Race, Lies & Videotape:
A Lesson in Politics 2010
The Soul of New Orleans

Trailblazer
Rev. T.J. Smith

National News
President Obama Signs Finance Law
Race, Lies & Videotape: A Lesson in Politics 2010

By Gary Estwick

Albert Samuels views the wrongful firing of a Black employee at the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the latest political scheme by conservatives and the media outlets that support their agendas. Their goal, said Samuels, an Associate Professor of Political Science at Southern University in Baton Rouge, is to persuade Americans to believe racism is in the past. It has to be, they claim at campaign rallies and town hall meetings, over the airwaves and on the blogosphere.

The president is Black, right? (Forget that we still question his birthplace). What more proof do you want?

Because of this, voices like Rush Limbaugh, Bill O’Reilly, Glenn Beck, Don Imus and Andrew Breitbart, who uncovered footage which initially cost Shirley Sherrod her job, preach that today’s race issues arise for two reasons: “Either you have Black people who still don’t want to be held accountable for what they do so they cry racism or it’s trouble stirred up by liberal Whites who feel guilty about the past,”

Shirley Sherrod, the latest near miss of the right wing press, was asked to resign after a doctored tape of her making apparently “racist” comments was aired by a Right wing blogger, and then broadcast by Fox News.

Van Jones, former “Green Czar” in the Obama Administration was forced to resign after a sustained attack from Glenn Beck, accusing Jones of being a communist sympathizer became to much for him to endure an still be effective in his job.

TIMELINE: March 2010 - Shirley Sherrod, a USDA official in Georgia, speaks at an NAACP banquet. Part of her speech includes her saying she didn’t initially give a White farmer as much help as she could have 24 years ago when she worked for a farmers’ aid group. July 2010 - Conservative journalist/Tea Party Activist Andrew Breitbart receives segments of Sherrod’s speech and turns footage over to Fox News, a conservative cable news station. Soon after, the White House and NAACP condemn her actions, with the administration forcing her to resign. Within days, a full version of Sherrod’s speech is reviewed, clearing her of racism. Also, the farmers in question support Sherrod, a 62-year-old Black woman. The White House apologizes to Sherrod and offers her another job with the Agriculture Department. The NAACP says in a statement the organization was “snookered” by Fox News and Breitbart into believing Sherrod harmed White farmers because of racial bias.

Continued next page.
Samuels said, explaining their strategy, which is hidden behind a cloak of racism itself.

“They want the problem to go away,” Samuels continues. “For those of us who keep bringing it up, they keep saying something must be wrong with us. America is the greatest country in the world. They question your patriotism.”

This was the force behind the smear campaign of Van Jones, who resigned last fall from the Obama administration, the backlash from the president’s criticism of Massachusetts’ police officers arresting national scholar Henry Louis Gates in front his home last summer and the hidden camera last year that appeared to show ACORN employees offering advice on avoiding detection with illegal activities - since then, footage in the heavy-edited video segments has been discounted.

This week, Sherrod, 62, became the latest prawn in a political gumbo of reactions, resignations and reversals.

She was forced to resign after incomplete footage surfaced of her saying she didn’t initially give a White farmer as much help as she could have 24 years ago when she worked for a farmers’ aid group. Full footage of her speaking engagement showed that Sherrod used the moment in her life to promote racial reconciliation at an NAACP event. What makes this week’s controversy even worse: It started because of the NAACP’s aggressive stance this month to condemn the Tea Party as a racist movement. So the political group’s media supporters found a story to put pressure back on the NAACP.

“It’s part of a bigger issue, the right wing’s quest to foster hate, fear and distrust,” said Deron Synder, a columnist at Root.com.

Now, the White House and NAACP both earlier retractions stances condemning her comments. Sherrod has been offered another job with the USDA. Meanwhile, media outlets - conservative and otherwise - are once again questioning whether they rushed to get the story first and forgot to get it right, or at the very least, explore all options available.

“It also demonstrates the perils of snap decisions in a culture of sound-bite journalism and 24/7 news cycles,” Synder said. “Andrew Breitbart played the White House, the NAACP and the media like suckers, and everyone fell for it.”

Blacks around the nation took to the Internet to sort out the issues. A few reader comments from Ebony/Jeet’s Facebook page:

“Why were they listening to Fox News in the first place, as opposed to listening to Sherrod’s entire story? Fox news is doing what they set out to do and that is to divide us and conquer us and we fall into it so quick and so well. I am appalled that Ben Jealous fairly maligned.”

