COMMISSION ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF BLACK MEN & BOYS

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BUSINESS MEETING
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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021
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The Commission convened via Zoom teleconference at 1:00 p.m. EST, Marvin Williams, Program Manager, presiding.

PRESENT:

REP. JOYCE BEATTY, Commissioner
JACK BREWER, Commissioner
RICHARD CESAR, Commissioner
ASST. ATTY. GENERAL KRISTEN CLARKE, Commissioner
THOMAS M. COLCLOUGH, Commissioner
DR. MARSHALL DILLARD, Commissioner
LARRY ELDER, Commissioner
GERALD FOSTEN, Commissioner
REP. STEVEN HORSFORD, Commissioner
CALVIN JOHNSON, Commissioner
DR. JOSEPH MARSHALL, Commissioner
REP. LUCY MCBATH, Commissioner
DR. LASHAWN MCIVER, Commissioner
DR. O.J. OLEKA, Commissioner

CHRISTIAN RHODES, Commissioner

REV. AL SHARPTON, Commissioner

REP. FREDERICA S. WILSON, Commissioner

MARVIN WILLIAMS, Program Manager

MAURO MORALES, Staff Director, USCCR
A G E N D A

I. Call to Order - Marvin Williams, CSSBMB Program Manager

II. Business Meeting
   a. Discussion and Vote on CSSBMB Chair - Marvin Williams, CSSBMB Program Manager
   b. Approval of Agenda
   c. Discussion and Vote on CSSBMB Secretary
   d. Remarks from the 19 Commissioners of the CSSBMB
   e. Program Manager Report and Introduction of CSSBMB Staff - Marvin Williams, CSSBMB Program Manager

III. New Business
   a. Roberts Rules of Order
   b. Select meeting date for December organizational meeting

IV. Closing Remarks/Adjourn Meeting
I. CALL TO ORDER—MARVIN WILLIAMS,

CSSBMB PROGRAM MANAGER

MR. MORALES: Good afternoon. Dear Commissioners, I want to welcome all of you to the first meeting of the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys. My name is Mauro Morales, and I am the staff director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

When Congress created the new Commission, they placed the administrative responsibility for this new Commission within the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. While it is unusual to place a Commission within another Commission, we have endeavored to bring the new Commission into existence and are pleased to hold today's first meeting. We look forward to working with each one of you and with the members of Congressional Black Caucus.

The staff for the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys will hold several meetings next year and may undertake field investigations at educational institutions, prisons, and housing sites. I wish all of you the best. And I'll turn the rest of the meeting over to the Program Director.
Manager for the new Commission, Dr. Marvin Williams.

DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mauro. This meeting will now come to order. This is the initial public meeting of the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys called CSSBMB. It is now 1:13 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, November 9th, 2021.

Again, good afternoon. I extend a warm welcome to the incoming Commissioners, Commission staff, and our public audience today. I am Marvin Williams, and I serve as the Program Manager of the United States Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys. Today, I am honored to partake in this historic moment and having this inaugural meeting. And I’m excited to be part of this emphasis to improve the lives of Black men and boys in our country.

a. REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION MEMBERS—

REP. FREDERICA WILSON,
SPONSOR CSSBMB ACT

DR. WILLIAMS: At this time, I will ask for Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson to speak about the origin of the Commission on the social status of Black men and boys. Congresswoman Wilson?

COMMISSIONER WILSON: Thank you so much.

I can't tell you how excited I am. When I was a
school principal, my school was one-third African American and one-third Anglo and one-third Hispanic. And of all of those children, my little Black boys stuck out like a sore thumb.

They were just out of control. So I invited men into the school to work with them, to mentor them. And they began to change. And then Giles killed Jesse. Giles murdered Jesse.

And when Giles murdered Jesse, I quit my principal job, lost 70,000 dollars in salary, and ran for the Miami-Dade County School Board in order to stop the violence with Black men and boys. And you have to remember this was 30 years ago. This was during the crack cocaine era.

I started a program after eight hours of debate by the school board. I was the only member - Black member of the school board countywide. And they were saying, what are you going to do? We don't have any money for that. I said, I don't want you to give me money. Just pass the concept.

So, I got all of these Black boys in all of the schools and begin to expose them, put them on neck ties, took them on field trips, took train rides and cruises, museums, work with the police, did all kinds of things. And they changed. And now we're
in Fort Lauderdale and Jacksonville, Tampa, St.
Petersburg, Nashville, Tennessee, Detroit, Michigan.
And we have a waiting list.

And then when I was elected to the House
of Representatives in Tallahassee, I established a
Commission -- a council on the status of Black men
and boys. And that council still is operational in
the Office of the Attorney General. So when I came
to Congress, I said, boy, we've got to find a way to
make this impact that we're making in Florida, that
we're making in the few states outside of Florida
nationwide.

So, I addressed the CBC and I said, this
is what I plan to do. So, I began to write the
legislation in concert with the Congressional Black
Caucus. Every member of the Congressional Black
Caucus signed onto the bill every year that I proposed
the bill, and it was proposed year after year after
year. This bill just would not -- they would not
bring this bill to the floor.

After George Floyd was murdered, it came
to the floor of the Senate. It passed. It came to
the floor of the house. It passed, overwhelming
bipartisan support. It passed.

I couldn't believe it. And I am just so
related that all of you are here with me today because
this Commission, it wasn't easy getting here in these
30 years. But it's the most important piece of
legislation passed in Congress since the Voting
Rights Act.

While our country battles an
unprecedented pandemic and extreme racial unrest in
most cities, it is business as usual. And it is so
disheartening to witness Black men and Black boys
killing Black men and Black boys nonstop, even during
these perilous times. This new cycle does not even
-- the new cycle doesn't even mention their names and
local law enforcement does little to catch the
perpetrators.

How long will we allow this? How long
will we as talented Black members on this call let it
continue? How many funerals do we need to attend?
Babies, children, mothers, families are caught in the
crossfire. How long?

And the police murdering Black boys and
men. How long? When a Black boy is born, the doctor
says, Ms. Wilson, it's a boy. He doesn't say, Ms.
Wilson, it's a murderer.

So how do you raise a murderer? We're
going to count the ways and we're going to stop the
madness right here in this Commission. No more. The Commission will conduct a systemic study of the conditions affecting Black men and boys including homicide rates, arrests, incarceration rates, poverty, violence, fatherhood, mentorship, drug abuse, death rates, disparate income and wealth levels, school performance in all grade levels, including post-secondary education and college, and health issues.

Every African American family -- every, every African American family has experienced some challenge with regard to Black men and boys. Whether it's your father, son, nephew, cousin, grandson, or uncle, everyone on this call, everyone on this Commission that's Black has experienced something. So Black men have been blatantly, disproportionately targeted by racism.

And discrimination, since we landed in America as slaves, it is universal and has left an indisputable footprint in our community. They have been lynched, castrated, and imprisoned in record numbers. Despite this harsh treatment, so many have survived and are noble members of society, just like you on this call.

But it was hard, I'm sure. So, we must
reach back and pull those have lost along the way.

It is my greatest hope that the work of the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys will find a solution. That's a little bit about me, and I look forward to getting to know more about you today and learning while serving on this important Commission matters to you.

We also will take care of some administrative tasks so we can put this Commission into action. This is a wonderful day. This is a transformative day. This is a transformative legislation.

