ACTION ALERT

DATE: September 16, 2011
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, NAACP Washington Bureau

NAACP Calls for Quick Passage of the American Jobs Act, the New, Comprehensive and Aggressive Job Creation Package

NEW BILL CREATES JOBS, TRAINS WORKERS, ASSISTS IN CREATING AND EXPANDING SMALL BUSINESSES, EXTENDS UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE UNEMPLOYED

THE ISSUE:
Unemployment rates nation-wide are critically high: In August, 2011, the official national unemployment rate was reported at over 9%. Among African Americans, the rate is much higher, at 16.7%. For African American males the rate is 17.5%, and for black teens it’s nearly 41%. 1.4 million African Americans have been out of work for more than 6 months. That is why the NAACP was so encouraged by President Obama’s jobs proposal – announced September 9, 2011 – and his statement that “inaction is not an option”. The NAACP applauds the President and Congress, which has now begun to focus on the need for an aggressive, national job creation program and address an issue that the NAACP has been calling a very real and crucial need for a long time.

The President’s plan, the American Jobs Act (which been introduced in the Senate as S. 1549) will expand opportunities for the long-term unemployed to reenter the workforce, provide incentives for businesses to hire and make investments in revitalizing schools, infrastructure and neighborhoods. It also extends unemployment insurance to benefit the long-term unemployed and their families. The plan supports summer / year-round jobs for youth. The tax cuts portion will benefit over 100,000 African American small businesses and will help African American owned small businesses access capital.

The President is also proposing to invest $15 billion in a national effort to put construction workers on the job rehabilitating and refurbishing hundreds of thousands of vacant and foreclosed homes and businesses. In addition, his plan would invest $25 billion in school infrastructure to modernize at least 35,000 public schools, with the funds targeted at the lowest income districts. The bill would also invest $35 billion to prevent layoffs of up to 280,000 public school teachers, while hiring tens of thousands more teachers and keeping first responders, such as cops and firefighters on the job.

Lastly, the President’s plan would target the long-term unemployed by proposing a tax credit of up to $4,000 to employers for hiring workers who have been looking for a job for more than 6 months. The President’s plan also specifically prohibits employers from discriminating against unemployed workers, which has been a priority for the NAACP as expressed by President and CEO Benjamin Jealous at the white House earlier this year.

The NAACP plans on keeping job creation and anti-employment discrimination a priority for American lawmakers until people and our economy are back at work. As such, we will continue to review and assess all job creation plans and strongly promote and advocate for those which will offer the greatest amount of help to those most in need.
THE ACTION WE NEED YOU TO TAKE:
Contact your Representative and both your Senators and URGE THEM TO SUPPORT THE AMERICAN JOBS ACT, S. 1549. To contact your Senators and Representative, you may:

✔ **Make a Phone Call:**
  Call your Senators and your Representative in Washington by dialing the Capitol Switchboard and asking to be transferred to your Senators'/Congressman’s offices. The switchboard phone number is (202) 224-3121 (see message section, below).

✔ **Write a Letter**
  To write letters to your Senators, send them to:
  The Honorable (name of Senator)
  U.S. Senate
  Washington, D.C. 20510
  To write a letter to your Representative, send it to:
  The Honorable (name of Representative)
  U.S. House of Representatives
  Washington, D.C. 20515

✔ **Send a Fax**
  If you would like to send a fax, call your Senators’ or Representative’s offices (through the Capitol switchboard) and ask for their fax numbers (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box, below).

✔ **Send an E-Mail**
  To send an e-mail to your Senators, go to www.senate.gov; click on “Find Your Senators”. Look up your Senators by state; go to their web sites for e-mail addresses. To send an e-mail to your Representative, go to www.house.gov, and click on “Write Your Representative” (on the left hand side, just under “find your Representative). This will help you identify who your Congressman is and how to contact him/her.

**REMEMBER TO CONTACT BOTH YOUR SENATORS!!!!!**

**THE MESSAGE**

- The current official unemployment rates – over 9% nationally, 16.7% among African Americans, 17.5% for African American men and more than 41% for black teens – are unacceptable, and many experts believe these numbers are artificially low.

- We need an aggressive national job creation plan to put our people, and our economy, back to work.

- The *American Jobs Act* will expand opportunities for the long-term unemployed to reenter the workforce, provide incentives for businesses to hire, prohibit discrimination against the unemployed, build and expand small businesses and make much-needed investments in public schools, teachers, fire fighters, police officers and our nation’s infrastructure.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER!!!**
If you have any questions, call Hilary Shelton at the Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940.

**MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.**
To become an NAACP member or to sign up for e-mail legislative and press updates, visit www.naacp.org
(date)

The Honorable ___________________________
United States Senate / House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.  20510 / 20515

RE:  SUPPORT FOR THE AMERICAN JOBS ACT AND COMPREHENSIVE,
AGGRESSIVE JOB CREATION

Dear Senator / Representative ______________________________;

As your constituent, I strongly urge you to join me in supporting President Obama’s American Jobs Act. The current official unemployment rates – over 9% nationally, 16.7% among African Americans, 17.5% for African American men and more than 41% for black teens – are unacceptable, and many experts believe these numbers are artificially low. We need an aggressive national job creation plan to put our people, and our economy, back to work.

The American Jobs Act will expand opportunities for the long-term unemployed to reenter the workforce, provide incentives for businesses to hire and make investments in revitalizing schools, infrastructure and neighborhoods. It also extends unemployment insurance to benefit the long-term unemployed and their families. The plan supports summer / year-round jobs for youth. The tax cuts portion will benefit over 100,000 African American small businesses and will help African American owned small businesses access capital.

The President is also proposing to invest $15 billion in a national effort to put construction workers on the job rehabilitating and refurbishing hundreds of thousands of vacant and foreclosed homes and businesses. In addition, his plan would invest $25 billion in school infrastructure to modernize at least 35,000 public schools, with the funds targeted at the lowest income districts. The bill would also invest $35 billion to prevent layoffs of up to 280,000 public school teachers, while hiring tens of thousands more teachers and keeping first responders, such as cops and firefighters on the job.

Lastly, the American Jobs Act would target the long-term unemployed by proposing a tax credit of up to $4,000 to employers for hiring workers who have been looking for a job for more than 6 months. It would also specifically prohibit employers from discriminating against unemployed workers.

Our nation needs to maintain the issues of job creation and anti-employment discrimination as a top priority until our people and our economy are back at work. Accordingly, I look forward to hearing from you soon as to what you are doing to create jobs and ensure that the long-term unemployed are offered adequate opportunities, as well as what I can do to help you in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

(sign and print your name and remember to include your address)