

COMMISSION ON THE SOCIAL STATUS
OF BLACK MEN & BOYS

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BUSINESS MEETING

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021

+ + + + +

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, Commissioner¹
 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

¹ For Exact transcription listen to audio

CHRISTIAN RHODES, Commissioner

REV. AL SHARPTON, Commissioner

REP. FREDERICA S. WILSON, Commissioner

MARVIN WILLIAMS, Program Manager

MAURO MORALES, Staff Director, USCCR

DUPLICATED

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 1:11 p.m.

3 **I. CALL TO ORDER-MARVIN WILLIAMS,**
4 **CSSBMB PROGRAM MANAGER**

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

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

20 The staff for the Commission on the Social
21 Status of Black Men & Boys will hold several meetings
22 next year and may undertake field investigations at
23 educational institutions, prisons, and housing sites.

24 I wish all of you the best. And I'll turn the rest
25 of the meeting over to the Program Manager for the new

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1 Commission, Dr. Marvin Williams.

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

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

16 **a. REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION MEMBERS-**

17 **REP. FREDERICA WILSON,**

18 **SPONSOR CSSBMB ACT**

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

23 COMMISSIONER WILSON: Thank you so much.
24 I can't tell you how excited I am. When I was a
25 school principal, my school was one-third African

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1 American and one-third Anglo and one-third Hispanic.
2 And of all of those children, my little Black boy
3 stuck out like a sore thumb.

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

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

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

20 So I got all of these Black boys in all of
21 the schools and begin to expose them, put them on neck
22 ties, took them on field trips, took train rides and
23 cruises, museums, work with the police, did all kinds
24 of things. And they changed. And now we're in Fort
25 Lauderdale and Jacksonville, Tampa, St. Petersburg,

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1 Nashville, Tennessee, Detroit, Michigan. And we have
2 a waiting list.

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

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

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

24 I couldn't believe it. And I am just so
25 elated that all of you are here with me today because

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1 this Commission, it wasn't easy getting here in these
2 30 years. But it's the most important piece of
3 legislation passed in Congress since the Voting Rights
4 Act.

5 While our country battles an unprecedented
6 pandemic and extreme racial unrest in most cities, it
7 is business as usual. And it is so disheartening to
8 witness Black men and Black boys killing Black men and
9 Black boys nonstop, even during these perilous times.

10 This new cycle does not even -- the new cycle doesn't
11 even mention their names and local law enforcement
12 does little to catch the perpetrators.

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

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

22 So how do you raise a murderer? We're
23 going to count the ways and we're going to stop the
24 madness right here in this Commission. No more. The
25 Commission will conduct a systemic study of the

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1 conditions affecting Black men and boys including
2 homicide rates, arrests, incarceration rates, poverty,
3 violence, fatherhood, mentorship, drug abuse, death
4 rates, disparate income and wealth levels, school
5 performance in all grade levels, including post-
6 secondary education and college, and health issues.

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

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

22 But it was hard, I'm sure. So we must
23 reach back and pull those have lost along the way. It
24 is my greatest hope that the work of the Commission on
25 the Social Status of Black Men & Boys will find a

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1 solution. That's a little bit about me, and I look
2 forward to getting to know more about you today and
3 learning while serving on this important Commission
4 matters to you.

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

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

15 Let's talk about that later.

16 At this point, I will turn the meeting
17 back over to our Program Manager Wilson. And I want
18 to say to each of you, from this point on, your title
19 is not congressman, not doctor, not mister. You are
20 Commissioner, Commissioner Beatty, Commissioner Elder,
21 Commissioner Horsford.

22 You are -- we will refer to each other as
23 Commissioner. Thank you so much, and welcome to this
24 history making Commission. Thank you. Marvin?

25 **II. BUSINESS MEETING**

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

5 Per statute, the majority of the members
6 of the Commission that is ten members constitute a
7 quorum. To establish quorum, I will call each member
8 by name. Please note your presence by saying, here.
9 And my order here is in alphabetical order.
10 Commissioner Joyce Beatty?

11 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: Here.

12 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Jamaal Bowman?
13 Commissioner Jack Brewer?

14 COMMISSIONER BREWER: Here.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Richard Cesar?

16 COMMISSIONER CESAR: Here.

17 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Kristen
18 Clarke?