Breitbart, as of press time, made no such apology. Perhaps that is because conservatives, more than anyone else in America, believe that outlawing discrimination is enough to end race issues, Samuels said.

“They believe more so than any other Americans what happened in the past is in the past and that the race problem, to the extent it exists, we can deal with that problem without having to change any of the fundamentals of the country.

“I believe in racial equality as long as it doesn’t cost me anything. Sure, you guys can live anywhere you want to live; just don’t live next to me. You can work anywhere, but if you get a job through Affirmative Action that I thought I could get, I have a problem with that.’ They have been convinced that they have a problem with that.'
Rev. T.J. Smith

Trailblazer Legacy Award

Edited by Edwin Buggage

Rev. T.J. Smith is a person who has made an indelible mark on society coming from a small town in Louisiana during the period of segregation to overcome adverse circumstances to become a great man in his family and community. To commemorate and celebrate his amazing life, Data News Weekly is honoring his life with the special “Legacy Trailblazer Award.” For he is gone but not forgotten and is a hero in our community, and Data News Weekly is honored to present Rev. Smith with this award.

Thomas Smith was born to John M. and Ruth Isadore Smith in St. Joe Louisiana. Living during the tumultuous times of segregation he endured many injustices that inspired him later to be a fighter for the rights of the disenfranchised. He often recalled walking 12 long miles to school with other Black children while watching yellow school buses half filled with White children drive right past them. Not deterred he would later hitch rides to school with the laborers. While still a student, Thomas adopted the middle name “Jefferson”, and became known and commonly referred to as T.J.

In April 1945, T.J. was drafted into a segregated United States Army serving in the South Pacific. In December 1947, he returned to St. Joe and began working as a farm hand and laborer in the swamps of St. Tammany Parish. Despite always loving his birthplace, St. Joe, he also acknowledged many unpleasant memories of racial segregation and the cruel treatment of Blacks in Slidell and Pearl River. These events, coupled with unforgettable experiences in a segregated army, were the catalysts that motivated him to return to school.

T.J. enrolled in Xavier University in June 1948 and graduated in May 1952 earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Arts with a minor in English. One of his notable contemporaries was Dr. Norman C. Francis, Xavier’s President of more than 40 years. T.J. was elected President of the 1st NAACP-St Tammany Chapter in 1951 under Chairman J.W. Wilson, serving under Justice Marshall inspired T.J. to on greater civil rights activities. During that same period, the Louisiana State Legislature officially outlawed the NAACP in the State of Louisiana. T.J. and the NAACP local chapter members established the St. Tammany Parish Voters League in order to continue their civil rights activities.

Amid T.J.’s growing civil rights activities, he also began his career as an educator, accepting his first teaching assignment in 1952, at Chata-Ima Jr. High School, located in Lacombe, Louisiana. With C.O.R.E.’s assistance, he sued the St. Tammany Parish School Board to desegregate its schools and the case was won in 1965. He was fired in 1955 along with Leroy Palmer as a result of their civil rights activities. He then taught and studied at Xavier University simultaneously. He later entered the Orleans Parish School system as a long-term substitute teacher, and continued on as a full time teacher of English and Drama at George Washington Carver, John McDonough, McDonough 35, and Booker T. Washington Sr. High Schools, as well as Andrew J. Bell Jr. High School. He also worked with various civil rights organizations, including C.O.R.E., S.N.C.C., the Deacons for Defense and Justice, and S.C.L.C. as follower and supporter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In 1968, he organized and led a boycott of Slidell merchants seeking and obtaining better job opportunities for minority men and women.

In 1972, he was appointed State Director of Veterans Education and Training for the Louisiana Department of Education. It was during this period...
Incarnate Word Head Start Graduation

On Wednesday July 14, 2010 many graduations took place for Head Start Centers across the New Orleans metro area. The graduations held at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church were with Catholic Charities of New Orleans Head Start program. Total Community Action is a grantee for the Catholic Charities Head Start programs. The Head Start program is a child and family development program that provides services and experiences to promote the growth and development of the family with special emphasis on a comprehensive range of services to the family’s 3 and 4 year old preschool children, including children with disabilities. Many children benefit from these programs giving them a jumpstart into their early education. Some of Incarnate Word’s Head Start graduates are featured here.
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Making This Right

Beaches
Claims
Cleanup
Economic Investment
Environmental Restoration
Health and Safety
Wildlife

BP has taken full responsibility for the cleanup in the Gulf. And that includes keeping you informed.

