



for the people

MEMBERS:

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|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| William Clay, Mo. | Ronald Dellums, Calif. | Augustus Hawkins, Calif. | Robert N. C. Nix, Pa. |
| Yvonne B. Burke, Calif. | Charles Diggs, Mich. | Barbara Jordan, Texas | Charles Rangel, N.Y. |
| Shirley Chisholm, N.Y. | Walter Fauntroy, D.C. | Ralph Metcalfe, Ill. | Louis Stokes, Ohio |
| Cardiss Collins, Ill. | Harold Ford, Tenn. | Parren Mitchell, Md. | Andrew Young, Ga. |
| John Conyers, Mich. | | | |

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Caucus Announces Legislative Agenda and Economic Priorities

On February 27, the Caucus presented its first formal Legislative Agenda, outlining its priorities for the First Session of the 94th Congress. A copy of the full Agenda is included with this issue of the newsletter. Top priorities include: legislation on full employment and tax reduction in response to the economic crisis; legislation to increase voter participation by removing existing barriers; reordering of national priorities and reduction of the military budget.

no tolerable level of unemployment."

- Tax reform, including repeal of the oil depletion allowance, enactment of a minimum tax, and restructuring of capital gains provisions.
- Extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 for 10 years and passage of a universal voter participation law.
- A searching re-examination of the general revenue sharing program

Caucus Successful In Blocking F.E.C. Appointment by Ford

In a letter to President Ford on January 28, 1975, the Congressional Black Caucus strongly protested the rumored nomination of former Mississippi Governor John Bell Williams to sit as a member of the Federal Elections Commission.

The Caucus letter pointed to Williams' outspoken opposition to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, his approval of Mississippi laws found to be racially discriminatory by the U.S. Attorney General under that Act, and his praise and close ties to the White Citizens Council.

The Caucus protest was apparently successful, as the two presidential nominations did not include Mr. Williams. However, none of the six Federal Elections Commission nominees, including two each from the House and Senate, is black.



Participating in a special press briefing on the Legislative Agenda were, from left to right, Representatives William Clay, Louis Stokes, Charles Rangel, Ronald Dellums, Yvonne Burke, Harold Ford, Augustus Hawkins (not shown), and Walter Fauntroy.

In addition, the Agenda takes a position on forty major legislative initiatives by individual Caucus members that are aimed at specific problems faced by both the black community and the nation generally. The Legislative priorities include:

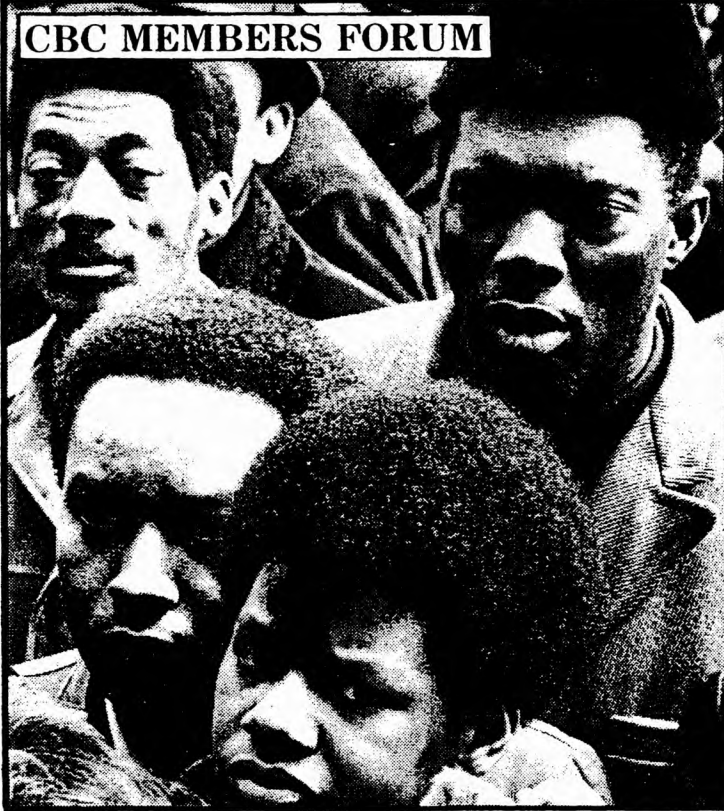
- Passage of comprehensive full employment legislation which incorporates the concept that "there is

with respect to its impact on blacks and the poor, and consideration of both program changes and alternative and complementary programs.