19 COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Here.

20 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Thomas M.
21 Colclough?

22 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Here.

23 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Marshall
24 Dillard?

25 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Here.

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1 (Simultaneous speaking.)

2 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Lawrence
3 Elder?

4 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Here.

5 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Gerald Fosten?

6 COMMISSIONER FOSTEN: Here.

7 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Steven
8 Horsford?

9 COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: Here.

10 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Hakeem
11 Jeffries?

12 Commissioner Calvin Johnson?

13 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Here.

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

16 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Here.

17 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Lucy McBath?

18 COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Here.

19 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner LaShawn
20 McIver?

21 COMMISSIONER MCIVER: Here.

22 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner O.J. Oleka?

23 COMMISSIONER OLEKA: Here.

24 DR. WILLIAMS: Christian Rhodes?

25 COMMISSIONER RHODES: Here.

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1 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Al Sharpton?
2 Commissioner Al Sharpton?

3 Commissioner Frederica S. Wilson?

4 COMMISSIONER WILSON: Here.

5 DR. WILLIAMS: For the record, please note
6 that a quorum of the Commissioners are present today.

7 The next item of business is a vote on the Chair.
8 This is the first item on the agenda, and we vote for
9 the Chair and Secretary.

10 **a. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON CSSBMB CHAIR**

11 **MARVIN WILLIAMS, CSSBMB PROGRAM MANAGER**

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

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

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

24 COMMISSIONER MCBATH: I so nominate -- I
25 nominate Representative Commissioner Frederica Wilson

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1 as Chair of the Commission of the status of young
2 Black men and boys.

3 COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: I second the
4 motion.

5 DR. WILLIAMS: We have a motion on the
6 floor and it has been second that Commissioner
7 Frederica Wilson will be the Chair of this Commission.

8 Are there any other nominations on the floor?

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

12 You can answer by saying aye.

13 Commissioner Bowman?

14 Commissioner Brewer?

15 COMMISSIONER BREWER: Aye.

16 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: I am sorry.

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

19 (Simultaneous speaking.)

20 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: -- my loud aye?

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

23 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: And I will now mute.

24 I am so sorry.

25 DR. WILLIAMS: Oh, no, no. No problem,

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1 ma'am. Commissioner Clarke?

2 COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Aye.

3 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Colclough?

4 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Aye.

5 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Dillard?

6 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Aye.

7 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Elder?

8 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Aye.

9 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Fosten?

10 COMMISSIONER FOSTEN: Aye.

11 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Horsford?

12 COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: Aye.

13 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Johnson?

14 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Aye.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Marshall?

16 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Aye.

17 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner McBath?

18 COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Aye.

19 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner McIver?

20 COMMISSIONER MCIVER: Aye.

21 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Oleka?

22 COMMISSIONER OLEKA: Aye.

23 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Rhodes?

24 COMMISSIONER RHODES: Aye.

25 DR. WILLIAMS: Commissioner Sharpton?

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1 And Commissioner Wilson?

2 Okay. At this time --

3 COMMISSIONER WILSON: Yeah.

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

10 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so
11 much to everyone for supporting my bid. We're going
12 to have an exciting time. I hope you're ready to roll
13 up your sleeves because I'm an overachiever. I've
14 worked real hard, and I'm going to need each and every
15 one of you to help me make history.

16 This is a Commission that's going to
17 travel. We're going to go to so many places to change
18 this whole trajectory of Black men and boys. Thank
19 you so much. I'm honored to serve as Chair, and I
20 won't let you down. Thank you.

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

23 **c. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON CSSBMB SECRETARY**

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

1 this time, I would like to nominate myself Dr. Joseph
2 Marshall.

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

6 CHAIR WILSON: Okay.

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

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

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

14 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Do we have a second
15 Dr. Marshall?

16 COMMISSIONER BREWER: I second Dr.
17 Marshall.

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

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

25 CHAIR WILSON: Commissioner Brewer?

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1 COMMISSIONER BREWER: Dr. Marshall.