Searching For And Cleaning Up The Oil
Every morning, over 50 spotter planes and helicopters search for oil off the coast, heading to areas previously mapped with satellite imagery and infrared photography. Once oil is found, they radio down to the 6,000 ships and boats of all sizes that are supporting the cleanup effort and working to collect the oil. These are thousands of local shrimping and fishing boats organized into task forces and strike teams, plus specialized skimmers mobilized from as far as the Netherlands.

We have recovered more than 27 million gallons of oil-water mixture from the Gulf. Other methods have also helped remove millions of additional gallons of oil from the water. We’ve deployed more than 8 million feet of boom to protect beaches and sensitive wildlife areas.

Hurricane Preparedness
In the event of a hurricane, our first priority is keeping people safe. In coordination with the Coast Guard and local officials, we may suspend operations temporarily but have organized to resume them as soon as possible.

Our Responsibility
We have already spent more than $3.2 billion responding to the spill and on the cleanup, and none of this will be paid by taxpayers. We will work in the Gulf as long as it takes to get this done. We may not always be perfect but we will do everything we can to make this right.

I grew up on the Gulf Coast. I know these waters. And I’m doing everything I can to clean them up. - Fred Lemond, BP Cleanup Operations

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What the Tea Party Really Stands For

(NNPA) - When we study the intense struggle for civil rights in this nation, we quickly – and rightfully so - find ourselves analyzing the life and legacy of the great Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

We learn of his tireless efforts to achieve equality and justice for all of humanity as we pass on anecdotes of sit-ins, marches and boycotts to our children. Our schools highlight the selfish sacrifice of Dr. King in rooting out the stains of racism and achieving integration across the country. But what we as a collective sometimes forget to impress upon the next generation is the depth to which Dr. King was an advocate for federal government as he knew it was the only effective way to ensure a unified system of equality in every state. Today, the Tea Party stands to break that national stance on justice and in turn, break the crux of what the civil rights movement symbolized and what Dr. King fought and literally died for.

Long observing a consistent pattern of racist comments and behavior within the Tea Party, the NAACP recently voted on a resolution urging leaders of the Party to denounce such inflammatory elements of their organization. What has ensued is a back-and-forth between the two groups with a national discussion surrounding race and race relations. But in this much-needed conversation, we cannot glance over what the Tea Party as a whole stands for: smaller government and states’ rights.

It is a group so ardently focused on state sovereignty that talk of secession and state self-regulation has become as commonplace as the bigoted signs visibly present at their gatherings. And if it is an ideology that should raise alarm bells to anyone who believes in true freedom and justice for all.

During the struggle for civil rights in the 1950’s and 1960’s, it was more often than not, the federal government that intervened when state policies failed us. At Clinton High School in Tennessee, it was National Guard troops that protected Black students as they entered a desegregated educational facility for the first time. And it was the federal Supreme Court that ruled segregation resulted in unfair and unequal practices to begin with in the infamous Brown vs. Board of Education decision. It was federal policies that allowed Blacks and other folks of color to exercise their right to vote and voice their opinion in the politics and social issues of the day. It was national regulation of discriminatory housing and zoning laws that afforded the marginalized a shot at the American dream. And if we take it all the way back to the days of emancipation, it
Prescription Help Available for the Unemployed

Despite assertions that the re-cession is ending, many Ameri-
cans are still out of work and continue to have trouble finding employment. Since 2000, a steady increase in unemployment has contributed to a lack of employer-sponsored insurance coverage. Without health coverage, many have difficulty accessing needed medical care including prescription medicines.

The national unemployment rate is uncharacteristically high at nearly 10%, and has been for more than a year. Minority populations struggle the most, with over 15% of the African-American population and over 12% of the Hispanic population currently unemployed. Data suggest that the high unemploy-
ment rate means an increase in uninsured individuals.

Without employer-based insur-
ance coverage, many uninsured patients lack access to a medical home and ultimately forego pre-
ventative health care measures, which are critical to maintaining good health.

Millie Gorham, Executive Director of the National Black Nurses Association, recommends patient assistance programs as a way for patients to gain access to the medicines they need if they become unemployed and unin-
sured.

“Without insurance coverage, many people fail to receive the medical care they need, especially when it comes to their prescrip-
tion drugs,” says Gorham. “African-Americans are particularly at risk. Many pharmaceutical com-
panies offer patient assistance programs to help patients in need get access to prescription medi-
cines. These programs can be a huge help when folks are strug-
gling to make ends meet.”