- Reform of social insurance programs, particularly welfare, and passage of a comprehensive health care act.

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CBC MEMBERS FORUM



No Boots or Bootstraps: The Recession and the Black Community

By Rep. Charles B. Rangel
CBC Chairman

It has been sadly, but truthfully stated that when the American economy catches a cold, its poor and minority communities get pneumonia. The current recession and high inflation that is ravaging the nation, has been most severely felt in the Black community.

While government officials and others have expressed alarm at a national unemployment rate of over 8 percent (some 7.5 million "officially reported" jobless people), they have failed to place similar weight on the fact that Black unemployment has not been below 8 percent since 1969. In February 1975, the joblessness rate for Blacks stood at nearly 14 percent.

In addition, as we have pointed out for some time, there are basic weaknesses in the unemployment measures used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). A large number of people—discouraged workers, no longer seeking jobs; part-time workers, unable to find full-time jobs; and women, frustrated in their attempts to enter the labor market—are not adequately counted in the unemployment statistics. In many poor communities, one-third to one-half of the adult workforce is out of a job and without hope.

Millions of dollars have been allocated to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and yet the measures and procedures they use for determining unemploy-

ment are grossly inadequate. Unemployment figures for our major urban cities—areas where there is a high concentration of black citizens—are generally distorted and diluted by use of figures based on the Standard Metropolitan Area (SMSA). In many instances, no effort is made to determine or cite joblessness data for black adult and teenage workers. In recent hearings held by the Manpower, Compensation, and Health and Safety Subcommittee of the Education and Labor Committee, Department of Labor officials were hardpressed to come up with a satisfactory answer on this data "short-fall".

Title III of the Concentrated Employment and Training Act (CETA) explicitly requires the Department of Labor to improve its system and procedures for reporting unemployment in state, local and poverty areas. Rep. Augustus Hawkins and other members of the Manpower, Compensation, Health and Safety Subcommittee are actively monitoring and urging the Department of Labor's full compliance with CETA Title III.

Miscalculations and undercounts notwithstanding, Black workers remain the front line victims of the nation's current economic down-turn. Many of the hard fought and hard won battles in the 1960's for adequate employment and income opportunities have fallen by the wayside. It appears that our

nominal gains in the sixties were the result of temporary, "knee-jerk" concessions by a government fearful of the spread of summer rebellions.

Black teenagers have yet to be significantly aided in their employment status. Over the last fifteen years, unemployment among black youth has *never been below 25 percent*. In January, 1975, the joblessness rate for black youth (16 to 19) stood at 41.1 percent and dropped to 36.7 percent in February, 1975. This slight decline was chiefly attributable to the fact that many of our youth grew discouraged and simply stopped looking for work—and were, therefore, no longer counted in the unemployment statistics.

The Ford Administration expects us to accept the notion that stronger federal initiatives against unemployment and poverty would "fuel the fires of inflation". However, common sense tells us that *the only buffer poor and moderate income families have against inflation is a job*.

One of the highest priorities of the Congressional Black Caucus is the passage of comprehensive legislation that guarantees the right to useful, meaningful employment for all Americans who are willing and able to work. The major thrust will center on legislation introduced by Representative Augustus Hawkins—H.R. 50, The Equal Opportunity and Full Employment Act of 1975.

Energy, Taxes, and the People

In an effort to reduce energy consumption and stimulate programs for energy independence, the President proposed *increased energy taxes* (in excess of \$30 billion) on imported oil, domestic crude oil and natural gas. The Administration also proposed a series of *tax adjustments* (increasing the standard deduction for individuals and families; lowering tax rates for individuals, families and corporations; making modest payments to poor non-taxpayers). The tax adjustments, totalling over \$30 billion were designed to offset, or "neutralize", the detrimental impact of the Administration's energy taxes.