2 CHAIR WILSON: Commissioner Cesar?

3 COMMISSIONER CESAR: Dr. Rev. Al Sharpton.

4 CHAIR WILSON: Kristen Clarke?

5 COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Rev. Sharpton.

6 CHAIR WILSON: Thomas Colclough?

7 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Rev. Sharpton.

8 CHAIR WILSON: Marshall Dillard?

9 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Dr. Marshall.

10 CHAIR WILSON: Lawrence Elder?

11 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Is it possible for me
12 to abstain?

13 CHAIR WILSON: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Okay. I abstain.

15 CHAIR WILSON: Gerald Fosten?

16 COMMISSIONER FOSTEN: I abstain as well.

17 CHAIR WILSON: Steven Horsford?

18 COMMISSIONER HORSFORD: Rev. Sharpton.

19 CHAIR WILSON: Calvin Johnson?

20 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Rev. Sharpton.

21 CHAIR WILSON: Joseph Marshall?

22 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: As much as I
23 appreciate the nomination, I nominated Al Sharpton.
24 So I yield and nominate and vote for Al Sharpton.

25 CHAIR WILSON: Lucy McBath?

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1 COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Rev. Al Sharpton.

2 CHAIR WILSON: LaShawn McIver?

3 COMMISSIONER MCIVER: I abstain. Thank
4 you.

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

7 COMMISSIONER OLEKA: I abstain.

8 CHAIR WILSON: Christian Rhodes?

9 COMMISSIONER RHODES: I abstain.

10 CHAIR WILSON: And Frederica Wilson, Rev.
11 Al Sharpton. And the tally, Rev. Al Sharpton, 9 --
12 I'm sorry. Commissioner Sharpton, 9, Commissioner
13 Marshall 2, 5 abstentions. It is my honor to say that
14 I move that Rev. Sharpton serve as Secretary of the
15 Commission.

16 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: Madam President
17 Commissioner, point of personal privilege -- or point
18 of order rather. Would the Madam Chair yield for a
19 point of order?

20 CHAIR WILSON: Uh-huh.

21 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: I would like to say
22 thank you to Mr. Marshall. And since he withdrew his
23 name, I don't think our records need to show a vote
24 count because he withdrew before the vote count for
25 that. So I would not think we would need to record a

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1 vote count with his numbers.

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

6 **d. REMARKS FROM THE 19 COMMISSIONERS**
7 **OF THE CSSBMB**

8 CHAIR WILSON: Please share information
9 about yourself and the work you hope to do and the
10 shared goal of improving the social status of Black
11 men and boys. This legislation to create the
12 Commission on the social status of Black men and boys
13 was written for the Congressional Black Caucus and was
14 written in consultation with the Congressional Black
15 Caucus which is celebrating 50 years of service to our
16 nation. Give us a hand, 50 years. Thank you so much.
17 Congressional Black Caucus Chairwoman --
18 well, Commissioner Chairwoman Joyce Beatty serves on
19 this Commission. You heard her introduce herself.
20 According to the legislation, she appointed five
21 members to serve as it is written.

22 She appointed Congresswoman McBath and she
23 appointed Congresswoman Wilson and Commissioners
24 Jeffries, Steven Horsford, and Jamaal Bowman. Steven
25 is on the Commission today. The other two were -- you

1 heard from both of them in the process. And the other
2 two are on CODELs.

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

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

20 Commissioner Beatty, Chair of the
21 Congressional Black Caucus, we're going to ask
22 everybody to introduce themselves for one minute. I
23 know it's hard because it's hard for me. But this is
24 our champion here. We are so proud of the leadership
25 that the Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus

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1 has given us through this perilous time that we have
2 been in, including COVID-19, the passing of the Rescue
3 Act, passing of all our CARES 1, CARES 2, fighting for
4 the infrastructure bill, fighting for Build Back
5 Better, keeping all of us intact.

6 We have very moderate members. We have
7 very progressive members. We have all kind of
8 members. We have new members. We have old members.
9 We have young members. We have seasoned members. And
10 she is able to manage and keep all of us under this
11 big tent.

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

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

24 I am also the Chair of the 58-member
25 Congressional Black Caucus. I serve on the exclusive

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1 Committee of Financial Services and the first ever
2 Chair of Diversity and Inclusion. My two grandbabies
3 make my day a lot better. But I am known for
4 connecting people to policies to politics.