And all of us are making history. There has never been any bill, legislation, or policy passed by Congress to address Black men and boys. Specifically, whenever I would run for office, they would say, you won because it's the year of the woman. Let's talk about that later.

At this point, I will turn the meeting back over to our Program Manager, Dr. Marvin Williams. And I want to say to each of you, from this point on, your title is not congressman, not doctor, not mister. You are Commissioner, Commissioner Beatty, Commissioner Elder, Commissioner Horsford.
You are -- we will refer to each other as Commissioner. Thank you so much, and welcome to this history making Commission. Thank you. Marvin?

II. BUSINESS MEETING

DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Commissioner Wilson. Again, a good afternoon. And I just want to go into the business area of the meeting, first with the quorum.

Per statute, the majority of the members of the Commission, which is ten members, constitute a quorum. To establish a quorum, I will call each member by name. Please note your presence by saying, here. And my order here is in alphabetical order.

Commissioner Joyce Beatty?

COMMISSIONER BEATTY: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Jamaal Bowman?

Commissioner Jack Brewer?

COMMISSIONER BREWER: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Richard Cesar?

COMMISSIONER CESAR: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Kristen Clarke?

COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Here.
DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Thomas M. Colclough?

COMMISSIONER COLCLough: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Marshall Dillard?

COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Here.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Lawrence Elder?

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Gerald Fosten?

COMMISSIONER FOSTEN: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Steven Horsford?

COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Hakeem Jeffries?

Commissioner Calvin Johnson?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Joseph E. Marshall, Jr.?

COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Lucy McBath?

COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Here.
DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner LaShawn McIver?

COMMISSIONER MCIVER: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner O.J. Oleka?

COMMISSIONER OLEKA: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Christian Rhodes?

COMMISSIONER RHODES: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Al Sharpton?

Commissioner Al Sharpton?

COMMISSIONER WILSON: Here.

DR. WILLIAMS: For the record, please note that a quorum of the Commissioners is present today. The next item of business is a vote on the Chair. This is the first item on the agenda, that we vote for the Chair and Secretary.

a. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON CSSBMB CHAIR

MARVIN WILLIAMS, CSSBMB PROGRAM MANAGER

DR. WILLIAMS: And the Chair actually will do the vote for the Secretary. But at this point, I will actually do the Chair for -- the voting for the Chair. The duty of each position is included in the meeting packet.

Does everyone have a copy of the packet?

I will take those nods as yes. Is there anyone who
does not have a copy of the packet?

Okay, very good. The statute requires that our first meeting, we are to elect a Chair. At this time, will someone make a motion for yourself or someone else to serve as Chair?

COMMISSIONER MCBATH: I so nominate -- I nominate Representative Commissioner Frederica Wilson as Chair of the Commission of the Status of young Black men and boys.

COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: I second the motion.

DR. WILLIAMS: We have a motion on the floor, and it has been second that Commissioner Frederica Wilson will be the Chair of this Commission. Are there any other nominations on the floor?

Hearing none, I would ask that we would vote on Frederica Wilson's position as Chair. And I will call each person by name. Commissioner Beatty?

You can answer by saying aye.

Commissioner Bowman?

Commissioner Brewer?

COMMISSIONER BREWER: Aye.

COMMISSIONER BEATTY: I am sorry.

Commissioner Beatty, we're having some technical
problems in my district office. Did you get my --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

COMMISSIONER BEATTY:  -- my loud aye?

DR. WILLIAMS:  Yes, ma'am. I definitely have it now.

COMMISSIONER BEATTY:  And I will now mute. I am so sorry.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Oh, no, no. No problem, ma'am. Commissioner Clarke?

COMMISSIONER CLARKE:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Colclough?

COMMISSIONER COLCLough:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Dillard?

COMMISSIONER DILLARD:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Elder?

COMMISSIONER ELDER:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Fosten?

COMMISSIONER FOSTEN:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Horsford?

COMMISSIONER HORSFORD:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Johnson?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner Marshall?

COMMISSIONER MARSHALL:  Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS:  Commissioner McBath?
COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner McIver?

COMMISSIONER MCIVER: Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Oleka?

COMMISSIONER OLEKA: Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Rhodes?

COMMISSIONER RHODES: Aye.

DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Sharpton?

And Commissioner Wilson?

Okay. At this time --

COMMISSIONER WILSON: Yeah.

DR. WILLIAMS: -- thank you so much for your votes. And Commissioner Frederica Wilson has been nominated and she has been -- and it's been second and has been voted upon. And she is now Chair of the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys. Congratulations, Commissioner Wilson.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much to everyone for supporting my bid. We're going to have an exciting time. I hope you're ready to roll up your sleeves because I'm an overachiever. I've worked really hard, and I'm going to need each and every one of you to help me make history. This is a Commission that's going to travel. We're going to go to so many places to change
this whole trajectory of Black men and boys. Thank you so much. I'm honored to serve as Chair, and I won't let you down. Thank you.

DR. WILLIAMS: And ma'am, the next order for you as Chair is the vote on the Secretary, ma'am.

c. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON CSSBMB SECRETARY

CHAIR WILSON: Okay. The statute requires that in our first meeting, we elect a Secretary.

COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: I would like to put in a nomination for the Secretary Rev. Al Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay.

COMMISSIONER BEATTY: I additionally would like to place into nomination the Rev. Al Sharpton on National Action Network.

CHAIR WILSON: Do we have a second for Rev. Al Sharpton?

COMMISSIONER CESAR: I'd like to second that nomination for Rev. Al Sharpton.

COMMISSIONER BREWER:

CHAIR WILSON: Okay. We will now vote on the Secretary. I will call the roll. And as I call the roll, you will answer with the name of the person you would like to serve as Secretary.
Commissioner Joyce Beatty?

COMMISSIONER BEATTY: It's a great honor that I vote for Rev. Al Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Commissioner Brewer?

COMMISSIONER BREWER: 

CHAIR WILSON: Commissioner Cesar?

COMMISSIONER CESAR: Dr. Rev. Al Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Kristen Clarke?

COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Rev. Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Thomas Colclough?

COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Rev. Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Marshall Dillard?

COMMISSIONER DILLARD: 

CHAIR WILSON: Lawrence Elder?

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Is it possible for me to abstain?

CHAIR WILSON: Yes.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Okay. I abstain.

CHAIR WILSON: Gerald Fosten?

COMMISSIONER FOSTEN: I abstain as well.

CHAIR WILSON: Steven Horsford?

COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: Rev. Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Calvin Johnson?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Rev. Sharpton.
CHAIR WILSON: Joseph Marshall?

COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: So I yield and nominate and vote for Al Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: Lucy McBath?

COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Rev. Al Sharpton.

CHAIR WILSON: LaShawn McIver?

COMMISSIONER MCIVER: I abstain. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: O.J. Oleka, Commissioner Oleka?

COMMISSIONER OLEKA: I abstain.

CHAIR WILSON: Christian Rhodes?

COMMISSIONER RHODES: I abstain.

CHAIR WILSON: And Frederica Wilson, Rev. Al Sharpton. And the tally, Rev. Al Sharpton, 9 -- I'm sorry. Commissioner Sharpton, 9, 5 abstentions. It is my honor to say that I move that Rev. Sharpton serve as Secretary of the Commission.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay. And now we'll move to the second order of business. I'm going to now open up the floor for each Commissioner to give a one-minute introduction.

d. REMARKS FROM THE 19 COMMISSIONERS OF THE CSSBMB

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CHAIR WILSON: Please share information about yourself and the work you hope to do and the shared goal of improving the social status of Black men and boys. This legislation to create the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys was written for the Congressional Black Caucus and was written in consultation with the Congressional Black Caucus which is celebrating 50 years of service to our nation. Give us a hand, 50 years. Thank you so much.

