complaint filed. All recordings shall be released with the consent of the subject or individual involved. Blurring portions of video/audio should be used to protect the underage or innocent. All videotaping should be time stamped and not allowed to be erased by officers. Officers should not be allowed to use their own devices as body camera or video equipment. All video footage shall be downloaded immediately to a central data base.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) calls upon law enforcement agencies across the United States to develop guidelines for the usage of drones that protects the privacy and rights of the American people; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People encourages its units to work with law enforcement and stakeholders in the development and implementation of drone usage in the community.

4. NAACP Supports Comprehensive Criminal Justice Reforms

WHEREAS, the NAACP is committed to supporting comprehensive criminal justice reform which address the grossly disproportionate impact that our federal charging and sentencing policies have had on communities of color; and

WHEREAS, from initial contacts with police officers, which are often driven by racial profiling and other racially tainted practices, through every stage of the criminal justice process, African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities receive disparately severe treatment; and

WHEREAS, nearly a million African Americans today are incarcerated in prisons and in jails, and while we comprise just over 13% of the total American population, we make up more than 40% of those who are incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, unless there is a change, a black male born today has a one-in-three chance of going to prison in his lifetime; and

WHEREAS, African American women have the highest rate of incarceration among women in our nation, a rate that is four times higher than that of White women; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP has worked with and commends the bi-partisan efforts of Chairman Jim Sensenbrenner (WI) and Ranking Member Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (VA) in forming and leading the U.S. House of Representatives Over-Criminalization Task Force; and

WHEREAS, over the course of ten hearings, the U.S. House of Representatives Over-Criminalization Task Force heard from federal agencies, stakeholders, experts, academics, and advocates about the problems of Over-Criminalization as well as potential solutions; and

WHEREAS, included in the problems brought to the attention of the Task Force were the racial disparities inherent in our nation’s criminal justice system and the proliferation of federal criminal penalties that duplicate civil sanctions and state prosecutions; and

WHEREAS, included in some of the potential solutions which the Task Force was called on to consider were diverting mentally ill and addicted offenders from incarceration; narrowing the application of mandatory minimum sentences; expanding proven recidivism-reducing programming; and eliminating barriers to re-entry.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP Washington Bureau is called upon to review any legislation that is the product of this task force, especially proposals which build upon the evidence-based successes that the majority of states have implemented; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP through its full array of resources and most specifically its Washington Bureau should support through letters, Action Alerts, and other advocacy tools at its disposal legislation, regulations, and any guidance which is put forth by the Chairman and Ranking Member of this task force which will result in saving taxpayer money, improving public safety for citizens and law enforcement officers alike, and reducing the racial and ethnic disparities currently found in the American Criminal Justice system which meets the NAACP policy criteria.

VOTING RIGHTS

1. *NAACP Opposes Discriminatory Attacks on the Voting Rights of Young Voters*

WHEREAS, the 26th Amendment of the United States Constitution lowered the voting age to 18 from 21 and declares the right to vote “shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age”; and

WHEREAS, there is an unprecedented effort nationally by some state legislatures to restrict the voting rights by tightening rules for voters, including requirements for photo identification, in the name of preventing fraud; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that there is no evidence that widespread voting fraud has been uncovered; and

WHEREAS, proposals to change voting regulations have frequently affected younger voters, particularly college students, as well as low income communities, racial and ethnic minorities, women, and senior citizens; and

WHEREAS, young people under 30 cast more than 20 million votes in the 2012 presidential election, accounting for about 15 percent of the total, according to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement; and

WHEREAS, in Maine, the Secretary of State investigated 200 students for fraud. After finding no evidence, he sent the students a letter warning them to register their cars in Maine or to cancel their voter registrations; and

WHEREAS, in Texas, voters must show a photo identification, however a state handgun license qualifies, but a state university identification card does not; and

WHEREAS, students in North Carolina have also complained of government efforts, separate from the new voting law, to shut down voting sites at Appalachian State University and Winston-Salem State University; and

WHEREAS, registration sites and polling places which had once been on college and university campuses were moved to places less accessible to students; and

WHEREAS, under the North Carolina law passed last year, the period for early voting was shortened from 17 to 9 days and same-day registration was eliminated; and,