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

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

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

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

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

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

14 I'll just close by saying Commissioner
15 Wilson referred to the bill that I'm sponsoring to
16 Break the Cycle of Violence Act along with many of my
17 Congressional Black Caucus members, including Lucy
18 McBath and Lisa Blunt Rochester and others. This is a
19 5 billion dollar investment in community violence
20 intervention to disrupt violence, particularly gun-
21 related violence. Black men account for 6 percent of
22 the U.S. population, but we are 50 percent of the gun
23 homicides in this country.

24 And with our bill and the work of this
25 Commission, we are going to change that. We're going

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1 to save lives, and we're going to help Black men and
2 boys understand their value and their worth. Thank
3 you, Madam Chair. I yield back.

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

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

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

24 We are only here today because of the
25 tireless efforts of Commissioner Wilson. And she's

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1 been a champion for Black men and boys ever since her
2 time as an elementary school principal. And that
3 tireless work is why we now have this Commission.

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

15 I lost my son, Jordan, to unnecessary gun
16 violence in Jacksonville, Florida in 2012. I believe
17 that Jordan's father and I had done everything right.

18 But at the end of the day, he was a young Black man.

19 And I still feel that injustice every single day of
20 my life.

21 So while I continue to look back on how
22 far we have come, I must also look forward to a future
23 without my son as more young Black men and males
24 around this country continue to suffer by these
25 inequities and unnecessary gun violence. So I see how

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1 far we still have to go. This Commission on the
2 Social Status of Black Men & Boys can help us to
3 continue to move forward and move forward with that
4 strength and that hope that we need to give our
5 communities.

6 And I know that we're going to all work
7 hard together toward a future that we believe is going
8 to be fair and equitable for everyone, in particular
9 our young Black males and men in America. I know we
10 have a lot of work to do before us. But I so look
11 forward to being on this journey with each and every
12 one of you. And I'm so grateful to be able to serve
13 with you.

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

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

24 I'm currently teaching in prisons across
25 Florida and the United States every week. So I get to

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1 look at these Black men in their eyes every week and
2 understand the pain that they go through and the
3 situation that they've been put in. I also run a
4 small school down here in South Florida where we
5 literally only focus on underserved Black men. And I
6 see them every day. Every day that that bell rings,
7 they come right to me. And so I coach, and I
8 understand the issues that they face.

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

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

20 And I know that that dream can be felt for
21 the majority of the Black boys and men in this nation.

22 We just have to be smarter about policy, about where
23 our dollars are going. And we have to hold our
24 parents accountable.

25 And we have to start really rehabilitating

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

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

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

24 Frederick Douglass said it is easier to
25 build strong children than to repair broken men. I

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1 believe the number one problem facing Black America is
2 a large number of children enter the world without a
3 father married to the mother. It was Barack Obama who
4 once said, a kids raised without a father is 5 times
5 more likely to be poor and commit crime, 9 times more
6 likely to drop out of school, and 20 times more likely
7 to end up in prison. In 1965, 25 percent of Black
8 children enter the world without a father married to
9 the mother. Now that number is almost 70 percent.

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

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

23 I think we need to rethink lots of
24 policies that in my opinion are destroy the family, up
25 to and including what I consider to be the welfare

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1 state. I think what we've done if we incentivize
2 women to marry the government, we've allowed men to
3 abandon their financial and moral responsibility.
4 There's lot of other policies I think that have come
5 together to hurt the Black family.

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

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

19 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Thank you.

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

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1 because we know that is wrong.

2 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Absolutely.

3 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. And now
4 Commissioner Marshall who was appointed by Speaker
5 Pelosi, one minute, Dr. Marshall -- Commissioner
6 Marshall.

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

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

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

22 All the numbers you cited, all of the
23 conditions we're in, I think we know what happens to
24 young Black men in this country. They're going to
25 jail or they're going to prison. I've heard it all.

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1 And this is what I do for a living. It is wonderful.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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1 these problems.

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

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

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

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

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

4 He came to bless me when I was elected to
5 Congress and reconcentrated me. And I just love him.

6 He knows that. He is the civil rights leader of this
7 century. Rev. Sharpton, bless you.

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

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

20 But let me say that I am honored to be a
21 part of this Commission. I'm honored to be serving
22 with people that I know and respect, some that I hope
23 to get to know. I think it is a testimony to your
24 leadership that we have the Commission.