One patient assistance pro-
gram, the Pfizer MAINTAIN Program, was developed to help eligible, unemployed patients continue to take their Pfizer medicines despite losing their prescription drug coverage. July marks the 1-year anniversary of the MAINTAIN program, which is part of Pfizer’s family of pa-
tient assistance programs, Pfizer Helpful Answers®, Pfizer Helpful Answers and the Wyeth patient assistance programs have helped nearly 6 million uninsured and underinsured patients get access to more than 48 million prescrip-
tions in the past 5 years (2005-2010) alone.

Last year, Emmanuel Stone was laid off from his job as an IT Engineer in Independence, Mis-
souri and lost his insurance cov-
erage. When he learned of the MAINTAIN program, he applied, his eligibility was verified and he was accepted within only a few weeks.

“The MAINTAIN program has allowed me to get the Pfizer pres-
scription medicines I could not have gotten otherwise during these difficult times” says Stone. “I wish more programs like this existed.”

“We launched our first patient assistance program at Pfizer more than 20 years ago,” said Gary Pel-
etier, Director and Team Leader of Pfizer Helpful Answers. “Since then, we’ve evolved our programs to meet the changing needs of people who don’t have prescrip-
tion insurance. Our still-strugg-
gling economy is evidence that these programs are still highly important, especially to individu-
als who are recently without their medical coverage.”

If you or someone you know is interested in finding out more information about Pfizer’s patient assistance programs or to check your eligibility status, call 1-866-767-2400 or visit www.PfizerHelp-
fulAnswers.com.

Trailblazer, Continued from p.4.

that he recognized that God was calling him to a higher purpose in life. He later acknowledged strug-
gling greatly with God’s call to the preaching ministry. After much prayer and self-examination, he accepted the call of God to this spiritual vocation for the rest of his life. On April 13, 1974, he was licensed; On September 14, 1974, he was ordained as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and on March 15, 1975, he was installed as pastor of Salvation Baptist Church in St. Joe, Louisiana, his home church since childhood. Shortly afterwards he studied and received degrees from the Union Baptist Theological Semi-

nary, Christian Bible College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Semi-
nary. In 1979 he travelled to Israel to study biblical archeology. He would later teach and mentor many aspiring ministers at Union Seminary and Christian Bible College.

In 1981, he was commis-
ioned as a missionary with the Convention. He accepted this call to serve, which led to an appoint-
ment as Director of the Baptist Joint Committee of Greater New
Orleans. God used him as a me-
diator between Black and White Christians. This helped him over-
come profuse racial biases, which had haunted him since childhood, and he learned to love everybody; in true obedience to God’s Holy Word. This also led to a 1986 return trip to the Holy Land, and further mission work in Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe in 1986 and 1989, twice fulfilling a lifelong de-
sire to perform mission work in Mother Africa.

Former Mayor C. Ray Nagin, where T.J. youngest son Kenya

Sharpton, continued from previous page

was a President and a federal gov-
ernment that ended the abhor-
rrent institution of slavery.

On August 28th, 1963, Dr. King went to Washington and held a rally for the precise purpose of

pushing for increased federal action and involvement to nul-
lify all discriminatory state and local practices. As we prepare to mark the 47th anniversary of his ‘I Have a Dream’ speech on this date, Glenn Beck and others push for an expansion of states’ rights – the exact antithesis of the civil rights movement and Dr. King’s legacy.

We can already clearly see the detrimental effects of state regu-
lution with the recent passage of Arizona’s immigration bill SB 1070. And when members of the Tea Party like Rand Paul state that it is perfectly permissible for private businesses to discriminate on the basis of race, we have a se-
rious problem. The NAACP was inarguably justified to call out rac-
est elements of the Tea Party, but we must also ensure that we ques-
tion the legitimacy of the Party’s foundation itself. As the chants of rights and recession get louder, we must all ask ourselves if we would truly like to return to a period where there was less fed-
eral involvement?

In the tradition of Dr. King and the civil rights movement, I urge for more – not decreased - federal intervention. This is, after all, the United States of America; let’s start acting like it.
52nd Annual Press Club of New Orleans Excellence in Journalism

98.5 WYLD-FM's Sunday Journal with Hal Clark won the first place award in the Best Radio Talk Show category during the 52nd Annual Press Club of New Orleans Excellence in Journalism Awards Gala held Saturday, July 17th at Harrah's Hotel. The show also won the first place award in 2009.

