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Legislative Updates

Michelle Woolley

Lydia Edwards

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ENDNOTES

* Sophia Nelson, Esq. graduated from American University Washington College of Law in 1994, and is currently an attorney with Holland Knight in Washington D.C.

¹ US CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2001-2002

² Fox Butterfield, *Freed from Prison, but Still Paying a Penalty*, N.Y. TIMES, Dec. 29, 2002, at 18.

³ Bruce Western, Vincent Schiraldi, Jason Ziedenberg, *Education and Incarceration*, Justice Policy Institute, Aug. 28, 2003, at p. 6 available at http://www.soros.org/initiatives/justice/articles_publications/publications/education_incarceration_20030828/EducationIncarceration1.pdf.

⁴ *Id.* at 8.

⁵ MMWR Weekly, *Quick Stats: Percentage of Persons who lacked Health Insurance for more than 1 Year, by Race/Ethnicity --- United States, January--June 2004*, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5403a6.htm>.

⁶ Fact Sheet, Eliminating Racial & Ethnic Health Disparities Center for Disease Control Office of Minority Health, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/omh/AMH/factsheets/hiv.htm#6>.

⁷ *Eliminating Racial & Ethnic Health Disparities*, Center for Disease Control Office of Minority Health, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/omh/AboutUs/disparities.htm#1>.

⁸ See Nathaniel C. Briggs, M.D., M.Sc., Robert S. Levine, M.D., H. Irene Hall,

Ph.D., et. al, *Occupational Risk Factors for Selected Cancers Among African American and White Men in the United States*, AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, vol. 93(10), pp. 1748-1752, available at <http://www.ahcpr.gov/research/jan04/0104RA14.htm#head3>; Press Release, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Unique study aims at why blacks get, die from cancer more often (Oct. 17, 2001) available at http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2001-10/vumc-usa101601.php.

⁹ See generally, Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/>.

¹⁰ Exec. Order No. 13279, 67 Fed. Reg. 76819 (Dec. 16, 2002).

¹¹ Fact Sheet, Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, Progress in Helping Americans most in need through Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (Jan. 15, 2004), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040115-1.html>.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ See Fact Sheet, Building the American Dream and Strengthening Communities, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, available at <http://www.hud.gov/about/secretary/accomplishments/factsheet/index.cfm#homeownership>.

¹⁶ US CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

By Michelle Woolley and Lydia Edwards

Over the next few months, Congress will be working on several major legislative areas that could significantly impact minority and underrepresented communities. Listed below are a selection of important initiatives, many of which are relevant to the minority community, anticipated to be on the Congressional calendar over the spring and summer.

Privatization of Social Security

President Bush is making privatization of Social Security a top legislative priority in his second term. The President proposes allowing workers to invest a portion of their payroll taxes in private bonds and stock mutual funds that the Administration predicts will have higher yields than traditional Social Security benefits. Critics point out that the expenses incurred by the estimated 100 million new private accounts would substantially impact the forecasted investment returns. Opponents are particularly concerned that changing the safety-net program will cut the incomes of women and African Americans. These groups disproportionately rely on retirement, disability, and survivor benefits from the government, and a reduction in this significant part of their income could result in increased economic hardship.

Other bills, acts and resolutions that have been introduced this term or are pending include:

S. 450 Count Every Vote Act

Introduced by the Senators Clinton (D-NY), Boxer (D-CA), Kerry (D-MA), Lautenberg (D-NJ) Tubbs Jones (D-OH)

This act will make several new voting requirements including: all voting systems to produce a voter-verified paper record for use in manual recounts; at least one machine per precinct must provide for paper, audio, pictorial verification, and be ac-

cessible to language minorities; and a mandatory recount of voter-verified paper records in 2 percent of all polling places or precincts in each state.

H.R. 663 Ex-Offenders Voting Rights Act of 2005

Introduced by Representative Rangel

This bill is introduced to override state laws that currently bar ex-felons from voting in federal elections. Currently, 3,900,000 individuals in the United States, or 1 in 50 adults, cannot vote as a result of a felony conviction. Women represent about 500,000 of those 3,900,000 and thirteen percent of the African-American adult male population, or 1,400,000 African-American men, are disenfranchised.

Joint Resolution to Protect the Boy Scouts

S. Con. Res. 4 and H. Con. Res. 6

Senator Nelson (R-FL) introduced in the Senate and Representative Hefley (R-Colo.) introduced in the House of Representatives

This resolution, introduced in the Senate and the House, asserts that Congress should continue to exercise its statutory authority to support the activities of the Boy Scouts of America, in particular the national and world Boy Scout Jamborees, despite the Boy Scouts policy of excluding gay scout masters and members.

H. R. 1259 Gold Medal for Tuskegee Airmen

Introduced by Representative Rangel (D-NY)

This bill will authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress, collectively, to the Tuskegee Airmen in recognition of their unique military record, which inspired revolutionary reform in the Armed Forces.