25 I think it's a testimony to you having

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1 been a real example of unifying people that it is
2 bipartisan because the issues of Black boys and Black
3 men is not a partisan issue. And if there's anything
4 we can agree on is this. I grew up raised by a single
5 mother. My father left when I was young. But if it
6 wasn't for mentors I had in the ministry and later
7 civil rights they became father figures to me, I
8 would've probably ended up like most of my
9 contemporaries in Brooklyn, in jail or dead by now.

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

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

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

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

10 (Simultaneous speaking.)

11 COMMISSIONER SHARPTON: That's correct.

12 CHAIR WILSON: -- Black boy death in a
13 boot camp. We got rid of all the boot camps in
14 Florida. I mean, we did so, so much. And Rev.
15 Sharpton and I have been marching and for unions in
16 every state.

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

21 And I told you over and over and over
22 again, you are the civil rights leader of our time.
23 We have no one else. And you have taken the mantle,
24 and you have marched with that.

25 And that's why when I was Chair of the

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1 CBC, I made sure that you receive the highest award
2 that we give because all of the Congressional Black
3 Caucus members on this call are Chairwoman, Ms.
4 McBath, Mr. Horsford, Commissioners. So from now on,
5 they know what I'm saying. So when we see you, you're
6 not going to be Rev. Sharpton. You're going to be
7 Commissioner Sharpton. So --

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 COMMISSIONER SHARPTON: Thank you.

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

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

19 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: I'm right here.

20 CHAIR WILSON: Okay, welcome. How are
21 you?

22 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Thank you. Thank
23 you. Well, first of all, I have to write my thoughts
24 down because as an elementary school principal, I'm
25 used to dealing with kindergartners and all the way up

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1 to fifth graders. So when I speak to them, it's
2 different than when I'm going to have to speak to you
3 guys. So I've written down what I need to say here.

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

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

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

24 We went into high schools and taught an
25 anti-drug curriculum and used professional athletes

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1 from various sports as our guest speakers. So after
2 Pros for Kids, I went into teaching and earned my
3 master's in Education from the University of La Verne.

4 One of the reasons I went into administration because
5 I wanted to have a larger impact on the lives of
6 students outside of my classroom doors there because
7 as a teacher, you're impact is mainly within your four
8 walls of your classroom.

9 So I wanted to be behind the closed doors
10 who would make decisions into the lives of the -- how
11 we're going to impact the lives of students throughout
12 our entire school and throughout the entire school
13 district. Never in my wildest dreams did I envision I
14 would be appointed to a committee that would have such
15 a national impact. So I look forward to serving on
16 this committee to work with you and learn from you and
17 learn from such an esteemed collection of people
18 that's going to enrich the lives of Black men also in
19 our nation. Thank you.

20 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you, Commissioner
21 Dillard. We look forward to working with you. A lot
22 of school principals on here. That's great.

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

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1 Congress altogether.

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

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

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

24 So thank you so much for bringing us
25 together. And it is not lost on me the gravity of

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1 this task. We now have the collective responsibility
2 to drive the mission of this Commission forward and to
3 take a hard look at the social conditions faced by
4 Black men and Black boys across the country.

5 And the challenges, we know, are critical.

6 I just want to highlight a few statistics. Black men
7 are overrepresented among prisoners in this country by
8 a factor of five compared to the rest of the
9 population.

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

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

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1 democracy.

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

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

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

25 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, Madam

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

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

14 I actually provide executive leadership to
15 the Department on demonstrations, evaluations, and
16 research focusing on programs and policy in the areas
17 that I think that we're going to cover, economic self-
18 sufficiency, housing mobility, homelessness, housing
19 discrimination, and various issues at the intersection
20 of housing and health, housing and education, housing
21 injustice. And so I am really excited about the
22 opportunity to serve with you all on this Commission.

23 Prior to joining HUD, I spent my career designing
24 program models and actually evaluating programs at
25 think tanks, university, and also for the mayor of the

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1 District of Columbia.

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

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

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

25 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. We look forward

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1 to it. We know about Black men and homelessness and
2 Black people and homelessness. So give Mr. Fudge a
3 thumbs up for sending you. We appreciate it.

