

The BLACK C o m m e n t a t o r

An independent weekly internet magazine
dedicated to the movement for economic justice,
social justice and peace - Providing commentary,
analysis and investigations on issues affecting
African Americans and the African world.

www.BlackCommentator.com

February 19, 2009 - Issue 312

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

From Stimulus to Recovery: Follow the Money African American Leadership By Dr. Ron Walters, PhD BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board

Click on the back button of your browser to return to non printer friendly page of this article

[Click here](#) to get helpful hints for viewing and printing this printer friendly plain text page

Now that the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act" has been signed into law by President Obama, what has happened through much trial and tribulation is tantamount to what Cuba Gooding said in one of his movies – "show me the money." We have been shown the money, \$787 billion, and now it is up to us to get down to business and follow the money and then access it for the good of our communities. The stakes are enormous. This is one of the rare moments in history when a cruise-ship size load of funds docks in our states in a few weeks, but if we are not savvy enough to know enough how to access the funds, that ship could come in and leave us with substantial needs unmet.

The Act is a big one with lots of sections. Click [here](#) look at them all. But I will provide a quick glimpse of a few things in Title 9 on "Labor, Health, and Human Services and Education."

- \$4 billion is added to the Workforce Investment program.
- \$500 million of that amount goes to states for adult employment and training activities;
- \$1.2 billion will go to states for youth under 24 years old for summer jobs
- \$1 billion will go to states to assist dislocated workers employment and training
- Another \$500 million will be put in the dislocated worker reserve to assist through June 30 2010

- \$50 million will go to YouthBuild programs through June 30, 2010
- \$750 million will provide grants for training and placement of workers for careers in energy efficiency and renewable energy employment
- \$120 million will be allotted to fund Community Service jobs for senior citizens
- \$500 million will be given to states to augment their Unemployment Insurance funds
- \$300 million for Job Corps

This is the time for black leaders the various communities to come together and work out a system of communicating information to many people who have been laid off, who are disabled, who are youth, who have been unemployed, who are elderly but want to work, and generally everyone who wants to participate in the program funded by this Act. Citizens themselves who want to participate in these programs, many of which are already going in some states like YouthBuild and some that have been shut down, should contact the office of their elected officials at the local, county, state and national level to find the entry point into these activities.

The Obama Administration has created a website RECOVERY.GOV for the average citizen to follow how these funds will be used. That will not be a place to access the programs, but to understand how they are being distributed and what effect the funding is having on things like the unemployment rate.

As the debate has suggested, this may not be the last stimulus package needed to jump-start the economy by the spending made possible through job creation. But our national organizations such as the Congressional Black Caucus, Black Leadership Forum, National Urban League, NAACP, National Action Network, RainbowPush, and others should followed the distribution of such funds carefully to see whether or not the black community is getting a fair share of those jobs and the other resources made available by this Act.

I must confess however, to being somewhat worried when I see that Black leaders have not visited the White House to make their position felt on this matter, but on Friday, February 13, 60 Latino and Latina leaders from around the country visited the White House for a briefing by key White House staff. Perhaps we should not have been first in the door among racial and ethnic groups – perhaps we would not have been permitted to be first – but we should make it plain that there is an expectation that the black community would experience a fair distribution of these funds.

Without the black vote, there would be no Barack Obama in the White House. Take away the states where the Black vote influenced an Obama victory: North Carolina, Virginia, District of Columbia, Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Indiana, and John McCain would have won the election. Our claim on policy fairness is strong.

[Click here to comment on any article
in this issue or see what others are saying in the](#)
The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board member Dr. Ron Walters is the Distinguished Leadership Scholar, Director of the African American Leadership Center and Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland College Park. His latest book is: [The Price of Racial Reconciliation \(The Politics of Race and](#)


[Ethnicity](#)) (Rowman and Littlefield). Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Walters.

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

Click Here

[Home](#)

Click Here To

CONTRIBUTE TO  NOW

Click Here To

CONTACT 

Your comments are always welcome.

e-Mail re-print notice

If you send us an e-Mail message we may publish all or part of it, unless you tell us it is not for publication. You may also request that we withhold your name.

Thank you very much for your readership.

Website Design and Hosting provided by



Copyright © 2002-2009
www.BlackCommentator.com
All Rights Reserved