Congressional Black Caucus Chairwoman -- well, Commissioner Chairwoman Joyce Beatty serves on this Commission. You heard her introduce herself. According to the legislation, she appointed five members to serve as it is written.

She appointed Congresswoman McBath and she appointed Congresswoman Wilson and Commissioners Jeffries, Steven Horsford, and Jamaal Bowman. Steven is on the Commission today. The other two were -- you heard from both of them in the process. And the other two are on CODELs.

Steven himself is a champion in the cause of justice for Black men and boys. And he has some important legislation that is included by the Congressional Black Caucus in Build Back Better. So,
when we pass Build Back Better, we will pass Commissioner Horsford's very important legislation that addresses what we're discussing today.

According to the legislation, the only members of Congress to serve on the Commission -- and I wrote it -- shall be members of the Congressional Black Caucus. And as a Caucus and as a Commission, we will advance legislation through Congress on behalf of Commissioners on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys and the issues are many, in addition to writing an annual report of our activities. Every member of the Congressional Black Caucus at the time of passage of this bill in 2020 sponsored the bill.

Commissioner Beatty, Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, we're going to ask everybody to introduce themselves for one minute. I know it's hard because it's hard for me. But this is our champion here. We are so proud of the leadership that the Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus has given us through this perilous time that we have been in, including COVID-19, the passing of the Rescue Act, passing of all our CARES 1, CARES 2, fighting for the infrastructure bill, fighting for Build Back Better, keeping all of us intact.

We have very moderate members. We have
very progressive members. We have all kinds of members. We have new members. We have old members. We have young members. We have seasoned members. And she is able to manage and keep all of us under this big tent.

And America is really praising her for breaking the log jam and the passage of the infrastructure bill as she worked with the Progressive Caucus and the other caucuses and our whip, Clyburn, to come up with a solution to get that very important bill passed. It's a bipartisan bill, and we're going door to door tallying it. And we hope that you would do the same. Commissioner Beatty, one minute.

COMMISSIONER BEATTY: Thank you, and I will do it in 30 seconds, I think. Our Madam Chair has said a lot. I am Commissioner Joyce Beatty. I hail from the great state of Ohio.

I am also the Chair of the 58-member Congressional Black Caucus. I serve on the exclusive Committee of Financial Services and the first ever Chair of Diversity and Inclusion. My two grandbabies make my day a lot better. But I am known for connecting people to policies to politics.

I also believe with this Commission like
the caucuses that I work with that our diversity is our strength. And I am so glad to be a part of this bipartisan caucus. I am an advocate. I'm a civil rights fighter. But I'm also a businessperson.

With that, I yield back. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone, hopefully in person when we are at a better new normal. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for all those kind words about me during this historic 50 years of the Congressional Black Caucus.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. And now our Vice Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Commissioner Horsford. Please provide us with an introduction, one minute.

COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: Thank you, Chair Wilson. I want to commend you for your extraordinary leadership and vision in establishing this important Commission on the Status of Black boys and men. To my Chairwoman Joyce Beatty and to all of the Commissioners, I'm really honored to join with you.

I am a product of the Las Vegas community. My mom is an immigrant from Trinidad. I lost my father to gun violence. He was shot and killed my freshman year in college. I am now raising three children, two Black boys and a Black daughter, with
my wife, Sonya. And I am honored to be on this
Commission.

Before I was ever elected to anything, I
was involved in community work helping our young
people get the support, the training, the education,
the mentoring that they need to be successful.
Someone gave me an opportunity. And I believe it's
our mission to give them an opportunity.

I'll just close by saying Commissioner
Wilson referred to the bill that I'm sponsoring to
Break the Cycle of Violence Act along with many of my
Congressional Black Caucus members, including Lucy
McBath and Lisa Blunt Rochester and others. This is
a 5-billion-dollar investment in community violence
intervention to disrupt violence, particularly gun-
related violence. Black men account for 6 percent
of the U.S. population, but we are 50 percent of the
gun homicides in this country.

And with our bill and the work of this
Commission, we are going to change that. We're going
to save lives, and we're going to help Black men and
boys understand their value and their worth. Thank
you, Madam Chair. I yield back.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you so much,
Commissioner Horsford. And now this is a special
Commissioner. She brings so much experience to this Commission, and I'm so happy that she is on the Commission.

And she is a member of a -- we have a caucus, and all of these are members of the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys. I don't want to steal her thunder. So, I'm going to let her tell her life story that is very, very heartbreaking, Commissioner Lucy McBath.

COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Thank you so much, and good afternoon to all of you, my fellow Commissioners. As a member of Congress, I really look forward to working with all of you as we set forward on this very important mission that is ahead of us. And let me start by congratulating my friend and colleague, Commissioner Frederica Wilson, for her extraordinary vision to just protect and serve America's Black men and boys.

We are only here today because of the tireless efforts of Commissioner Wilson. And she's been a champion for Black men and boys ever since her time as an elementary school principal. And that tireless work is why we now have this Commission.

The work that we do here, we'll search for ways to address just so many of the inequities in
education and employment and housing and healthcare and civil rights. And I believe that this Commission really will help us create a better future for our children and for our grandchildren because while we know that we've come so far, we still have such a long way to go. And I know from personal experience that you can do everything that you believe is right as a parent and still see your child, a young Black man, be taken away from you.

I lost my son, Jordan, to unnecessary gun violence in Jacksonville, Florida in 2012. I believe that Jordan's father and I had done everything right. But at the end of the day, he was a young Black man. And I still feel that injustice every single day of my life.

So, while I continue to look back on how far we have come, I must also look forward to a future without my son as more young Black men and males around this country continue to suffer by these inequities and unnecessary gun violence. So I see how far we still have to go. This Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys can help us to continue to move forward and move forward with that strength and that hope that we need to give our communities.
And I know that we're going to all work hard together toward a future that we believe is going to be fair and equitable for everyone, in particular our young Black males and men in America. I know we have a lot of work to do before us. But I so look forward to being on this journey with each and every one of you. And I'm so grateful to be able to serve with you.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much, Commissioner McBath. And now we have Commissioner Brewer who was appointed by former President Trump. Welcome, Mr. Brewer -- Commissioner Brewer, one minute. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BREWER: Thank you, Commissioner Wilson. It's an honor and a pleasure, and I just applaud you for your lifelong dedication, particularly to these young boys down here in South Florida. That's where I reside.

I'm currently teaching in prisons across Florida and the United States every week. So, I get to look at these Black men in their eyes every week and understand the pain that they go through and the situation that they've been put in. I also run a small school down here in South Florida where we literally only focus on underserved Black men. And
I see them every day. Every day that that bell rings, they come right to me. And so, I coach, and I understand the issues that they face.

And I got to admit I don't agree with the politics of a lot of people on this call. But I think for this call right here, we need to all put our political perspectives aside. We need to focus because we all have the same goal and that's to help these boys live the American dream.

I'm a proud American. I'm a proud patriot. I love this county. I got a chance to play in the National Football League. I've had an opportunity to go on and do some incredible things that God has anointed me and allowed me to do.