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

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

9 COMMISSIONER MCIVER: Thank you,
10 Commissioner Wilson. Good afternoon, everyone. My
11 name is Dr. LaShawn McIver, and I am truly honored to
12 serve as a Commissioner on this Commission for the
13 Social Status of Black Men & Boys.

14 I am the Director of the Office of
15 Minority Health at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid
16 Services within the Department of Health and Human
17 Services. Our agency is the largest insurer of health
18 care in the country. And our office plays a role in
19 ensuring that the needs of minority populations are
20 met.

21 I am very grateful for Secretary Becerra's
22 appointment for this critical role during this time of
23 transformation and historic opportunities within the
24 health care system itself. Having spent my career
25 focused on public health and addressing the needs of

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1 minority populations, this work is extremely important
2 to me, not only as a public health physician but as a
3 daughter, as a sister, as a wife and a mother, having
4 seen the impact gun violence and other issues that
5 folks have talked about on the call. This is
6 something that I've seen firsthand living in
7 Baltimore, living in parts of North Carolina, and
8 living in other parts of the world and recognize that
9 we have an opportunity here on a global stage to make
10 a difference.

11 Black men currently suffer worse health
12 than other racial groups in the U.S. Subsequently,
13 Black men have the lowest life expectancy and highest
14 mortality rates, specific conditions compared to both
15 women and men of other racial and ethnic groups. And
16 there's no single reason that can be attributed to
17 Black male poor health outcomes.

18 Instead, racial discrimination,
19 unemployment, lack of affordable health services, low
20 health literacy, poverty, access to health insurance,
21 and insufficient medical and social services tailored
22 to their needs. So my hope as a participant in this
23 condition is that we emerge as a catalyst of positive
24 authentic engagement and paradigm shifting practices
25 that our interconnectedness reinforces a shared vision

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1 for our country to move from a current state of
2 growing health inequities due to multiple historical
3 and social factors to a state where we live in a
4 thriving nation of shared purpose and prosperity.

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

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

20 COMMISSIONER RHODES: Thank you so much.
21 And thanks, Madam Wilson, Commissioner Wilson, members
22 of the Congressional Black Caucus, and Secretary
23 Cardona for the opportunity to serve on this historic
24 Commission. My name is Christian Rhodes.

25 I currently have a couple jobs at the

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1 Department. I currently serve as Chief of Staff for
2 the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and
3 also senior advisor to the Secretary in the Office of
4 the Secretary. And I'm honored to participate and to
5 engage.

6 I am a blessed man of the son of my father
7 from Brooklyn, New York, Rev. Sharpton, my mother from
8 North Philadelphia, 32nd and Diamond as she reminds me
9 often. And had the opportunity to grow up as a son of
10 a military brat. So we moved across the country and
11 saw all over the -- all of the United States, the
12 opportunity that existed but also some of the
13 challenges.

14 I currently am a father of two small Black
15 boys, 4 and 1. My wife had our one-year-old in April
16 of last year in the middle of this pandemic. And as
17 we sit down together at dinner tables and at church
18 and at gatherings and events, I'm thinking about their
19 future. And that is influencing much of the decisions
20 and engagements that I'm currently in.

21 Just small things around education which
22 is one of the largest topics that we're engaged in
23 this time in our country. But we also know that the
24 challenges and opportunity gaps that has shown a light
25 during COVID existed well before COVID. But one of

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1 the things that I believe this administration is
2 focused on and I'm excited to hopefully engage with
3 this Commission on is the social and emotional and
4 mental health needs of our students, in particular our
5 Black boys.

6 This is a topic that is oftentimes done
7 unnoticed. But we know that if we do not address the
8 social and emotional needs of our students, we will
9 likely see them in a lot of other ways. And I'm
10 thankful, Congressman Wilson, for your leadership as a
11 principal and the 5,000 mentors that you pulled
12 together in Florida but also several of the other
13 educators who are on this call.

14 Lastly, I was a Chief of Staff of Prince
15 George's County Public Schools in Maryland where I
16 currently reside. We had 40,000 young men. And I
17 think about, what does that diversity pipeline look
18 for educators?

