

The Black Community will not be left in the COVID-19 boat of despair while white business owners receive the lion's share of no-bid contracts, and financial relief is doled out to others!



NYC's Black Business Empowerment Committee (BBE) based in the village of Harlem, NY, is concerned that the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) did not represent the Black business community well as Congress negotiated the funding of coronavirus relief efforts.

The Negro has been inflicted with 244 years of slavery and 100 years of segregation. And so with the legacy of these two unjust systems facing him, it is only natural that he is way behind. And he has been out of the mainstream of American life; he has been on the periphery of American life for all of these years. And it would really be a miracle, that history hasn't seen for someone to start exactly 344 years behind in a race and get ahead or catch up—unless something special is done. We've had special treatment in the negative sense for 344 years. Now we've got to get special treatment in the positive sense, in order to catch up and improve these lagging standards."

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1964 —

On March 20, 2020, the Congressional Black Caucus sent a letter to Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Schumer with the stated purpose of offering proposals to assist Black Americans for consideration as Congress negotiated the funding of coronavirus relief efforts. **The letter proposed 94 initiatives totaling approximately \$450 Billion.**

'Black-owned' businesses are mentioned specifically in three (3) proposals: ❶ Provide relief to Black Farmers by relieving any outstanding indebtedness arising from the settlement of claims successfully brought by Black farmers against the United States Department of Agriculture for discrimination, where the government was found to be at fault, ❷ Provide \$3 billion in emergency funding to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) and Minority Serving Institutions and ❸ 2020 is a critical year for the Black community, as we face unprecedented voter suppression efforts, restore Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

THERE WAS NO MENTION OF BLACK BUSINESS!

- 94 initiatives were proposed and only the three above speak directly to Black people.
- Only one of the three has a dollar value attached to it.
- Only one of the three mentions business and that's only—Farmers.
- \$449B in spending proposed and HBCU's have to share \$3B with other institutions.
- \$3B for the Minority Business Development Agency of which \$10M is reserved for Black businesses nationwide. That's if you believe the press release because it's not in the letter.

You don't believe us? Download and read the 11 page letter for yourself. Then contact members of the Congressional Black Caucus to let them know Black Businesses Matter.

The Small Business Administration defines minority-owned business as—a company that is minimally 51% owned, operated, and controlled by a minimum of one U.S. citizen whose ethnic background is at least 25% Asian-Indian, Asian-Pacific, Black, Hispanic, or Native American. **To be clear — Minority ≠ Black!**

'Minority-owned' businesses are mentioned specifically in four (4) proposals: ❶ 0% Federal Reserve loans to Support minority depository institutions (MDIs), ❷ \$3B for the Minority Business Development Agency with \$3 billion to minimize the economic impacts on minority-owned businesses and support full implementation of the Initiative to Build Growth Equity Funds for Minority Businesses and ❸ \$50 billion in new grants for the Small Business Administration (SBA) to assist negatively affected small businesses, including minority and women-owned businesses and ❹ Prioritize minority press for US government advertising contracts. **As stated previously, Minority ≠ Black!**

Did you notice, each proposal has a dollar value attached and they even call for 'minority' advertising contracts?

'Women-owned' businesses are mentioned specifically in two (2) proposals: ❶ \$50 billion in new grants for the Small Business Administration (SBA) to assist negatively affected small businesses, including minority and women owned businesses and ❷ Provide emergency funding through grants to support investments in technology, cyber-security, and resilience by small businesses owned by minorities, women and veterans. **Note; Women ≠ Black Either!**

In this case, one proposal has a dollar value attached and the second calls for grant funding for 'minority' and 'women' owned businesses.

'Small Businesses' are mentioned specifically in eight (8) proposals: ❶ 90-day moratorium on all consumer and small business credit payments (student loans, credit cards, mortgages, car, notes, small business loans, personal loans, etc.), ❷ \$50 billion in new grants for the Small Business Administration (SBA) to assist negatively affected small businesses, including minority and women owned businesses; ❸ Reauthorize the State Small Business Credit Initiative and provide \$10 billion, ❹ Authorize grants to small businesses for payroll support, ❺ Provide support for small businesses by providing government-backed interest-free loans to businesses, entrepreneurs, nonprofits, and independent contractors to cover operating expenses and payroll needs in order to keep their employees fully employed, ❻ Provide a rebate for 100% of payroll taxes paid by small businesses this year, and provide a rebate of 200% of payroll taxes paid by small businesses in "hot spots", ❼ Provide emergency funding through grants to support investments in technology, cyber security, and resilience by small businesses owned by minorities, women and veterans and ❽ Provide credit to small farmers. **Small Business ≠ Black Either!**

All eight proposals mandate a level of economic benefit and not one specific mention of Black business!