And I know that that dream can be felt for the majority of the Black boys and men in this nation. We just have to be smarter about policy, about where our dollars are going. And we have to hold our parents accountable.

And we have to start really rehabilitating our young boys because that's what they need, whether it's in a prison or schools. If they're leaving out of there and they can't read and write, we're not giving them a chance. And so, I just can't tell you all how excited I am to be
involved with this Commission. I'm a worker. So, Ms. Wilson, put me to work because I'm ready. Put me in. God bless you.

CHAIR WILSON: I love it. And we're not bringing any politics into this meeting in this Commission. This is all about the children, all about the Black boys, all about the Black men and lifting them up. I am so happy to have you on this Commission. Thank you. And now we have Commissioner Elder who was appointed by former President Trump.

One minute, Mr. Elder.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Thank you, fellow Commissioners, for having me. It's indeed an honor. I am an attorney. I am a TV and radio talk show host. I'm in about 300 markets. About 1.5 million people listen to me every day. And for the last 30 years, I've been talking, writing about supporting organizations that support Black men and Black boys, including the Angel Tree Prison Fellowship.

Frederick Douglass said it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men. I believe the number one problem facing Black America is a large number of children enter the world without a father married to the mother. It was Barack Obama who once said, a kid raised without a father is 5
times more likely to be poor and commit crime, 9 times
more likely to drop out of school, and 20 times more
likely to end up in prison. In 1965, 25 percent of
Black children entered the world without a father
married to the mother. Now that number is almost 70
percent.

I once interviewed Kweisi Mfume who was
then Chair of the NAACP. And I asked him, Mr. Mfume,
as between the presence of White racism or the absence
of Black fathers, which poses the bigger problem to
the Black community? Without missing a beat, he
said, the absence of Black fathers.

It is, again, far and away the most
important problem I think facing America and not just
Black children. Nearly half -- nearly 40 percent of
all children in America now enter the world without
a father married to the mother. Almost half of
Hispanic children do. Now 25 percent of White
children do, a number that was only 8 percent back in
1965.

I think we need to rethink lots of
policies that in my opinion are destroying the
family, up to and including what I consider to be the
welfare state. I think what we've done if we
incentivize women to marry the government, we've
allowed men to abandon their financial and moral responsibility. There are lots of other policies I think that have come together to hurt the Black family.

And I hope that we can have a discussion about all these things so that we can turn this situation around because as was pointed out, Black people, Black men are roughly 6.5 percent of the population. But nearly half of the homicides are Black male victims and Black male perps. We need to do something about that.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you so much, Commissioner Elder, for your perspective. And I've heard you say that before. So, I know what you mean. And we will have discussions about all of that. That is nothing that we will ignore. That is so powerfully evident in so many phases of life.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: That's why I think Mr. Brewer and Dr. Marshall, all of us have set out a mission on building a strong next, I guess you would say, new Black little boys. And that's why we do what we do. And we're going to need you to help us. We're not going to just -- we're going to fight for them because we know that is wrong.
COMMISSIONER ELDER: Absolutely.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. And now Commissioner Marshall who was appointed by Speaker Pelosi, one minute, Dr. Marshall — well, Commissioner Marshall.

COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Thank you, Commissioner Wilson. What a wonderful opportunity. This is fabulous. Like you say, this has never happened before. And for me, it's like -- I won't say a culmination, but just the result of all the work that I've done.

My entire adult life has been working with young Black men and boys. First, like yourself being an educator, I taught middle school for 18 years. You all want a real job? I'll give you one. And being an administrator and then just losing a lot of my young people basically to the streets.

Started my own organization to do something about that. And it's been great. It's been great. I mean, it's -- but there's a lot more to do.

All the numbers you cited, all of the conditions we're in, I think we know what happens to young Black men in this country. They're going to jail or they're going to prison. I've heard it all.
And this is what I do for a living. It is wonderful.

I just want to say, Commissioner Brewer, I don't know what your politics are. But I certainly think what you said about wanting to do something for Black men is aligned with me. If we can agree on that, we won't have a problem at all.

I will bring to this Commission the words that I have lived by. My grandmother told me when I was six years old, the more you know, the more you owe. And as you go and progress in life, you must help others to do likewise.

That is a motto I live by. That is the work that I do. And that is what I'm bringing the Commission. Let's make some more progress. Let's make some progress for our Black men and boys. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. Appreciate it. Commissioner Oleka appointed by Minority Leader McConnell, please provide one minute.

COMMISSIONER OLEKA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And it is an honor to be with you all today. Again, my name is Dr. O.J. Oleka. I hail from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I'd like to thank Leader McConnell for appointing me for this incredibly

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important Commission.

My background is in education and government. My first job out of college was middle school math teacher. And I’m excited to be in this conversation because I’m the product of Nigerian immigrants. And my father grew up in abject poverty, came to the United States with my mother, and lived the American dream, put three kids through college, of course, their favorite baby boy. And the rest they say is history.

I think that we’ve got an opportunity here to create something for our Black men and boys where they can either be my father’s generation. Or if they’re in poverty, they can come out of it. Or they can be my generation, a generation that benefits from it.

There was absolutely no reason and no excuse why this group of folks can’t come together and solve real problems and make sure that we can have answers to the American people because that’s what they sent us here to do. My background, like I said, is in education in government. I have a Ph.D. in leadership and higher education. And what I want to bring to this Commission is a lens through data and to make sure that we’re asking the important
questions to really get to the heart of how we can solve some of these problems.

And the last thing I'll say is this. There are very few things that the American people agree on and have agreed on politically in last couple years. This is one of them. They know that we need to solve the crisis that exists for Black men and boys.

And so I'll echo my colleagues and say that we need to put every piece of politics aside because what we can do here is do something phenomenal where the Congressional Black Caucus celebrates 100 years, they'll look back at 2021 and say it was this little Commission of Black Men and Boys that cared about their social status that really made the change that we all try to see. And so, thank you. I'm excited for the opportunity, and it's good to be here with you all.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you, Dr. Oleka -- Commissioner Oleka. We're happy that he's appointed you. You're going to be great, a great Commissioner. This is absolutely fabulous.

And now we have Commissioner Sharpton who really needs no introduction. He has been elected as the Secretary of the Commission. And I have known
him for at least 35 years.

I have been in the back doors of bars with him. I've worked on foster care. We've marched in the street for voting rights, all kinds of things.

He came to bless me when I was elected to Congress and reconcentrated me. And I just love him. He knows that. He is the civil rights leader of this century. Rev. Sharpton, bless you.

COMMISSIONER SHARPTON: Well, thank you, Congresswoman Wilson. And so that my friend, Congresswomen McBath and Congressman Horsford don't get the wrong impression, it was a bar in Florida. You wanted us to -- they were making Black go in the back door and Whites go in the front.

So, you had me come march on it. We weren't going in the bar to get a drink. I just want to give clarity to everybody on that when you said we were going in the back door because I don't want people to misunderstand that I was having communion outside of service.

But let me say that I am honored to be a part of this Commission. I'm honored to be serving with people that I know and respect, some that I hope to get to know. I think it is a testimony to your leadership that we have the Commission.
I think it's a testimony to you having been a real example of unifying people that it is bipartisan because the issues of Black boys and Black men is not a partisan issue. And if there's anything we can agree on is this. I grew up raised by a single mother. My father left when I was young. But if it wasn't for mentors I had in the ministry and later civil rights that became father figures to me, I would've probably ended up like most of my contemporaries in Brooklyn, in jail or dead by now.

