

backgrounds, it is the vision and leadership of people like Eloise Gentry, who have sought to improve the quality of life for all Americans, that has made America what it is.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing the tireless dedication of the members of organizations such as the National Urban League, who continue their selfless work today, and I ask that you join me in remembering a true hero, Ms. Eloise Gentry, one of Northwest Indiana's finest citizens.

## NATIONAL JOB CRISIS

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2010*

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I submit the following letter:

FEBRUARY 19, 2010.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,  
*Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

Hon. HARRY REID,  
*Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND MAJORITY LEADER REID: We write on behalf of the broad civil rights and human rights communities to urge swift action on a national crisis that is affecting us all. Unless we resolve our national job crisis, all of our other priorities—from reforming health care and fixing our broken immigration system to expanding economic opportunity for all Americans—are in real jeopardy. In our neighborhoods and communities, people are calling for bold action to rebuild the economy.

A recovery plan is needed that rescues Americans from job losses and foreclosures, and that lays the foundation for a more prosperous future for all. The lack of decent jobs, the fear of losing the family home to foreclosure, and the particular impact of both of these problems on minority, tribal, and poor neighborhoods are pushing people to the breaking point. In addition, people with disabilities, who have had historic high levels of unemployment, need relief. The economic and health care crises are inextricably linked as job loss causes the loss of health insurance coverage, leaving families one medical crisis away from bankruptcy and foreclosure.

Wall Street received the helping hand it needed, but the American people are still waiting. It is time to require Wall Street to do its fair share to rescue, restore and rebuild our cities and neighborhoods. Main Street is hurting, and the banks and the federal government must do their part to help turn the economy around in ways that all families can see and feel.

The House has passed a jobs bill that is awaiting action in the Senate. In his State of the Union address, President Obama urged the Senate to act quickly on it. We join the President's call to Congress, and strongly urge the House and Senate to enact bold legislation that provides immediate relief to people who are out of work and employers that are unable to maintain their workforces. As included in the House legislation, it is critical that substantial fiscal relief be made available to help stabilize State and local governments, and to preserve essential services and safety net programs in our communities and the jobs of tens of thousands of workers around the country. Similarly, and again as included in the House legislation, the extension and im-

provements to our Unemployment Insurance program and help with COBRA premiums as enacted in the ARRA must be extended at least through the end of 2010.

Of equal importance, and as urged by the Congressional Black Caucus, among others, the final legislation must provide tools for ensuring that stimulus funds go to the places and people most in need, especially those regions where homeowners were targeted by unscrupulous mortgage lenders and where job loss has been higher than average. Accordingly, we urge Congress to adopt legislation that provides for:

### (1) FAST TRACK CREATION OF JOBS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR THAT SERVE COMMUNITY-LEVEL NEEDS

Appropriate \$40 billion a year for two years to create employment opportunities for unemployed and underemployed residents of distressed communities. Under this proposal, the Department of Labor would administer grants to states, local governments, and Indian tribes. Five percent of funds would be reserved for Indian tribes and discretionary grants, 30 percent would be allocated to states to be re-granted to small localities, and the remaining funds allocated to metropolitan cities and counties under the Community Block Grant formula. Implementation would occur in two phases. The first phase would fast-track job creation for nine months in public service-oriented work projects. The second would provide job creation on projects that serve areas with the greatest economic need, integrate education and job training, coordinate with apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, and provide job opportunities in sectors that offer high growth and the prospect of long term employment. These initiatives must be designed so that they maintain existing wage and benefit standards and do not displace existing jobs or simply exchange one group of unemployed workers for another. A number of models for public employment have been proposed, including H.R. 4268, the Put America to Work Act of 2009, sponsored by Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN).

Invest \$1 billion to hire workers to maintain and rehabilitate abandoned and foreclosed properties in neighborhoods by appropriating a second round of funds for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). Under this proposal, at least 30 percent of new NSP jobs would be required to go to economically disadvantaged job-seekers, prioritizing hiring workers with low-income and low levels of education, and those not currently receiving UI. At least 30 percent of hires would be required to be low-income residents from the areas in which projects are funded.

Provide a work sharing tax credit, as proposed by Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) in H.R. 4179, the "Shortening Hours and Retaining Employees (SHARE) Credit Act of 2009," which would minimize layoffs and incentivize new hiring. The tax credits would be used to pay firms to shorten the typical workweek or work year, while keeping pay constant. This would lead employers to hire additional workers to make up for the fewer hours worked by their incumbent work force. A rough estimate is that this tax credit would create a net total of 1.3 to 2.7 million jobs. Funding work sharing would be cost-effective and efficient, and would very quickly make a big dent in the unemployment rate.

Extend through FY2011 the time during which states and localities are allowed to use existing TANF Emergency Contingency Funds, which can be used to create subsidized jobs, as well as to improve access to cash assistance and other one-time assistance for low-income families. These funds were authorized in the ARRA, and under cur-

rent law, all funds must be spent by the end of FY2010. In addition, as proposed in the President's budget, additional funds, at least \$2.5 billion, should be made available in FY2011.