The Caucus has challenged the Administration's assertion that tax adjustments would offset the impact of the energy taxes. Even the conservative estimates of the Federal Energy Administration concede that President Ford's plan would boost the annual fuel and utility costs of poor and moderate income families by \$200 to \$300—while the offsetting factor of tax adjustments only offer savings that range between \$182 and \$292.

AGENDA—

Continued from front page

- The forty or so specific legislative proposals by Caucus members including such categories as 1) child care, 2) civil and political rights and liberties, 3) criminal justice, 4) consumer protection, 5) foreign affairs, 6) governmental structure and responsibility, 7) women's rights, 8) housing, 9) health care.

In addition to working for passage of its Legislative Agenda, the Caucus plans to expand its oversight of federal activities, continuously evaluating the impact of federal programs on its constituents, reviewing civil rights enforcement, affirmative action and substantive program effectiveness and equity. The Caucus also plans a more vigorous scrutiny of nominees for federal appointive posts, examining their suitability, experience and positions on issues affecting the Black community.

PRESIDENT'S TAX REBATE VIEWED AS INADEQUATE STIMULUS:

The Caucus has criticized President Ford's \$16 billion tax rebate proposal (\$12 billion to individuals and \$4 billion to corporations). The President's proposed rebate plan calls for a return of 12 percent of the 1974 tax payments of individuals and families, with the maximum return of \$1,000 going to families earning above \$40,000 a year. A family of four with an annual income of \$7,500 would receive a rebate of only \$58. In terms of impact, families with incomes of \$25,000 and over—about 5 percent of all taxpayers—would receive about one-third of the rebates. Expenditures by lower income consumers, as a stimulus for the economy, are generally neglected in the President's proposal.

The Caucus members worked closely with other Members of Congress in developing an alternative to the Administration's tax rebate package—one that is more responsive to the needs of low and moderate income families.

Hearings on Criminal Justice and Blacks

On February 27, a special ad hoc panel including Representative John Conyers (Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime), Representative Ronald Dellums, and Representative Walter Fauntroy, began

the first of a series of hearings on the unequal treatment of Blacks in the criminal justice system. The first hearing, held in the District of Columbia, focused on the Attica Prison revolt, the North Carolina criminal case of the "Wilmington Ten", and the Republic of New Africa's conflict with Jackson Mississippi police. Many of the accused involved and convicted in these cases charge that they have been denied due process and are victims of racial injustice.



Representative Conyers noted, after four hours of testimony from lawyers and clients, that the goal of the hearings was a thorough exposition of circumstances and alleged abuses in each case; the development of corrective legislation and legal action; and the focusing of national attention of abuses within the courts and prisons.

Other members of the panel include: New York City Criminal Court Judge William Booth; Mississippi civil rights leader Dr. Aaron Henry; Dr. Charles Cobb, President of the National Committee of Black Churchmen; and Dr. Ronald Walters, professor in Howard University's Political Science Dept.

A second hearing is schedule in Jackson Mississippi. Future hearing dates will be listed in upcoming issues of **For The People**.

PLANS FOR ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE WORKSHOP BEGIN

The Congressional Black Caucus has begun planning activity for the annual legislative workshop involving Black elected officials and other key participants. The workshop, which has been traditionally held the same weekend as the Caucus Annual Dinner, is tentatively scheduled for **Friday, September 26, 1975**. The workshop will focus on political and legislative challenges facing the Black community, 1975-1976. Mark your calendars and watch upcoming issues of **FOR THE PEOPLE** for details.

FOR THE PEOPLE is a publication of the Congressional Black Caucus. The newsletter will be published monthly when Congress is in session. **Officers:** Representative Charles B. Rangel (N.Y.), Chairman; Representative Yvonne B. Burke (Calif.), Vice Chairperson; Representative Andrew Young, (Ga.) Treasurer, Representative Walter Fauntroy (D.C.) Secretary. **Editor:** Alicia Christian. **Production Consultants:** Roger Kranz Associates. Please direct all inquiries to **Editor, For The People**, Congressional Black Caucus, 306 House of Representatives Annex, Washington, D.C. 20515, (202) 225-1691

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

TAX REBATE: Tax Reduction Act of 1975 (H.R. 2166), from Ways and Means Committee—On February 27, the House of Representatives passed a tax rebate bill under which an amount up to \$200 would be returned to individuals and families from their 1974 tax payment (a total of \$16.6 billion to individuals and \$5.1 billion to businesses). The bill is progressive in that the amount of increase declines for those with higher incomes (above \$20,000/year). Also, the minimum standard deduction is increased to \$2500/year for joint returns and \$1900/year for single taxpayers, which frees a larger group of low-income persons from any tax; the minimum standard deduction is presently at \$1300/year for all taxpayers.