And I believe that the engagement of all of us can save millions of young men and that we can collectively do so, both legislatively as well as socially. Very few people know that two weeks after I gave the eulogy for George Floyd's funeral, I gave the eulogy in Brooklyn for a one-year-old young Black boy was killed by a stray bullet in a gang fight. The fact that that didn't make national news is the reason we need this Commission because people are dying every day in our communities. And it's been normalized.

And I don't care if you're a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or undecided, we all need to rise up about that because all of us are subject to that. And I think that we can unite around it. So,
I am honored to be a part of the Commission, honored to be elected, nominated by my Chairlady, Congresswoman Beatty.

And unfortunately, I had to do my radio show today. But any other time, I will get relief to be a part of all of the Commissioners proceedings. I take it as a priority in the work that I do. So thank you and God bless you. And again, we went in the bar to make sure Blacks could go in the front, not that we would go and have an afternoon cocktail.

CHAIR WILSON: That's not the only place we were. We did so many things.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

COMMISSIONER SHARPTON: That's correct.

CHAIR WILSON: -- Black boy's death in a boot camp. We got rid of all the boot camps in Florida. I mean, we did so, so much. And Rev. Sharpton and I have been marching and for unions - and everything.

I can't even -- and the one thing about him is when you call him and it's about justice, he doesn't even exchange words. He comes and he shows up. And that is so important.

And I told you over and over and over again, you are the civil rights leader of our time.
It has fallen on your shoulders. We have no one else. And you have taken the mantle, and you have marched with me.

And that's why when I was Chair of the CBC, I made sure that you received the highest award that we give because all of the Congressional Black Caucus members on this call our Chairwoman, Ms. McBath, Mr. Horsford, Commissioners. So, from now on, they know, they know what I'm saying. So, when we see you, you're not going to be Rev. Sharpton. You're going to be Commissioner Sharpton. So --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

COMMISSIONER SHARPTON: Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: And we're going to get some Commission pins and Commission t-shirts and Commission hats. And we're going to be moving along, Mr. Brewer. You'll see. We're going to make it happen. Thank you so much.

And now Commissioner Dillard who has been appointed by -- no, let me see, Commissioner Dillard appointed by Minority Leader McCarthy. Commissioner Dillard, raise your hand.

COMMISSIONER DILLARD: I'm right here.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay, welcome. How are you?
COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Thank you. Thank
you. Well, first of all, I have to write my thoughts
down because as an elementary school principal, I'm
used to dealing with kindergartners and all the way
up to fifth graders. So, when I speak, you know when
I speak to them, it's different than when I'm going
to have to speak to you guys. So, I've written down
what I need to say here.

And first of all, let me say that it's an
honor to serve on this Commission and humbling to be
among such distinguished people. So good morning.
With that being said, my name is Marshall Dillard.
I'm an elementary school principal, and I spent six
years as a teacher.

And I'm in my 27th year as an
administrator in our school district, 21 of those
years as a principal. I serve on the board of the
Driller to Driller Foundation. We provide
scholarship money to graduating seniors to attend
college for some trade school. And I'm the
Chairperson of the African American Network of Kern
County.

I received my B.A. from Stanford
University where I was a student athlete. After
graduating from Stanford with my B.A., I went to work
for an organization called Pros for Kids. It was
founded by -- I'm not sure if you recognize his name,
Dr. Marshall, Delvin Williams, ex-49er -- founded by
Delvin Williams.

We went into high schools and taught an
anti-drug curriculum and used professional athletes
from various sports as our guest speakers. So, after
Pros for Kids, I went into teaching and earned my
master's in Education from the University of La
Verne. One of the reasons I went into administration
because I wanted to have a larger impact on the lives
of students outside of my classroom doors there
because as a teacher, your impact is mainly within
your four walls of your classroom.

So, I wanted to be behind the closed
doors who would make decisions into the lives of the
students -- how we're going to impact the lives of
students throughout our entire school and throughout
the entire school district. Never in my wildest
dreams did I envision I would be appointed to a
committee that would have such a national impact. So
I look forward to serving on this committee to work
with you and learn from you and learn from such an
esteemed collection of people that's going to enrich
the lives of Black males in our nation. Thank you.
CHAIR WILSON: Thank you, Commissioner Dillard. We look forward to working with you. Got a lot of school principals on here. That's great.

And now this is our little star. We love her. She is such -- oh, my God. We just think so much of her in the Congressional Black Caucus and in Congress altogether.

We have to work with her, and she has always proven herself to be just phenomenal. This is Commissioner Clarke. She was appointed by Attorney General Garland. And we're going to ask her to give us a minute. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Thank you. Thank you so much. It's great to be here and a real honor to join this inaugural meeting of the Commission. I am really proud and pleased to be here representing the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice.

I want to first start off by recognizing the leadership of Commissioner Wilson. The Commission was born out of years of advocacy, research, hard work, and persistence, all led by Representative and Commissioner Wilson. And the fact that we are gathered here together, a diverse group of government officials, community advocates,
educators, researchers, and business leaders from around and across the country and across the ideological spectrum really is a testament to Commissioner Wilson's coalition building and leadership efforts.

So, thank you so much for bringing us together. And it is not lost on me the gravity of this task. We now have the collective responsibility to drive the mission of this Commission forward and to take a hard look at the social conditions faced by Black men and Black boys across the country.

And the challenges, we know, are critical. I just want to highlight a few statistics. Black men are overrepresented among prisoners in this country by a factor of five compared to the rest of the population.

In 2019, only 28 percent of Black men between the ages of 25 to 29 had a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 40 percent of White men and nearly half of White women. Prior to March of 2020, Black men consistently had some of the highest unemployment rates. And those rates only worsened during the pandemic.

And recently, researchers have found that Black men and Black boys are uniquely stigmatized in
American society. According to one study on implicit bias, more than 40 percent of White respondents ranked many or almost all of Black men as violent while White men are less than half as likely to be described that way. So, we have a lot of work to do to achieve racial justice and racial equity for Black boys and Black men. We've got to work to ensure equal access to democracy.

We've got to tackle these disparities in arrest and incarceration rates, tackle poverty, work on quality education and access to health care and so much more. My hope is that this Commission will begin its work with a simple step, listening to the communities that we seek to uplift. And I look forward to hopefully hearing testimony from Black teenagers and young people who are living the very experiences we seek to improve.

Just in closing, I'll note on a personal note that as a mother who has had the talk with my son on multiple occasions, I'm hopeful that we can find ways to use our lived experiences and the force of our federal civil rights laws to help confront these challenges. I want to thank the Commission staff for their hard work, and I look forward to working with all of my fellow Commissioners in the
road ahead. Thank you so much.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much, Commissioner Clarke, for all that you do and all that you are going to contribute to this Commission. We appreciate you. Commissioner Johnson who was appointed by Secretary Fudge. Please provide for one minute.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, Madam Chairwoman and Commissioners, it is both an honor and a privilege to be working with you all on this. I just want to give you some background. I'm a native Washingtonian. I have lived in Washington, D.C. for most of my life.

And my work has basically been driven -- my education and my work has been driven by my experiences growing up in Washington D.C. I am currently at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. I operate out of the Office of Policy, Development, and Research where I'm the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Monitoring.