WHEREAS, beginning in 2016, voters will need to show photo identification; however, student ID cards, including those issued by state universities, will not be acceptable. In most instances, neither will an out-of-state driver's license; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina law also eliminated a program in which teenagers filled out their voter-registration forms early and were automatically registered when they turned 18; and

WHEREAS, the group of North Carolina students suing the state believe the voter-identification law is intentionally discriminatory. As proof of this intent, they note that the state prohibited the Division of Motor Vehicles from registering 17-years-olds who will turn 18 by Election Day; and

WHEREAS, in North Carolina, student turnout in 2012 was about 57 percent, among the highest in the country.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP reaffirms its resolution from 2007 *NAACP Resolution for Comprehensive Election Reform* and calls for a complete elimination of federal and state election laws, policies, and procedures that require stringent voter-identification in order to register or vote; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP supports the usage of college student identification as valid forms of identification in place of a state identification; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP continues to call on all units to identify and fight against these disenfranchising proposal at the local, state and federal level, including stringent voter-identification laws, elimination of pre-registration for 16 and 17 year olds, and any other voter suppression measures.

YOUTHWORK

1. *Saving Our African American Children in Foster Care*

WHEREAS, according to federal statistics, African American children are placed in foster care at twice the rate for white children; and

WHEREAS, a national study of child protective services by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reported that “minority children, and in particular African American children, are more likely to be in foster care placement than receive in-home services *even when they have the same problems and characteristics as white children*” [emphasis added]; and

WHEREAS, most white children who enter the system are permitted to stay with their families, avoiding the emotional damage and physical risks of foster care placement, while most African American children are taken away from theirs; and

WHEREAS, once removed from their homes, African American children remain in foster care longer, are moved more often, receive fewer services, and are less likely to be either returned home or adopted than any other children.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP reaffirms its 2003 Resolution on *Overrepresentation of African American Children in the Child Welfare and Foster Care Systems*; its 2003 Resolution on *The Unconstitutional Removal of African American Children from their Homes Under the Child Welfare System*; its 1987 Resolution on *The Adoption of Black Children*; and its 1976 Resolution on *Safety in Child Placement*; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP asks the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct a national study on the Child Welfare and Foster Care System, including the collecting of the most recent available data, disaggregated by race, national origin and gender of children involved.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. *NAACP Ends Its Boycott of the State of South Carolina*

WHEREAS, the Confederate Battle Flag is a symbol of racial, ethnic and religious hatred, oppression, and murder which offends untold millions of people; and

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2015, nine members of the Emmanuel AME Church including their Pastor were gunned down as they were studying their Bible in their House of Worship by an individual driven by a hatred which was fueled by the Confederate Battle Flag and all that it stands for; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, as a result of the insistence of the State of South Carolina to continue to fly the Confederate Battle Flag on the grounds of the state capitol, the NAACP called for a boycott of the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, the NAACP reiterated its condemnation of the confederate battle flag and the confederate battle emblem being flown over, being displayed in or on any public site or space building, or any emblem, flag standard or as part of any public communication; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the NAACP boycott, the South Carolina State Conference of NAACP Branches, led by the courageous and tenacious leadership of President Dr. Lonnie Randolph was, at times, degraded but never defeated; and

WHEREAS, had the South Carolina State Conference of NAACP Branches chosen at any point to prematurely end the boycott, it would have easily given strength and support to those elements within society who wanted to perpetuate the hatred and history of oppression associated with the Confederate flag; and

WHEREAS, on Friday, July 10, 2015, the flag was removed permanently from the Capitol grounds as a result of actions taken by the South Carolina Senate, the South Carolina House of Representatives, and the South Carolina Governor; and

WHEREAS, while removal of the flag was clearly a victory for the NAACP and a defeat for promoters of hate, the NAACP clearly recognizes that there are still

battles to be fought in other states and jurisdictions where emblems of hate and oppression continue to be celebrated; and

WHEREAS, removal of the confederate flag is not going to solve most of the severe tangible challenges facing our nation, including discrimination in our criminal justice system, economic system, employment, education, housing, health care, or other barriers to full and equal protection under the law and full first-class citizenship, but it does represent an end to a symbol of the state sponsored reverence of, and adherence to, the values that support slavery, domestic terrorism, and the hatred which has divided our country for too long.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP ends its boycott of South Carolina.

