



Minority Leadership Summit 2020 ***"Hope and Change for the Future"***

On May 2nd, 2008 the Hispanic Leadership Forum (HLF) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) hosted the Minority Leadership Summit 2020. The concept of the Summit was initiated at the HLF Inaugural Breakfast that was held on January 26, 2008. The Summit gathered a select group of Hispanic and African American leaders, including judges, business leaders, military veterans, community activists, church leaders, law enforcement officials, lawyers, educators, and political representatives.

The Summit was the first official meeting between HLF and SCLC, the venerable civil rights group once led by **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** The goal of the Summit was twofold. First, the groups aimed to address the most important economic, political, social issues facing these communities in North Texas. Second, the groups sought to bridge the historical gap between the growing Hispanic and African American communities to pursue projects of common interest. The theme of the Summit was "Change and Hope for the Future."

To further these goals, HLF and the SCLC created the Greater North Texas Coalition. The new Coalition created joint working groups dedicated to pursuing two major problems that plague both communities: economic segregation and political under representation.

The HLF and SCLC created two committees among others to address these specific issues and develop an agenda that identifies barriers and proposed solutions. It is our collective desire to provide solutions to issues that are plaguing Hispanics and African Americans, which will in turn benefit the community at large.

The economic segregation committee will be addressing various financial inequities and trade deficits that exist amongst the Hispanic and African American community and the public and private sector. However, we first need to examine demographic factors and contributions made by our respective communities.

For example, in terms of population, collectively, we represent 66% of the City of Dallas and 93% of the students in the Dallas Independent School District (DISD).

The purchasing power of Hispanics, African Americans and other ethnic groups in the DFW area is \$41.1 billion which constitutes 27% of the total buying power. In 2002, there were 44,952 Hispanic-owned companies and 27,514 Black-owned companies. Hispanic companies contributed \$5.7 billion in sales receipts and Black firms contributed \$2.2 billion.

With respect to housing, approximately 65% of Hispanics and African Americans reside in apartments. Since such a large percentage of our population are not homeowners, this serves as a barrier to the creation of wealth and long term financial stability. Additionally, only 44% of the students graduate from DISD, which creates an economic burden for this region.

These are just a few examples of various issues discussed during the Summit.

Therefore the economic segregation committee will focus on the following agenda items:

- 1.) Meet with the President and Board Members of the Federal Reserve Bank to open dialogue to encourage the depository institutions to help increase the credit and investment needs of the communities in which they operate. Additionally, they need to become more accountable in increasing business with Hispanic and African American owned companies and to continue to diversify their workforce.
- 2.) Meet with the CEOs and executives from the North Texas region, both public and private, to discuss how we can work in a cooperative manner to establish relationships and establish a process to ensure their corporate participation in investing in our communities. Since Hispanics and African Americans contribute billions of dollars in economic trade with the private and public sector, we wish to explore any perceived trade deficits that exist.
- 3.) Meet with the Mayor publicly every eight weeks to seek his public support of our collective initiatives and discuss with specificity an action plan to be implemented.
- 4.) The City Council should explore the possibility of mandating by ordinance that whenever an economic development project is approved by the City of Dallas, a 15-20% affordable housing component be included.

Other issues, solutions and topics will be incorporated.

The political representation committee will focus on establishing meetings with elected officials from both communities to advance the agenda from the Summit, and ask that the officials publicly support these positions, as well as focus on working with other elected officials to affect public policy.

Thereafter, the committee would meet with other elected officials in the community to promulgate our collective agenda, and seek their public support and votes.

Community leaders from the Summit would examine the historical under representation of minority groups in light of the upcoming 2010 U.S. Census and commence dialogue to discuss the effect that the 2010 Census will have upon our respective political representatives.

Senior Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) attended the Summit, endorsed the coalition and encouraged the groups to work together on these pressing issues. As Congresswoman Johnson stated, "This is an historic Summit in that it is imperative that Hispanics and African Americans work together for the benefit of the entire North Texas region. This could be a model that could be used by other communities throughout the country. Our Congressional office will provide any assistance necessary to support the committees and their goals."

The newly-formed Greater North Texas Coalition is scheduled to meet periodically to advance various initiatives on behalf of these two communities.

For more information, please contact Michael A. Gonzales, Chairman of the HLF or Derrick Bowman, President of the SCLC-Dallas Chapter.

Website: www.hispanicleadershipforum.org