I actually provide executive leadership to the Department on demonstrations, evaluations, and research focusing on programs and policy in the areas that I think that we're going to cover, economic self-
sufficiency, housing mobility, homelessness, housing
discrimination, and various issues at the
intersection of housing and health, housing and
education, housing and justice. And so, I am really
excited about the opportunity to serve with you all
on this Commission. Prior to joining HUD, I spent
my career designing program models and actually
evaluating programs at think tanks, university, and
also for the mayor of the District of Columbia.

Specifically, I spent most of my career
on community crime control policies to include youth
and adult diversion programs which many of you have
actually mentioned, community policing, community
corrections, and community violence interventions.
And I am HUD's representative to the community
violence intervention group now run out of the White
House called the Collaborative that I believe that's
what the five billion dollars is actually going to
expand and support. I look forward to sharing things
that I'm learning across the various work streams
that I'm in.

I hope to bring these experiences to bear
on the work of the Commission with a focus on racial
and social equity and community engaged approaches to
program and policy development. I am no stranger to
basically going in prisons and talking to inmates, juvenile detention facilities, public housing developments. I really do enjoy a community engaged approach.

Communities need to be engaged. They have a lot of solutions, and I welcome the opportunity to do that type of work with you all as well. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. We look forward to it. We know about Black men and homelessness and Black people and homelessness. So give Ms. Fudge a thumbs up for sending you. We appreciate it.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Certainly will.
I certainly will. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Commissioner McIver appointed by Secretary Becerra, Health and Human Services.

COMMISSIONER MCIVER: Thank you, Commissioner Wilson. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Dr. LaShawn McIver, and I am truly honored to serve as a Commissioner on this Commission for the Social Status of Black Men & Boys.
I am the Director of the Office of Minority Health at the Centers for Medicare &
Medicaid Services within the Department of Health and
Human Services. Our agency is the largest insurer
of health care in the country. And our office plays
a role in ensuring that the needs of minority
populations are met.

I am very grateful for Secretary
Becerra's appointment for this critical role during
this time of transformation and historic
opportunities within the health care system itself.
Having spent my career focused on public health and
addressing the needs of minority populations, this
work is extremely important to me, not only as a
public health physician but as a daughter, as a
sister, as a wife and a mother, having seen the impact
of gun violence and other issues that folks have
talked about on the call. This is something that
I've seen firsthand living in Baltimore, living in
parts of North Carolina, and living in other parts of
the world and recognize that we have an opportunity
here on a global stage to make a difference.

Black men currently suffer worse health
than other racial groups in the U.S. Subsequently,
Black men have the lowest life expectancy and highest
mortality rates, specific conditions compared to both
women and men of other racial and ethnic groups. And
there's no single reason that can be attributed to Black male poor health outcomes. Instead, racial discrimination, unemployment, lack of affordable health services, low health literacy, poverty, access to health insurance, and insufficient medical and social services tailored to their needs. So my hope as a participant in this condition is that we emerge as a catalyst of positive authentic engagement and paradigm shifting practices, that our interconnectedness reinforces a shared vision for our country to move from a current state of growing health inequities due to multiple historical and social factors, to a state where we live in a thriving nation of shared purpose and prosperity.

I also hope to advance the mission of HHS to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans by providing for effective health and human services by fostering sound sustained advances in science, underlying medicine, public health, and social services. So thank you so much for the opportunity, and I'm looking forward to serving alongside my fellow Commissioners. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. We appreciate it. And we know that Black men don't go to the
doctor. So, we're going to be working on health initiatives to get them prostate -- all kinds of things. And I appreciate you being here with us. And now Commissioner Rhodes from the Secretary of Education.

COMMISSIONER RHODES: Thank you so much.

And thanks, Madam Wilson, Commissioner Wilson, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, and Secretary Cardona for the opportunity to serve on this historic Commission. My name is Christian Rhodes.

I currently have a couple jobs at the Department. I currently serve as Chief of Staff for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and also Senior Advisor to the Secretary in the Office of the Secretary. And I'm honored to participate and to engage.

I am a blessed man of the son of my father from Brooklyn, New York, Rev. Sharpton, my mother from North Philadelphia, 32nd and Diamond as she reminds me often. And had the opportunity to grow up as a son of a military brat. So, we moved across the country and saw all over the -- all of the United States, the opportunity that existed but also some of the challenges.
I currently am a father of two small Black boys, 4 and 1. My wife had our one-year-old in April of last year in the middle of this pandemic. And as we sit down together at dinner tables and at church and at gatherings and events, I'm thinking about their future. And that is influencing much of the decisions and engagements that I'm currently in.

Just small things around education it seems, which is one of the largest topics that we're engaged in this time in our country. But we also know that the challenges and opportunity gaps that has shown a light during COVID existed well before COVID. But one of the things that I believe this administration is focused on and I'm excited to hopefully engage with this Commission on is the social and emotional and mental health needs of our students, in particular our Black boys.

This is a topic that is oftentimes done unnoticed. But we know that if we do not address the social and emotional needs of our students, we will likely see them in a lot of other ways. And I'm thankful, Congresswoman Wilson, for your leadership as a principal and the 5,000 mentors that you pulled together in Florida but also some of the other educators who are on this call.
Lastly, I was a Chief of Staff of Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland where I currently reside. We had 40,000 young men. And I think about, what does that diversity pipeline look for educators?

What if it's one percent, five percent, ten percent of those young Black men who are currently growing up in Upper Marlboro and Suitland and Seat Pleasant? What if they went into education? And what if the same thing happened in New York and L.A. and Houston, Texas?

So, look forward to the conversation, and the Department is willing and able to help in any way we can to support this vision. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. We have so many educators. That's so great. Commissioner Cesar, who was appointed by Secretary Walsh, one minute.

COMMISSIONER CESAR: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Commissioner Richard Cesar. I currently serve in the Biden-Harris administration as the Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. Department of Labor.

I'm honored to be here today among such distinguished individuals. And I'm thankful to
Secretary Walsh for the appointment to this Commission. I commend you, Congresswoman and Chair Wilson, for your leadership. And I look forward to working for all of you on this critical initiative to improve conditions for Black men and boys in this country.

I've been very blessed in my life. Although my parents immigrated to this country from Haiti over 50 years ago with very little, they worked hard to provide a life for me filled with love, support, and opportunity that I know is not a reality for everyone. I attribute to my success to their sacrifices and guidance, and I'm a strong believer that to whom much is given, much is expected.

It has been one of my life goals to deepen my understanding of how individuals progress and succeed in life and to use my knowledge, skills, and experiences to create opportunities for others. I've dedicated my life to public service utilizing my legal background to serve in a variety of settings, from representing incarcerated men and women in Wisconsin prisons to advocating for inclusionary transportation policies as an appointee in the Obama administration to helping communities across Los Angeles County connect to workforce training, mental
health and substance abuse services, and other critical support in pursuit of good paying union job opportunities or providing critical access to capital to minority owned businesses devastated by the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I've always focused on using my skills to better lives for others. In my current role at the U.S. Department of Labor, I believe I'm well situated to access and understand labor force participation and employment data. And I'm thankful to be working each day to create a more equitable workforce that will lead to increased economic conditions for communities that have been historically left behind.