Clark has served as host/producer of the show since 2001. Victims and Citizens Against Crime, at an awards banquet held June 24, 2010 at The Balcony in Metairie, honored him with an award for sensitive coverage of the plight of crime victims and educating the community about crime. Eddie Francis is the co-producer (he works in a similar capacity, including duties as co-host, with WQUE-FM's Real Talk with Wild Wayne, which airs Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. on 93.3) and host of the monthly Education, NOLA 3.0 and Success Series segments. Assistant producers include Theresa Sanchez, who manages audio content for the show's webpage and disseminates the weekly press releases, and Jonathan Nichols, a community news segment producer and editor.

Regular contributors include certified personal fitness practitioner Dianna Beasley; veteran political strategist Vincent Sylvan, who publishes The New Orleans Agenda; political analyst Dr. Gary Clark, chair of the political science department at Dillard University; personal money management consultant and author Dr. Lisa Frye; Dr. Carl Robinson of Children's Hospital; Lloyd “The Love Doctor” Dennis; journalist, activist and minister Kojo Livingston; and licensed clinical social worker Victor Sims. Sunday Journal's 2010 entry for the Best Radio Talk Show category included Clark and Sims discussing a major spike in suicides in New Orleans post-Katrina, a segment that aired September 27, 2009 (it's still available on the Sunday Journal webpage).

Sunday Journal with Hal Clark airs live from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Central on 98.5, WYLD (FM) and live on the web at www.wyldfm.com. For more details about the show or to hear previous interview segments, visit the Sunday Journal webpage: http://www.wyldfm.com/pages/sundayjournal.html.

Due to the live format of Sunday Journal, topics and guests are subject to change without prior notice.

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Interim LSU Public Hospital Will Close Labor and Delivery Services

The Interim LSU Public Hospital (ILH), 2021 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA, will close its labor and delivery services beginning August 1, 2010, in part due to state budget cuts. It will also close its nurseries, which include its Well Newborn Nursery, Intermediate Care Nursery and Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery.

LSU will move its labor and delivery services to Tulane Lakeside Hospital, 4700 I-10 Service Road, in Metairie, LA. ILH will stop accepting patients on Wednesday, July 28, 2010. Patients arriving that day at the ILH Emergency Department will be evaluated in the Emergency Department and, if stable, will be transferred after 5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 28, 2010. If they are not stable, they will be taken upstairs for delivery.

In all circumstances, ILH will provide patients with the full array of appropriate services available throughout the length of their stay and in order to minimize any unnecessary transfers.

In 2009, ILH averaged just over two births a day.

“Our plan will provide the best services possible for our patients while addressing state budget cuts," said Dr. Roxane Townsend, ILH Interim CEO. "This plan will also allow the LSU and Tulane residency programs to maintain their high level of training."

LSU and Tulane OB/GYN programs will continue their outpatient clinics at 2100 Perdido Street. Both schools will continue to offer both inpatient and outpatient gynecology services at ILH.

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Trailblazer, Continued from p9.

Dr. Smith was preceded in death by his mother and father, John M. and Ruth Isadore Smith, his stepmother, Ada Smith, his siblings, Frank, Annie Mae, Mary, Milton, Grace, Roswell, Ruth, John C., James, Lawrence, one unnamed sibling who died at birth, and his son, Roderick.

Dr. Smith leaves to cherish his memory his widow, Gwendolyn Ray Smith, his children, and a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and other relatives and friends whose lives he touched very deeply.

Family was an important part of Dr. Smith’s life and gave his life meaning and purpose. His legacy has been handed down as two of his sons reflect on his life; He left the same indelible mark on his children as on the community-at-large. T.J., Jr., eldest son and former St. Tammany Parish Councilman recalled his father explaining his transition from secular civic activity to accepting the call to the ministry with the simple phrase “only what you do for Christ will last.” Kenya, his youngest, credits his father with inspiring his work to produce economic and social equity. “Dad inspired our spirit of service and embodied the song ’If I can help somebody as I pass along.’ His life and work issued a challenge that I will spend the rest of my life working to meet so that future generations can enjoy the progress he worked to afford us.”
Sweeping Wall Street and Finance Reform Passes Senate, Heads for Obama Signature

By Pharoah Martin
NNPA National Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - The U. S. Congress last week finally passed the most sweeping legislation on bank and Wall Street reform in 70 years. The financial reform bill provides tougher regulations on banks and financial institutions and additional protections for consumers, many of which directly benefit African-Americans.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act was a response to the severe downturn of the U.S. economy during which “too big to fail” institutions like AIG and Lehman Brothers nearly uprooted America’s whole financial system two years ago with underhanded business practices. Under the new legislation, the federal government now has the power to break up large failing financial companies and banks. It establishes an Office of Minority and Women Inclusion to ensure diversity, and introduces a new oversight agency that will regulate the industry and establish consumer safeguards.