Where do the CBC's 94 initiatives totaling \$459B leave the Black Business Community?

If your city is anything like NYC where participation by all other ethnic groups and white-women far exceeds Black participation; it leaves us out in the cold and on our own!

In NYC, Black people are roughly 22% of the population and Black businesses receive less than 2% of NYC/ NYS agency contracts and Black people own less than 2% of all businesses in NYC and NYS.

Those we've elected to represent us are clearly more interested in representing the big umbrella of Minority | Women | Small Business enterprises with no real attention paid to Black Businesses. Note: the SBA's definition for 'minority' doesn't even include women, but the CBC saw fit to argue the case for women while they neglected to propose funding specifically for Black businesses.

Harlem's BBE finds this UNACCEPTABLE!

A US Census 2012 Survey of Business Owners found - there are ~ 2.6 million Black owned companies in the US. More than 95% of the Black-owned businesses are sole proprietorship or partnerships which have no paid employees. About 40% of these businesses in 2012 operated in the health care, social assistance; and other services such as repair, maintenance, personal and laundry services sectors. The site goes on to say—of the 2.6 million Black-owned businesses in 2012, 109,137 had paid employees according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Roughly 2.6M Black businesses in America—that means the Congressional Black Caucus asked for approximately \$3.86 for each Black business in a \$2T COVID-19 relief package. And don't believe the hype when told the number of Black businesses is increasing. Ask what is the nature and quality of these new businesses?

Sure, there's a lot of stuff in that 11 page letter with 94 'ASKS' and Black people will certainly benefit from the social service spending, but its 2020 and the dawn of a new century; are we really still relegating our forward advancement to lip service from those inside and outside of our community. **North Carolina put Joe Biden back on the map and he never even put a Black agenda on the table.** Black businesses in America are deserving of more because some had a 400 year head start and others just got here!

According to prosperitynow.org, if current trends continue, the median household wealth for Black people will decline to \$0 by 2053. If we do not speak up now and demand a renegotiated COVID-19 relief package for the Black business community, this trend will become our reality and \$0 household wealth will be the legacy our generation will leave for our children and grandchildren.

The question is—will our elected officials continue to ignore the economic health of the Black community, or will we challenge them to put measures in place that will ensure the economic health of the Black community during and after the current COVID-19 crisis?

NY's Black business community and the Black faith community are watching. We are hoping you will join us as we assess the effectiveness of those we elected to represent us and respond accordingly as the 2020 and 2021 election seasons unfold. COVID-19 emergency and recovery spending will be the Black Business Community's litmus test for NYC, NYS and Federal candidates seeking political office during the 2020 and 2021 election seasons.

Regards—The Black Business Empowerment Committee



Congressional Black Caucus
Black Economic Empowerment
Grade : F

Who are we?

Harlem's Black Business Empowerment Committee (BBE) is a collective of Black community organizations, churches and business owners that have come together to put forth a Plan for Black Business Empowerment. The goal is to make Black economic health and Black business empowerment a priority for all elected officials. Primary organizers:



The 400 Foundation
The 400 Foundation, a moral movement for economic equality, was birthed in February 2019 as a historical acknowledgement of the 400th year since the end of Chattel Slavery in North America and a biblical response to the Exodus of oppression after 400 years of liberation.
www.the400foundation.org



Harlem Business Alliance
Since its founding in 1980 the Harlem Business Alliance (HBA) has been a force of advocacy for the development and empowerment of Harlem's small business community. HBA offers free one-on-one counseling services to aspiring entrepreneurs maneuvering through the start-up phase as well as to established small business owners. www.hbany.org



WEG
WEG is an alliance of Harlem based Black entrepreneurs formed in 2018 in an effort to level the playing field for Black business owners in NYC. WEG seeks to buck the trend by advocating for Black-owned businesses and identifying contract opportunities and Black entrepreneurs prepared to accept the opportunity. www.WEGNYC.org