### (2) IMMEDIATE INVESTMENT IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

Provide \$20 billion for school maintenance and repair, with funds allocated in accordance with the ESEA Title I formulas. According to the Economic Policy Institute, this could generate 250,000 skilled maintenance and repair jobs. In addition, provide \$50 billion in capital funds for the lowest-income school districts.

Prioritize investments in public transportation, including regional systems that connect housing, jobs, and local services to improve access to healthy foods, medical care, and other basic services. Create clear guidelines to ensure that communities with high unemployment and poverty rates are served, and expand on language in the ARRA by creating strong accountability and enforcement measures tied to achieving equitable economic benefits.

Both programs should include safeguards to ensure that job creation results in widespread impact for all workers. For example, contractors receiving federal dollars should ensure that at least 15-30 percent of project work-hours are worked by local residents who are lower income, people of color, women, or who are otherwise underrepresented in the construction industry. Where joint apprenticeship programs are located near a project, contractors should have to maximize the use of registered apprentices who receive quality training. One percent of all dollars for infrastructure investment should be dedicated to creating a pipeline of workers ready to step into apprenticeship programs and construction careers. The Secretary of Labor should be authorized to ensure that public agencies and contractors receiving federal funds utilize Community Workforce Agreements.

### (3) PREVENTION OF FORECLOSURES

Allocate \$10 billion of appropriated TARP funds to HUD to provide fixed-rate, low-interest loans to unemployed people facing foreclosure who don't qualify for other assistance. This program would be modeled on a successful effort by the Pennsylvania-based Homeowners' Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (HEMAP). If a homeowner provided verification of their unemployment compensation to his loan servicer, he would be automatically approved for a loan that would pay any mortgage above 31 percent of family income. Loans would be repayable with interest, but interest would not accrue and repayments would not begin until the homeowner's income was sufficient to allow payment.

Allow homeowners to rent back their homes at market rates for up to ten years following foreclosure. The program would be modeled after the Fannie Mae "Deed for Lease" program that gives former owners the option to lease their recently-foreclosed properties and that targets neighborhoods with above-average foreclosure rates.

Support "cram down" provisions to allow bankruptcy court judges to approve changes to mortgage contracts for homeowners in bankruptcy, such as extending repayment periods, reducing interest rates and fees, and adjusting the principal balance of mortgages.

Implementing our proposals would swiftly stabilize neighborhoods and stem the human suffering in the most distressed parts of the country. While these are temporary investments, all would leave the kind of lasting benefits for homeowners, workers, and students, which would generate long term benefits to the economy and nation. By ensuring

that recovery and reinvestment programs reach all Americans, we ensure strong economic growth for the nation overall. We stand ready to support you and our President in efforts to build an economy based on shared prosperity for all Americans.

Sincerely,

AFL-CIO; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Asian American Justice Center; American Association of People with Disabilities; Campaign for Community Change; Center for Responsible Lending; Coalition on Human Needs; Communications Workers of America; Demos; Economic Policy Institute; Half in Ten; Japanese American Citizens League; Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; National Congress of American Indians; National Council of La Raza; National Partnership for Women and Families; Policy Link; Service Employees International Union; The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society; United Methodist Episcopal Churches; United States Student Association; United Steelworkers; USAction.

HONORING WILLIE BROWN, SR.,  
M.D.

**HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2010*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor Willie Brown, Sr. M.D. upon being honored with the "Trail Blazers Award" by the African American Museum. Dr. Brown will be honored at the African American History Month Celebration and Banquet on Saturday, February 6, 2010 in Fresno, California.

Dr. Willie Brown was born on January 4, 1932 in rural Mississippi. His father worked as a sharecropper and educator and his mother raised 12 children. Against all odds, he attended the University of California, Berkeley and Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee during the 1950s. After completing the program with a medical degree, Dr. Brown was accepted as an intern at Fresno County Hospital, and moved toward becoming an obstetrician gynecologist. In 1962, he began a private practice. Dr. Brown was the first African American specialty board certified physician in Fresno County and the 51st African American Board Certified obstetrician gynecologist in the United States.

During Dr. Brown's 47 year career, he spent 22 of those years in practice with his son, Dr. Willie Brown, Jr. Together they delivered well over 22,000 babies in Fresno County. Dr. Brown's passion for education never ended, he was an instructor to many OB/Gyn physicians in the area and was recognized as an associate clinical professor in the department of OB/Gyn at the University of California, San Francisco in Fresno.