As passed by the House, the bill eliminates the oil depletion allowance, as called for in the Caucus' Legislative Agenda, but this provision may be removed in the Senate. Members of the Caucus voted for the bill on final passage. While H.R. 2166 is more progressive than the Administration's proposal in returning a larger share to lower-income persons, this concept can certainly be extended further in future legislation.

FOOD STAMPS: To amend the Food Stamp Act of 1964 (H.R. 1589), from Agriculture Committee—An Administration proposal to increase the cost of food stamps was blocked by a bill passed overwhelmingly by both Houses (and not vetoed, though not signed, by the President). The new law simply prohibits the Agriculture Department from raising food stamp prices above their January 1, 1975 level. However, it is only binding through December 21, 1975, during which time the Congress will hold new hearings on the law.

The Congressional action blocking food stamp price increase protects the roughly 5 million blacks, as well as the roughly 10 million whites and others who use food stamps. Persons interested in making their views known on further changes in the food stamp program should contact the Congressional Black Caucus.

ENERGY: (H.R. 2633, H.R. 2650) Ways and Means Committee is presently holding hearings on energy conservation, and discussions are taking

place with the White House as to a possible compromise position on an energy program. The Congress passed a bill which would delay for 90 days the President's executive action increasing oil import taxes, but the bill has been vetoed by the President. A veto override vote is being held up pending the possible compromise.

Even the congressional Democrats' energy package would include a five cent a gallon increase in gasoline taxes, which could increase an additional 6 or 7 cents a gallon above that point. For Blacks of lower incomes, this would cause additional hardship, particularly where automobile use is necessary. Congressman Louis Stokes' bill providing for an energy cost rebate to persons of lower incomes—the F.U.E.L. plan, has been referred to the Subcommittee on Energy and Power of the House Interstate and Commerce Committee. Letters of support should be

sent to Congressman John Dingell the Subcommittee Chairman.

COMMITTEE HEARINGS: Several major bills on the Caucus' Agenda, are now in the hearing stage before subcommittees. This, of course, is a crucial stage in the development of legislation. Following is a partial list of current hearings: 1) Extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (House Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights); 2) Full Employment Act (House Education and Labor Committee, Equal Opportunities Subcommittee) 3) Gun Control (House Judiciary Committee, Crime Subcommittee); 4) Appropriations Committee hearings for federal agencies including Labor, Health, Education and Welfare, and Defense.

Persons interested in making an input on these or other topics should contact the relevant committee or the Congressional Black Caucus.

Congressman Harold Ford: Newest CBC Member

Representative Harold E. Ford (D-Tenn.), 29, is the newest member of the Congressional Black Caucus. Congressman Ford is the first Black Congressional Representative from Tennessee since the Reconstruction era. Harold Ford graduated from Tennessee State University and also has an Associate Degree in Mortuary Science from John Gupten College in Nashville.

No novice in elective politics, Ford was elected in 1970 to the Tennessee State Legislature. During his first term in the 87th General Assembly, Ford was named Majority Whip for the House. In his successful congressional campaign against incumbent Republican Dan Kuykendall, Ford stressed accountability and accessibility by elected officials. In keeping with that theme, he is an active participant in local developments and is conducting "Town Hall Meetings" with his constituency.

Congressman Ford, a vigorous consumer advocate, has introduced legislation that would require all packaged consumer commodities to be labeled to show their selling price. He is also concerned about jobs, the role of utilities and the development of economic in-



Representative Harold E. Ford

itiatives that would assist poor and moderate income consumers during this period of inflation and recession.