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

25 So look forward to the conversation, and

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1 the Department is willing. It's able to help in any
2 way we can to support this vision. Thank you.

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

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

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

20 I've been very blessed in my life.
21 Although my parents immigrated to this country from
22 Haiti over 50 years ago with very little, they worked
23 hard to provide a life for me filled with love,
24 support, and opportunity that I know is not a reality
25 for everyone. I attribute to my success to their

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1 sacrifices and guidance, and I'm a strong believer
2 that to whom much is given, much is expected.

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

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

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1 that have been historically left behind.

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

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

13 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Colclough.

14 CHAIR WILSON: All right.

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

23 It's my honor to serve with each of you.
24 And I was to thank Chair Burrows for appointing me to
25 this Commission. And I would be remiss if I did not

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1 thank Commissioner Wilson for leading the initiative
2 for the creation of the Commission on Social Status of
3 Black Men & Boys.

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

10 I feel that one of the most pressing
11 issues that we need to address is employment
12 opportunities. As you know that today that the
13 unemployment rate for Black men is two times the rate
14 of White men. Statistics says that's impossible
15 statistically.

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

25 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you so

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1 much. We look so forward to working with you and
2 bringing all of your experience. We now will hear
3 from Commissioner Fosten who is appointed by the U.S.
4 Civil Rights Commission, Staff Director Morales.
5 Commissioner Fosten, you might be -- you have to
6 unmute probably.

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

11 I share optimism for the purpose of this
12 new Commission. And as a social scientist with the
13 Commission on Civil Rights, express tremendous
14 gratitude to serve with a distinguished panel of
15 Commissioners. And I'm excited and confident
16 throughout -- I'm excited and confident of such a
17 talented assemble that can produce positive outcomes.

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

24 I've participated in successful models of
25 the K through 12 levels, special needs organizations -

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1 - special needs educational organizations, and
2 reentering citizens. I would like to help build and
3 forge consensus and pluralistic outcomes regarding the
4 nature of social issues we address. I desire we do
5 more than put a Band-Aid on issues within a community.

6 My desire is that we go to the root causes
7 and break generational poverty and social disparities.

8 I hail from the south. I've traveled extensively
9 throughout the United States, Memphis, Baltimore, D.C.

10 I have a large portion of my family from
11 Detroit, some from South Side, Chicago, State Street.

12 I traveled to South Central L.A. And a lot of the
13 issues I see within the Black community and among
14 Black men and boys are the same. And like I said, I
15 like to go to the root causes, not just put a Band-Aid
16 on those issues.

17 Behind those statistics is a human being.

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

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

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

13 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you.
14 You're the last one to introduce themselves, and you
15 have left us a very moving message. And we will
16 remember what you said because you were last.

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

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

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

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

12 **b. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

15 **e. PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT & INTRODUCTION OF CSSBMB**

16 **STAFF-MARVIN WILLIAMS,**

17 **CSSBMB PROGRAM MANAGER**

18 CHAIR WILSON: At this point, I will turn
19 the meeting back over to Program Manager Williams to
20 introduce the staff of the United States Commission on
21 the Social Status of Black Men & Boys and the United
22 States Commission on Civil Rights and to provide his
23 Program Manager support. Doesn't that sound so
24 important, the United States Commission on Civil
25 Rights and we are the United States Commission on the

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1 Social Status of Black Men & Boys. Now we got the
2 Black men and boys up there real high. Go ahead,
3 Marvin.

4 DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. Thank you,
5 Madam Chair. What an honor that I want to say that I
6 bring to this process, I have never been so proud of
7 serving. I served in 30 years in the United States
8 Air Force and I thought I was a proud member of our
9 country then. But serving in this Commission in this
10 capacity, I am tremendously moved every day.

11 I eat and breathe this Commission because
12 this is what I do. And I just want to say I could not
13 be here today without the support of Mauro Morales and
14 who's the Staff Director of the U.S. Commission on
15 Civil Rights. And his team, they've worked together
16 on an executive team that really, really got this
17 going.

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

24 And so basically what I want to kind of
25 talk about here just for a short programmatic area

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1 here is three areas that I really want to highlight.
2 One is the historical perspective. The second is the
3 direction in which we're going.

4 And of course, you kind of talked about
5 those five program areas. So how did we get here? We
6 got here by 400 years of history that we can't ignore.