Dr. Brown also served as a Flight Surgeon and Clinic Commander of the U.S. Air Force 144th Dispensary in the California Air National Guard. He was honorably discharged as a Major by the Air Force and is a recipient of the Service Commendation Medal. Dr. Brown served as the director of the Office of Family Planning at the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission. He was the founding presi-

dent of the John Hale Medical Forum and co-founder of the John Hale Medical Center in West Fresno. Dr. Brown was also a member of the Board of Governors in the Fresno Medical Society, a Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International and was a lifetime member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP.

Dr. Brown was also an entrepreneur. Along with a few colleagues, Dr. Brown started and funded the first African American privately owned supermarket in West Fresno. He was a real estate developer, a music producer, a co-owner of Robert's Collision Repair business, a co-owner of Just Julia's Jewelry business and had his own record label, Gimini Twins and Brownstone Entertainment. Dr. Brown was a benefactor for Second Baptist Church, Northwest Church, Youth for Christ, Meharry Medical College, Edison High School, Fresno Westside Seventh Day Adventist Church and Family Community Church, where he served as deacon and deacon emeritus. For his enormous contributions to the community, Dr. Brown has been recognized by a number of organizations; including West Fresno Health Care Coalition and the local NBC affiliate, KSEE Channel 24.

Dr. Brown and his wife, Julia, were married for 54 years. Together they raised three children and had six grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor Dr. Willie Brown, Sr. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring his life and wishing the best for his family.

HONORING LEMARC HUMPHREY'S  
ACT OF HEROISM IN JACKSON  
STATE SHOOTING

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2010*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. LeMarc Humphrey for his heroic actions on Monday February 1, 2010 at Jackson State University. The 21-year-old computer engineer major rushed to the aid of a wounded and stumbling research chemist student, Andrea Scott, after hearing shots behind the John A. People's Science Building Monday night. The gunman fired two shots striking Mrs. Scott in the back of the head, after allegedly trying to rob her. Mr. Humphrey heroically picked Mrs. Scott up out of the pouring rain and rushed her to the hospital to receive needed medical attention.

Madam Speaker, if it were not for the valiant effort of Mr. Humphrey, Andrea may have never had the chance to tell her story. The victim's husband, Bill Scott stated, "Our country is in desperate need of repair, and when you find a man like LeMarc, you see he was an American and he did something above and beyond the call of duty". Mr. Scott would like to see Mr. Humphrey nominated for the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Madam Speaker, Mr. LeMarc Humphrey was raised in Jackson, MS. He is currently in the Air Force ROTC and played trombone for the Jackson State University "Sonic Boom of the South" Band his freshmen year. After his freshman year, he chose to leave the band to devote more time to the ROTC.

Madam Speaker, this is truly an act of bravery and courage on the behalf of this young

man. I salute him for his tremendous act of selflessness and I wish Mrs. Scott a full recovery.

HONORING MICHAEL BAIRD

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2010*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I take this time to honor one of Northwest Indiana's most respected business and community leaders, Mr. Michael Baird, from Valparaiso, Indiana. On January 21, 2010, Mike was honored by the Northwest Indiana Forum in appreciation for his many years of service as a dedicated executive and for his numerous contributions to the community of Northwest Indiana. The celebration took place at the Avalon Manor in Merrillville, Indiana.

Mike Baird's professional and academic career led him to become a prominent leader in the banking industry for thirty-seven years. In 1970, Mike earned a Bachelor's degree in Marketing from Indiana University. Prior to graduate school, he worked as a representative for Hallmark Cards and also served in the United States Naval Reserve. In 1975, Mike went on to earn his Master's of Business Administration degree in Finance from Indiana University. Mike then began his career managing a middle-market lending division for Continental Bank in Chicago, covering both the Michigan and Indiana markets. In 1988, Mike joined Mercantile Bank as Senior Vice President, Chief Lending Officer, a position he held until 2004 when he assumed the position of Chief Credit Officer. In addition, Mike also served on the board of directors at Mercantile Bank from 1999 to 2004. In December 2004, Harris Bank completed the acquisition of the Hammond, Indiana-based Mercantile Bancorp Incorporated. On January 1, 2005, Mike joined Harris Bank as Senior Vice President and Chief Credit Officer for the Northwest Indiana region. Mike continued to advance in the company and on January 1, 2008, he became the Northwest Indiana Region President for Harris Bank. After many years of devotion to the banking industry, Mike retired from his remarkable career in January 2010.

In addition to his impressive professional career, Mike passionately serves the people of Northwest Indiana through his involvement in many community organizations. Among his many contributions to the community, Mike currently serves as Chairman of the Board of the Northwest Indiana Forum, Vice Chairman of the Board for the Center for Workforce Innovations, Board Member for the Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation, Board Member for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Indiana, Advisory Board Member for the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center, and Advisory Board Member for the Porter County Vocational Career Center.

Mike's dedication to his community is exceeded only by his devotion to his wonderful family. He has been married to his loving wife, Jeanne, for almost 29 years. They have one son, Eric, who is married to Tricia, and three beloved grandchildren: Nick, Russ, and Molly Baird.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me