2. Gratitude and Commendations for the South Carolina State Conference

WHEREAS, South Carolina has long claimed the distinction of being the first state to sign the compact known as the Articles of Secession and the site of the first offensive in 1861 that launched the U.S. Civil War with the aim of preserving the practice of racial subjugation; and

WHEREAS, during and following the Civil War which cost over one million American lives, the Confederate battle flag has been used as a symbol of defiance and to incite violence and terrorism against African Americans and any person who attempted to challenge state-sponsored practices aimed at marginalizing Black people and communities of color; and

WHEREAS, after unsuccessful appeals to the government of South Carolina over many decades to have the Confederate flags posted at the State Capitol removed, through the efforts of the leadership of the South Carolina State Conference, NAACP in 1999, and its special Program and Research Committee a strategic plan was devised to launch a renewed Call to Action that would seek to remove the Confederate flag from all positions denoting sovereignty in South Carolina and challenge the prevailing Confederate mindset that existed in the Legislative and Executive branches of government; and

WHEREAS, in July 1999, a delegation from the South Carolina State Conference traveled to New York City to deliver an emergency resolution to the 90th Annual Convention of the NAACP, calling for the removal of the Confederate flags in South Carolina with provisions to initiate national economic sanctions against South Carolina beginning January 1, 2000; and

WHEREAS, the delegates gave unanimous approval to the emergency resolution, with our colleagues in other states across the Nation, most notably Mississippi, Texas and Alabama having graciously agreed to support a singular national direct action initiative, the Campaign for Dignity, which focused on the government-sanctioned Confederate flags in South Carolina, rather than mounting concurrent campaigns to address the issue in their respective states; and

WHEREAS, the Call to Action generated an immediate international response with event cancellations by national civil rights organizations, religious denominations, and corporations and prompting family reunions, professional associations, social, Masonic, Sport and civic organizations to also strike South Carolina from their list of choice destinations; and

WHEREAS, in response to the NAACP led King Day at the Dome march from historic Zion Baptist Church to the State House on January 17, 2000 which drew more than seventy thousand supporters to mark the largest civil rights demonstration in South Carolina history, and mounting economic and moral pressure, state government, tourism and commerce officials actively promoted the passage of the Heritage Act of 2000, over ardent objections from the NAACP – a law, also known as “the Compromise”, which granted the Confederate flag privileged status on the State House grounds and provided certain protections for all Confederate monuments in the State, including streets named to honor Confederate history; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina State Conference guided a long-running campaign of local protests and intense economic sanctions on tourism, entertainment and collegiate sports that came to an abrupt pause on the fateful night of June 17, 2015 when at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, the very location where the NAACP staged a rally in December 2011 protesting a Confederate Sesquicentennial ball planned at a nearby auditorium, the senseless slaughter of nine innocent Black worshipers took place at the hands of a young gunman who had been weaned on White supremacist doctrine and honor for the Confederate battle flag, thus; and

WHEREAS, moral outrage over the tragic demise of the “Emanuel Nine” coupled with major impending international divestment secured by the NAACP pressed the South Carolina Legislature to quickly modify its extended session to consider Senate Bill 857, that would effectively order what the NAACP, millions of South Carolinians and supporters around the world asked them to do in 2000. The measure passed by an affirmative vote of 37 to 3 in the Senate and 94 to 20 in the House exceeding the required two-thirds majority in both chambers thus

clearing the way for ratification by the governor on Thursday, July 9, 2015. The Confederate battle flag and the pole upon which it was hoisted were removed from the State House grounds on Friday, July 10, 2015, destined for a museum.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southeast Region and NAACP members around the globe in memorializing the sacrifices of the Emanuel Nine and others across South Carolina whose weary feet traced a path to the State House in South Carolina year after year to insist upon respect for the dignity of all human beings and an equal opportunity accorded to all for full enjoyment of our rights guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States of America; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the delegates assembled at the 106th Annual NAACP Convention express gratitude and commendations to the leaders and members of the South Carolina State Conference, NAACP for attending the mission of the Campaign for Dignity in South Carolina over the past sixteen years and achieving a historic and meaningful result for the people of State of South Carolina and everyone across America – a result that expresses finality for a divisive vestige of our past slave and Jim Crow history, and places race relations and human relations squarely at the center of our National conversation.