7 And people have brought that up in various ways
8 today.

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

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

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

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1 about those five program areas into fruition.

2 Is it an easy process? No, it's not easy.

3 I'm not looking for easy. But what I am looking for
4 is to be competent in this whole realm of what we're
5 doing in our country.

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

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

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

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

25 CHAIR WILSON: Commissioner Elder, you're

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1 recognized.

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

5 Again, thank you so much for inviting me
6 to be part of this. This is a major, major, major
7 effort for a most important problem in our country.
8 As you may or may not know, I was recently a candidate
9 for governor of California, obviously not successful.

10 Otherwise, I'd be doing this from the mansion in
11 Sacramento.

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

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

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

25 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Thank you.

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1 CHAIR WILSON: Spread the good news.

2 COMMISSIONER ELDER: I will.

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

7 **b. SELECT MEETING DATE FOR DECEMBER ORGANIZATIONAL**
8 **MEETING**

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

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

21 We're going to partner with the NFL to
22 address the police and youth and cut down on the
23 tensions that we know exists between Black men and the
24 police. Black men and the police have been at odds
25 and in tense situations since slavery. And we will

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1 work with organizations like the National Action
2 Network, the NAACP, the 5000 Role Models of Excellence
3 and other mentoring programs, the program that
4 Commissioner Brewer spoke of.

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

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

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

22 I think that we will also talk about
23 legislation that is stuck in Congress and how as a
24 Commission we can move it forward, legislation like
25 police reform, anti-lynching reform, and voting

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1 rights. We're going to see what we can do as a
2 Commission to advocate for all of these challenges.
3 And I want to thank all of you for committing your
4 time and energy.

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

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

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

21 A teacher has a pencil on her desk and a
22 little White girl knocks the pencil off the desk. The
23 teacher is going to go down to the floor with her to
24 help her pick up the pencil and put it back on her
25 desk. If a little White boy, a little Hispanic boy, a

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1 little Hispanic girl, a little Black girl knocked the
2 pencil off the desk, the teacher is going to simply
3 say, please pick up my pencil. And they will go down
4 and pick up the pencil.

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

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

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

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

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1 And when we reconvene in December or if
2 you want to reach out to me before then, give me your
3 thoughts and let's see what happens. We know it's
4 dangerous. We know what's going to happen.

5 The women, they're going to say, what
6 about the girls? Well, the children used to ask me,
7 what about the girls? And I would say, I'm trying to
8 build you another generation of good strong husbands
9 and good strong fathers for your children and they
10 stopped.

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

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

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

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

24 CHAIR WILSON: Okay, okay. Thank you so
25 much. This is a historical day we are making history,

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1 and we're going to continue to march forward. We're
2 not going to let anything or anybody, any
3 organization, any organized group stop us because we
4 know how they come after you.

5 I know because I've been advocating for
6 Black men and boys and Mr. Marshall too since I was in
7 high school. So we're not going to let anybody stop
8 us, Mr. Brewer. We're going forward. We are moving
9 on, Commissioner Clarke. We've got this. So you all
10 be good. This meeting is adjourned.

11 (Simultaneous speaking.)

12 **IV. CHAIR REMARKS/ADJOURN MEETING**

13 COMMISSIONER BREWER: Ms. Wilson --
14 Commissioner Wilson.

15 CHAIR WILSON: Yes.

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

19 (Simultaneous speaking.)

20 COMMISSIONER BREWER: -- out in a prayer?

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

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

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1 house.

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

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

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

20 (Chorus of Amen.)

21 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you so much. Thank
22 you.

23 (Simultaneous speaking.)

24 CHAIR WILSON: -- Commissioner Clarke.

25 COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Yes, take care.

1 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Take care. All
2 right, everybody. See you soon.

3 COMMISSIONER MCBATH: Bye, everyone.

4 CHAIR WILSON: Wonderful. I am so proud
5 today and we were able to get so much accomplished.
6 Thank you so much. Thank you. Bye-bye. Lucy, see
7 you. Marvin, okay.

8 DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, ma'am.

9 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Dr. Fosten, Mr.
10 Fosten, okay. Thank you. All right.

11 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
12 off the record at 2:44 p.m.)

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