The financial reform bill cleared the senate with 60-39 vote two weeks after the House passed the legislation. It now goes to President Obama’s desk or be signed into law.

“It’s designed to make sure that everyone follows the same set of rules, so that firms compete on price and quality, not on tricks and traps,” Obama said at a press conference on the White House south driveway. “It demands accountability and responsibility from everybody. It provides certainty to everyone from bankers to farmers to business owners to consumers. And unless your business model depends on cutting corners or billing your customers, you have nothing to fear from this reform.”

The president called the resolutions in the reform bill the strongest consumer financial protections in history.

“For all those Americans who are wondering what Wall Street reform means for you, here’s what you should expect. If you’ve ever applied for a credit card, a student loan, a mortgage, you know the feeling of signing your name to pages of barely understandable fine print. It’s a big step for most families, and one that’s often filled with unnecessary confusion and apprehension. As a result, many Americans are simply duped into hidden fees and loans they just can’t afford by companies who know exactly what they’re doing.”

According to Obama, the bill will crack down on abusive practices of unscrupulous mortgage lenders and will ensure that consumers who are denied loans and insurance receive a free credit score.

Provisions of the bill also include:

- The creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau;
- Additional assistance for homeowners;
- More funding for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which helps homeowners who are at risk of foreclosure and provides low interest loans to unemployed homeowners who are having a difficult time keeping up with their mortgage payments. Under the legislation, the program will receive an additional $1 billion in funding and an additional $2 billion in funding from the Treasury Department;

- Safeguards that ensure fair access, treatment and regulations for racial minorities, women and low-income workers, including ensuring diversity in hiring and job promotions at federal financial regulatory agencies and in their contracting with the creation of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion;

National Urban League President and chief executive officer Marc Morial praised the congress for passing the legislation.

“The bill, passed by the Senate and sent to President Obama, will help protect America’s families from predatory lending practices and guard against the risky practices that landed the nation in its current financial crisis,” Morial said in a statement.

Communities of color have been disproportionately affected by the financial crisis, and stand to gain the most from provisions like the newly-created Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the additional investments in the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, as well as the creation of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Morial noted.

Three Republicans voted for the bill. But those who did not held that the legislation represents more government overreach that will lead to less jobs. The House Republican leader John Boehner called for its repeal.

“Obstructionists in the Senate are working overtime to protect the wealthy and influential at the expense of average Americans who are struggling to get by,” Morial said. “We desperately need to change the legislative culture and work together to stabilize our economy and support the working class.”

Jonathan Griffin: “A friend to many, stranger to none”

On Saturday, July 17th 2010 funeral services were held for Jonathan Griffin, a friend, a husband, a father, a grandfather, a classmate, and a co-worker. He was well-known in the New Orleans community as an employee of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which he retired from after thirty plus years. He loved his community, his wife, Jo Marie, who was the love of his life, his kids, his family and his friends.

Tributes were made by Kathie Clark and Greg Hamilton from HUD, Burnell Moliere, and Neal Mitchell. Mr. Hamilton said that he has never met a person like Jonathan. They became friends immediately from the moment they met and remained friends for life. He can’t remember ever working at HUD when Jonathan was not there. Mr. Moliere said, “Johnny seemed to know just how to find a rainbow behind every cloud; the one who knew when to offer advice and when to just listen. He could be fun, silly and lighthearted, or serious, caring and sympathetic-whatever the situation called for. He was so attuned to the feelings of others. Quite simply, he was a comfort and a joy to be around.” This was Jonathan Griffin.

Everyone who spoke at the service or knew Jonathan Griffin felt this way about him. He was truly a good person, always helping others. He was loved by everyone and he will be truly missed by all.

“Johnny seemed to know just how to find a rainbow behind every cloud; the one who knew when to offer advice and when to just listen. He could be fun, silly and lighthearted, or serious, caring and sympathetic-whatever the situation called for. He was so attuned to the feelings of others. Quite simply, he was a comfort and a joy to be around.” This was Jonathan Griffin.

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President Obama signs the landmark Financial Reform Bill into law. This is the greatest financial reform since the Great Depression.
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– Dale Owens, Peoples Health member

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