NAACP NATIONAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE: 2015

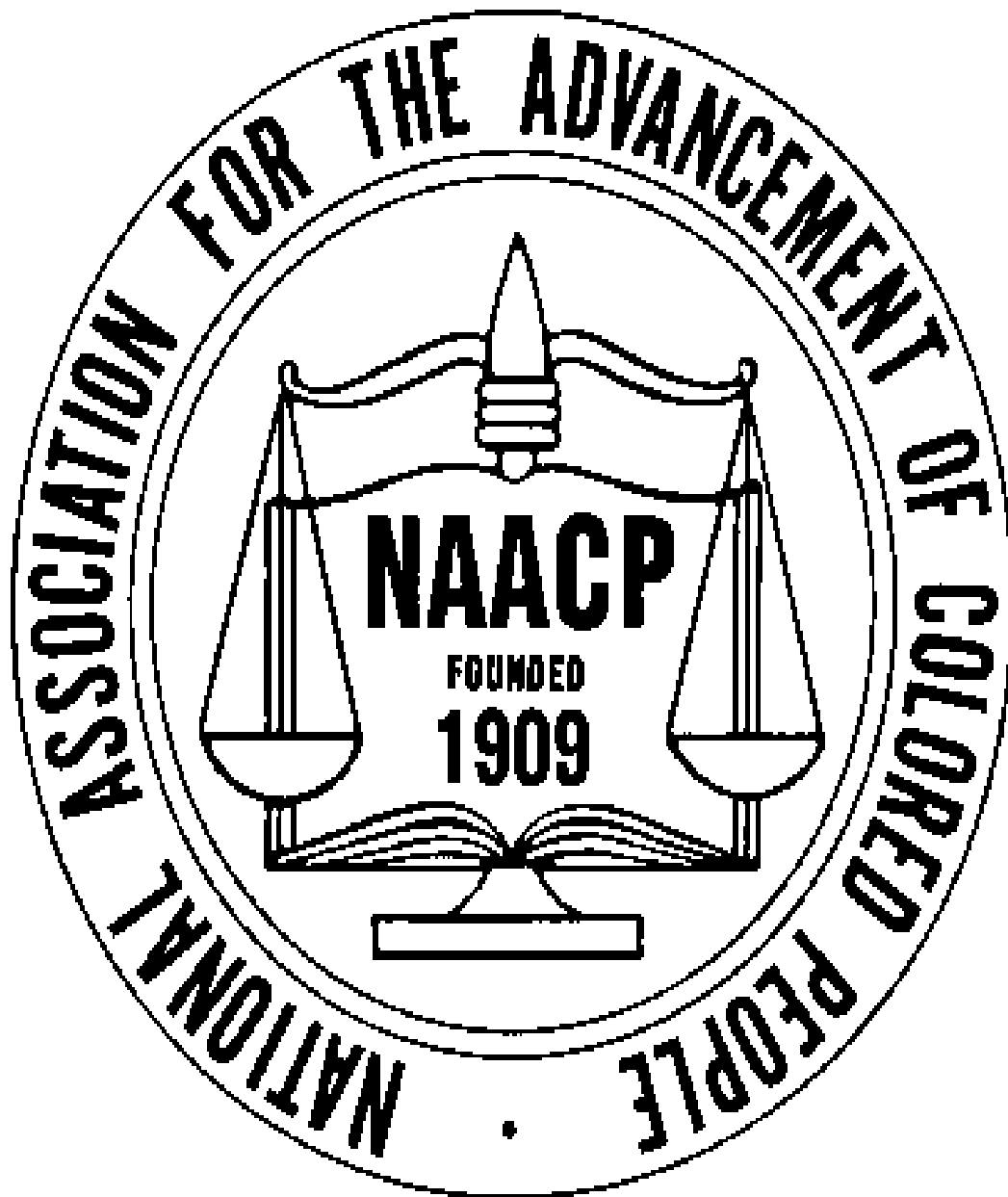
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