I plan to not only bring my professional perspective to this Commission but also highlight -- but also insights from my personal upbringing as a Black man in America, son of immigrants who has lived in and traveled to nearly all regions of this country as well as abroad. So, I'm beyond thankful for this opportunity to serve and look forward to meeting everyone and embarking on the work ahead. Thank you, Chair Wilson.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. And now we have Commissioner Colclough.

COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Colclough.
CHAIR WILSON: Alright.

COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Alright. Thank you and good afternoon, Commissioner Wilson and fellow Commissioners. Again, my name is Thomas Colclough and I am from North Carolina. And as many have stated, I'm a father of a 26-year-old daughter and my son will be 23 this weekend. And as others have stated, I've had the talk and we have the talk at least once a month frequently.

It's my honor to serve with each of you. And I was to thank Chair Burrows for appointing me to this Commission. And I would be remiss if I did not thank Commissioner Wilson for leading the initiative for the creation of the Commission on Social Status of Black Men & Boys.

I've been with EEOC for over 30 years, and that's the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. And I have the privilege to be on the front line every day with a dedicated group of professionals. And our job is to prevent and remedy unlawful employment discrimination in the workplace.

I feel that one of the most pressing issues that we need to address is employment opportunities. As you know that today that the unemployment rate for Black men is two times the rate

But I believe that economic equality can best be obtained by ensuring that Black men and boys, that they have fair and equal access to employment opportunities and more specifically to make sure that they have an opportunity enter, thrive, and excel in the workplace. I think we've got to change the narrative of unemployment for Black men and boys. And I'm thrilled to be here with you all to start that discussion. Thank you, Commissioner Wilson.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. We look so forward to working with you, bringing all of your experience. We now will hear from Commissioner Fosten who is appointed by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, Staff Director Morales. Commissioner Fosten, you might be -- you have to unmute probably.

COMMISSIONER FOSTEN: Yes, sorry about that. Thank you, Commissioner Wilson. Thank you for this opportunity. It's a pleasure with gratitude that I participate on this panel.

I share optimism for the purposes of this new Commission. And as a social scientist with the Commission on Civil Rights, I express tremendous
gratitude to serve with a distinguished panel of Commissioners. And I'm excited and confident throughout -- I'm excited and confident of such a talented assembly that can produce positive outcomes.

I have traveled extensively throughout the United States, and I'm very much in tune with the challenges and needs facing Black men and boys. I have witnessed cultural violence, and a culture of poverty firsthand. Sometimes I consider myself very fortunate to have made it this far.

I've participated in successful models of the K through 12 levels, special needs organizations -- special needs educational organizations, and reentering citizens. I would like to help build and forge consensus and pluralistic outcomes regarding the nature of social issues we address. I desire we do more than put a Band-Aid on issues within the community.

My desire is that we go to the root causes and break generational poverty and social disparities. I hail from the south. I've traveled extensively throughout the United States, Memphis, Baltimore, D.C.

I have a large portion of my family from Detroit, some from South Side, Chicago, State Street.
I traveled to South Central L.A. And a lot of the issues I see within the Black community and among Black men and boys are the same. And like I said, I like to go to the root causes, not just put a Band-Aid on those issues.

Behind those statistics is a human being. Like one of the Commissioners said, these statistics have been normalized or the homicides. But behind that statistic is a human being who's probably broken mentally and emotionally and has fell through the cracks and the system failed them. And because the system failed them when they were young, we will fear them when they get older when we see them walking down the street.

So, in my conclusion, it's my desire that hundreds of years into the future, history will be favorable to this Commission. And the narrative would be that this Commission was instrumental in helping play a part in ensuring that this nation remains great. And I'm enthusiastic that we will provide a successful and enumerable opportunities from which to build upon going forward in the future.

So, with that, I again am very humble to participate on this Commission. And I am very in tune with the needs and the challenges of Black men
and Black boys. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you.

You're the last one to introduce yourselves, and you have left us with a very moving message. And we will remember what you said because you were last.

And it speaks volumes for all of us because all of us regardless, just like Mr. Elder said and everybody said, this has nothing to do with politics. This has to do with the population that we are going to help. Mr. Brewer said it first. So let me repeat.

When the bill came out of the Senate, it was Democrats and Republicans. It came out of the House, Democrats and Republicans. That doesn't happen often.

But after George Floyd was murdered and that became front page news and people were marching in the street, people began to pay attention to these Black men and boys and what they were doing. And all of a sudden, my bill came up out of the hopper. And they passed it out of the Senate with the help of the Republicans.

Marco Rubio really sponsored it out of the Senate, got it over to the House. Leader Pelosi said, Congresswoman Wilson, it's about time. And
this bill passed. So I am just thrilled.

b. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR WILSON: So, without objection, the agenda provided for this meeting is adopted.

e. PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT & INTRODUCTION OF CSSBMB

STAFF-MARVIN WILLIAMS,

CSSBMB PROGRAM MANAGER

CHAIR WILSON: At this point, I will turn the meeting back over to Program Manager Williams to introduce the staff of the United States Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys and the United States Commission on Civil Rights and to provide his Program Manager support. Doesn't that sound so important? The United States Commission on Civil Rights and we are the United States Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys. Now we got the Black men and boys up there real high. Go ahead, Marvin.

DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. What an honor to serve, and I want to highlight the enthusiasm that I bring to this process. I have never been so proud of serving. I served in 30 years in the United States Air Force, and I thought I was a proud member of our country then. But serving this Commission in this capacity,
I am tremendously moved every day. I eat and breathe this Commission because this is what I do. And I just want to say I could not be here today without the support of Mauro Morales who is the Staff Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. And his team, they've worked together as an executive team that really, really got this going.

They were the nuts and bolts really of the organization. And they really helped me and really guided me through this entire process. And they assured me that I was never ever alone, and I wasn't, even though I was the only staff person in this Commission.

And so basically what I want to kind of talk about just for a short programmatic area here are three areas that I really want to highlight. One is the historical perspective. The second is the direction in which we're going.

And of course, you kind of talked about those five program areas. So how did we get here? We got here by 400 years of history that we can't ignore. And people have brought that up in various ways today.

And we want to begin to reframe the story
of Black men and boys in America. That's what we want to do. And our history was not without a struggle.

In the words of Toni Morrison, by no means do I want to romanticize the history of Black men and boys. But I want to lead a process of reorienting our country the way people think about who we are as Black men and boys and what we will become in our society. And so, with that, with Representative, Chair, or Commissioner Chair Wilson, I will begin to map a course of direction for the Commission.

And I am aware this course can change, and it will change. And I am prepared to navigate that journey. And so, in those program -- those five program areas that you all mentioned today that you highlighted so well, I just want to be a part of being able to work with you and work for you in bringing about those five program areas into fruition.

Is it an easy process? No, it's not easy. I'm not looking for easy. But what I am looking for is to be competent in this whole realm of what we're doing in our country.

Again, I am very, very proud to serve in this capacity. And you have my information. Please
feel free to reach out to me, call me, text me, email me. And I will guarantee you that I will respond to you in a like manner.

In that chord, I just want to say thank you for providing the staff that I have, for Mauro Morales. We have one GS person who's serving, and you have been in contact with her. And then we have an attorney who is a contractor. And we also have a media specialist who's a contractor and one other contractor who is an administrative agent.

And so again, I just want to say thank you for your work. Thank you for what we're going to do in the future. I look forward to the opportunity of bringing about this kind of change in our country. Back over to you, Chair Wilson.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Chair Wilson, may I say something real quickly, please?