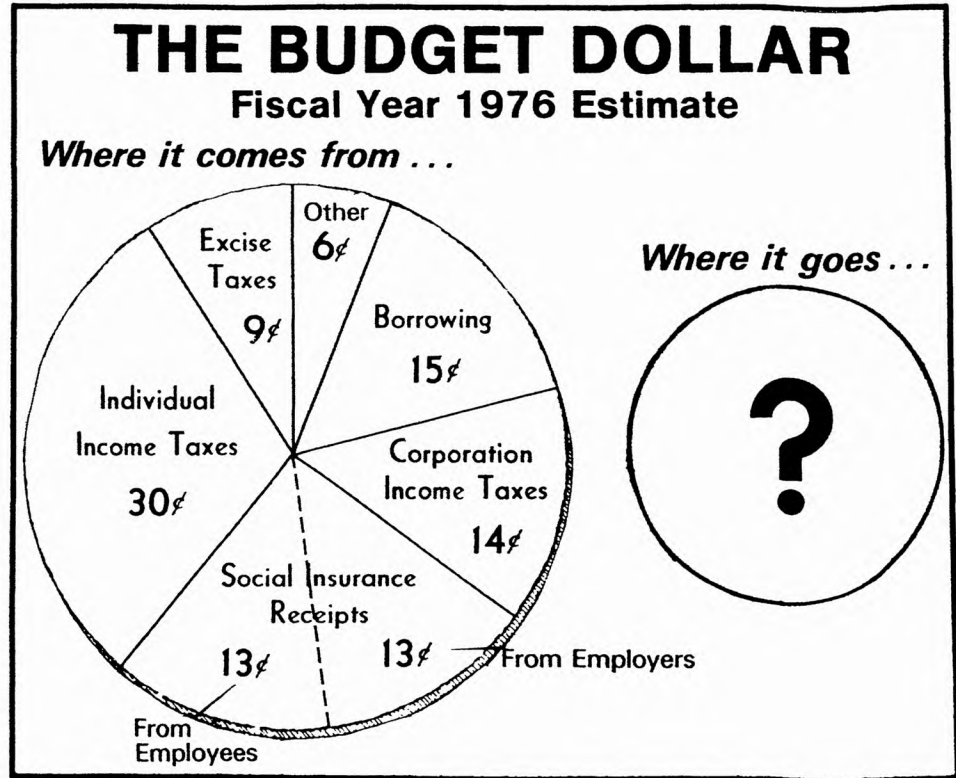
Committee assignments of Congressman Ford include: Banking, Currency and Housing Committee; Select Committee on Aging; and the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Briefing Held on the FY 1976 Federal Budget

On February 3, in response to a Caucus request, key executives from the Office of Management and the Budget provided a special budget briefing for Congressional Black Caucus members and their staffs. Such briefings are part of an on-going Caucus analysis of the Ford Administration's economic and budget proposals, and the development of Caucus position papers for cabinet officials and the general public.

The President's FY 1976 Budget proposed \$349.4 billion in outlays, with a deficit of nearly \$52 billion. The President expressed dismay at the deficit level and seeks to contain it through \$17 billion in proposed spending limitations, reductions, and cuts. Many of the proposed cuts affect key domestic programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Child Nutrition, public assistance, and education.

The President's Budget accepts projections of a national unemployment rate in excess of 8 percent in 1975 and 7.9 percent in 1976. Already, however, several economists have projected unemployment levels as high as 10 percent before the end of this year, along with a continuing rapid rise in the



cost of living. These conditions place devastating pressures on Black and poor communities.

Caucus members have been sharply

critical of inequitable provisions in the President's budget and will continue active deliberations on the budget and appropriations process.

Chess Janus Records Presents Check to Caucus

Over 400 invited guests attended a major reception on February 19, sponsored by Chess Janus Records, to honor the company's presentation of a \$50,000 check to the Congressional Black Caucus. The check was presented as an advance on the anticipated sales of the recorded First Annual CBC Benefit Concert. The Concert was held September 25, 1974 at the Capitol Center. The record album includes performances by WAR, CURTIS MAYFIELD, KOOL AND THE GANG, GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS, AND JIMMY WITHERSPOON.



Participating in the formal presentation, above from left to right are: Congressman Charles B. Rangel; Gene Friedman, Manhattan Advertising; Congressman William Clay; Mr. Marvin Schlachter, President of Chess Janus Records; Congressman Harold Ford, Congressman Ronald Dellums; Mr. Nathan McCulla, President of Shakat Records; Mr. Tom Bonetti, GRT Corporation; Congressman Louis Stokes; and Congressman Walter Fauntroy.

Women, Children and the Family

Black families have always suffered economic hardships even in times of national prosperity. Now, with the national economy in the worse straits in the past forty years, that group of citizens is facing disastrous financial difficulties.

Rep. Shirley Chisholm, a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor, has been concerned with the plight of these families since her first term in Congress. She has concentrated her energies to aid these families in areas such as equal employment, day care, food stamp legislation and sex discrimination.

"The problems our poor families face are interrelated in such a way that they need help in education and in health, in employment and in housing, in every area which involves the quality of a good life," Ms. Chisholm says.

There are some 6.6 million families in the United States where women are the heads or provide the major source of income. An estimated one-third of these families were reported living below poverty level in 1973. The current economic down-turn and spiralling cost of living serve to reinforce the fact that for many women, participation in the labor force is *crucial*, not incidental, to the economic well being of their families.

Black women and other minority women constitute a major proportion

of our poverty rolls. A Census Bureau study indicates that in 1973, *nearly 1 million of the "reported" 1.5 million low income Black families were headed by women.* Such families are more than five times as likely to have incomes below poverty level as families headed by men. In recent surveys of the low-income population, over 45 percent of the women heads of families reported that responsibilities associated with children prevented them from working and seeking jobs. For both poor and moderate income women, the availability of child care services continues to be a key factor in the extent and level of their participation in the work force.

Despite awesome barriers, the number of working mothers continues to grow. In 1973, over 31 percent of the nation's children under six years of age had working mothers, including 48% of the Black children under six.

The incidence of unemployment among women has been consistently higher than that of men, and the combined national average. For example, in January 1975, the unemployment rate for Black women over twenty years of age was 11.0%, compared to 7.7% for white women and 5.5% for white men. Even those women with jobs have appreciably lower salaries than men and



are concentrated in less skilled job categories.

Rep. Chisholm is currently developing a Child Care bill that would establish federally aided child development programs and service for children under six with definite priorities for poor children—including children of working mothers and single-parent families. Rep. Chisholm has noted that: "Day care must not be considered a *custodial* service. It will obviously be a help to women who want and need the opportunity to achieve their full employment potential For (the children) the primary importance will be as an *educational* environment."

New Congressional Black Caucus Staff

The Congressional Black Caucus, in December 1974, appointed **Ms. Barbara J. Williams** as **Executive Director**. Ms. Williams served previously as Director of the Coalition for Human Needs And Budget Priorities, and prior to that, was Administrative Assistant to Congressman Ronald V. Dellums.

As Caucus Executive Director, Ms. Williams will coordinate administrative, organizational and research supports

needed to realize the legislative goals and priorities of Caucus members. She heads a seven-member staff team that includes: **Kenneth Colburn**, *Legislative Coordinator*; **Alicia Christian**, *Research/Resources Coordinator*; **David Ruffin**, *Organizations and Federal Agencies Coordinator*; **Beryl Bridges**, *Administrative Assistant*; **Darcus L. Smith**, *Public Affairs Assistant*.

Nathaniel Davis Appointed, Despite Caucus Protests

Despite the vigorous objections of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Senate, on March 11, approved the appointment of Nathaniel Davis to the post of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Caucus members objected to the appointment, citing Davis' inexperience in African affairs, and questions surrounding his actions as former Ambassador to Chile, during the alleged U.S. complicity in the overthrow of Salvador Allende.

The Caucus was deeply disappointed at the Senate's failure to respond to the protests and plans to press its views even more forcefully on similar matters.

NOTICE

The following information is available through the Caucus:

*The Legislative Agenda of the Congressional Black Caucus
CBC Preliminary Analysis of the Proposed FY 1976 Federal Budget.
Caucus Committee and Sub-committee Assignments*

If you wish to be placed on the Caucus mailing list please write: Congressional Black Caucus, 306 House Annex, Washington, D.C. 20515.

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