CHAIR WILSON: Commissioner Elder, you're recognized.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Thank you. With my apologies, I have to go right now to start my radio show. But I want to just say one thing real quickly.

Again, thank you so much for inviting me to be part of this. This is a major, major, major effort for a most important problem in our country.
As you may or may not know, I was recently a candidate for governor of California, obviously not successful. Otherwise, I'd be doing this from the mansion in Sacramento.

But two of my issues were education and homelessness. Seventy-five percent of Black boys in California cannot read at state level proficiency, and the math scores are even worse. And 6.5 percent of the population of California is Black.

But 40 percent of the homeless according to a study by HUD -- I know we have a Commissioner from HUD. Forty percent of the homeless population here in California is Black. Very, very important issues and I hope we will be able to tackle. But thank you, and my apologies for having to leave.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. We appreciate it. And I was on the radio.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Spread the good news.

COMMISSIONER ELDER: I will.

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. Well, we're at the end of the meeting, and I want to thank all of you. Thank all of you for being here with us.

b. SELECT MEETING DATE FOR DECEMBER ORGANIZATIONAL
CHAIR WILSON: The next meeting we're looking at is Monday, November 13th at 1:00 p.m. We will set -- on that meeting date, we'll set a Commissioners' calendar for 2022. You will receive an email with potential dates from the Program Manager Williams or Commissioner Williams the week after Thanksgiving. And you will be able to give input as to whether you'll be able to make it.

I'd like to share a few ideas about what we'll be doing. This is going to be a traveling Commission. We will go to a federal prison and we're going to visit death row.

We're going to partner with the NFL to address the police and youth and cut down on the tensions that we know exist between Black men and the police. Black men and the police have been at odds and in tense situations since slavery. And we will work with organizations like the National Action Network, the NAACP, the 5000 Role Models of Excellence and other mentoring programs, the program that Commissioner Brewer spoke of.

And we're going to listen and we're going to involve the community in our work on the Commission. So we might show up in Chicago to meet
with the mayor and the police force to find out what's happening and listen to little boys who are carrying guns. I have actually gone into prison and met with child murderers.

And they always say to me, Mr. Brewer, that the reason they -- I say, why do you -- what could I have done to prevent you from being in this place today? And they always say, if only I had someone who cared and someone to listen, someone to guide me and help me make the right choices other than my peers. That's it.

So, we're going to listen. We're going to work on that. I want to thank each of you for committing your time and energy to the Commission.

I think that we will also talk about legislation that is stuck in Congress and how as a Commission we can move it forward, legislation like police reform, anti-lynching reform, and voting rights. We're going to see what we can do as a Commission to advocate for all of these challenges. And I want to thank all of you for committing your time and energy.

I believe together we can make a difference. Whenever I ran for office, people would always say it was declared because this was the year
of the woman, every time I ran for the school board,  
the House of Representatives, the Senate -- Florida  
Senate, and for Congress. You won because it was the  
year of the woman.

That's been 30 years. When will it be  
the year of the Black boy? We have a Commission. We  
need a year. So we're going to get the entire nation  
on their side so people won't fear them, profile them,  
and despise them.

I had a school that was totally  
integrated, and I had such a great, great  
relationship with my teachers. But they didn't even  
know that they were biased. And let me tell you what  
I experienced.

A teacher has a pencil on her desk and a  
little White girl knocks the pencil off the desk.  
The teacher is going to go down to the floor with her  
to help her pick up the pencil and put it back on her  
desk. If a little White boy, a little Hispanic boy,  
a little Hispanic girl, a little Black girl knocked  
the pencil off the desk, the teacher is going to  
simply say, please pick up my pencil. And they will  
go down and pick up the pencil.

If a little Black boy knocked the  
teacher's pencil off the desk, the teacher is going
to say, you didn't have no business up here anyway. Why are you out of your seat? Get my pencil! Go sit down!

So, this Black boy begins to internalize the difference in the responses in his classroom which this teacher is not even aware of that’s what she’s doing. So, he begins to say, why am I different? Why is she talking to me like that? What did I do?

And so, these are the things that we got to sensitize this nation because I consider these little Black boys as endangered species. And we live in a nation that invests billions of dollars to save endangered species, the whale, the Key deer, the bald eagle. I want you Commissioners to ponder this question. What is more important, saving animals or saving young Black boys?

So, in 2022, we are going to declare through Congress and a resolution as the year of the Black boy. I want you to think about it. Think about it real hard.

And when we reconvene in December or if you want to reach out to me before then, give me your thoughts and let's see what happens. We know it's dangerous. We know what's going to happen.
The women, they're going to say, what about the girls? Well, the children used to ask me, what about the girls? And I would say, I'm trying to build you another generation of good strong husbands and good strong fathers for your children, and they stopped.

So, we've got to be ready to take the brunt of this. And this is just a year now. We're just doing this. This is the year of the Black boy. So you think about it. If there's no more business to come before this Commission. Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER OLEKA: Madam Chair, I'm sorry. I've got one question. I missed that meeting date. What was that next meeting date, Madam Chair?

CHAIR WILSON: December 13th at 1:00 p.m. and you're going to get a notice real soon. Is that a bad day?

COMMISSIONER OLEKA: No, ma'am. Thank you.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay, okay. Thank you so much. This is a historical day, we are making history, and we're going to continue to march forward. We're not going to let anything or anybody, any organization, any organized group stop us because we know how they come after you.
I know because I've been advocating for Black men and boys and Mr. Marshall too since I was in high school. So, we're not going to let anybody stop us, Mr. Brewer. We're going forward. We are moving on, Commissioner Clarke. We've got this. So, you all be good. This meeting is adjourned.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

IV. CHAIR REMARKS/ADJOURN MEETING

COMMISSIONER BREWER: Ms. Wilson --

Commissioner Wilson.

CHAIR WILSON: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BREWER: If you don't mind because you got me really excited, if you all don't mind if I close us --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

COMMISSIONER BREWER: -- out in a prayer?

CHAIR WILSON: Oh, Mr. Brewer, go ahead.

COMMISSIONER BREWER: I said if you don't mind if I close us out in a prayer.? I just feel like what we're taking on is a spiritual battle. And I don't know about you all, but I was raised in a church house.

And so, I just want to just quickly just bow our heads and ask God to continue to give us wisdom and strength and discernment, dear God, for us
to come together as brothers and sisters on one mission to God. James 1:27 says, pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this: to serve the fatherless and the widow in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. And we just ask you, dear Father God, that we go out and serve our most underserved population in America.

We know that we have a lot of kings that are just waiting to be hatched, dear God. And the opportunity that this great nation provides can only come through you. So just give us the wisdom and discernment and let us stay humble before you, Father God. Amen.

CHAIR WILSON: Amen. Everybody, let the people say it.

(Chorus of Amen.)

CHAIR WILSON: Thank you so much. Thank you.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIR WILSON: -- Commissioner Clarke.

COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Yes, take care.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Take care.

Alright, everybody. See you soon.

COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Bye, everyone.

CHAIR WILSON: Wonderful. I am so proud.
today and we were able to get so much accomplished.

Thank you so much. Thank you. Bye-bye. Lucy, see
you. Marvin, okay.

DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, ma'am.

CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Dr. Fosten, Mr.

Fosten, okay. Thank you. All right.

(Whereupon the above-entitled matter

went off the record at 2:44 p.m.)