

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS  
 COMMISSION ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF  
 BLACK MEN AND BOYS

+ + + + +

FIRST QUARTER BUSINESS MEETING

+ + + + +

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023

+ + + + +

The Commission convened via  
 Videoconference at 11:00 a.m. EST, Representative  
 Frederica S. Wilson, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT:

FREDERICA S. WILSON, Chair

LUCY McBATH, Commissioner

LAURENCE ELDER, Commissioner

DR. JOSEPH E. MARSHALL, JR., Commissioner

KRISTEN CLARKE, Commissioner

THOMAS M. COLCLOUGH, Commissioner

ALAYSIA BLACK HACKETT, Commissioner

DR. CALVIN JOHNSON, Commissioner

ALEXIS HOLMES, Commissioner

MARSHALL DILLARD, Commissioner

HENRY JOHNSON, Commissioner

TINALOUISE MARTIN, Commissioner

MARK K. SPENCER, ESQ., Staff Director

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UNEDITED

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(11:02 a.m.)

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR WILSON: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the first quarterly meeting of the United States Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys.

I am Commissioner Frederica "Prevention" Wilson. That's what you can call me. I serve Florida's 24th Congressional District in Congress, and I am the founder and chair of this essential Commission. I am so excited to be a part of this group or part of this Commission and the work that we're doing.

This is our first quarterly meeting for the new fiscal year, and I'm excited about what we have in store coming up as we continue this vital work towards empowering Black men and boys.

Let's proceed with today's order of business. First, let's confirm the quorum. Can the Director please call the roll and confirm the quorum for us, so we can proceed with our business?

II. BUSINESS MEETING (ORDER OF BUSINESS)

a. QUORUM

MR. SPENCER: Yes. And good morning and

1 thank you, Madam Chair. For the body, per the  
2 statute, which at present is nine members to  
3 constitute a quorum and/or the majority of our  
4 business, to establish this quorum, I will call each  
5 Commission member by name. And please acknowledge  
6 your name by saying here or present.

7 First, Madam "Prevention" Wilson?

8 CHAIR WILSON: Here.

9 MR. SPENCER: Secretary Reverend Al  
10 Sharpton? Commissioner Horsford? Commissioner and  
11 new Commissioner Troy Carter, Sr.? Commissioner and  
12 new Commissioner, welcome. Commission Maxwell Frost?  
13 Our continuing Commissioner, Lucy McBath?

14 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Present.

15 MR. SPENCER: Thank you.

16 Our Commissioner, and welcome new  
17 Commissioner, Hank Johnson?

18 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Thank you. I am  
19 present and happy to be here. Thank you.

20 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, sir.

21 Commissioner Brewer? Okay. Commissioner  
22 Elder?

23 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Present.

24 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, sir.

25 Commissioner Clarke?

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1 COMMISSIONER CLARKE: Present.

2 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Commissioner Martin?

4 COMMISSIONER MARTIN: Present.

5 MR. SPENCER: Thank you.

6 Commissioner Hackett? And our new  
7 Commissioner?

8 COMMISSIONER HACKETT: Good morning.  
9 Present.

10 MR. SPENCER: Good morning. Thank you.  
11 Commissioner Calvin Johnson?

12 COMMISSIONER C. JOHNSON: Present.

13 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, sir.

14 Commissioner Marshall?

15 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Present.

16 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, sir.

17 Commissioner Holmes?

18 COMMISSIONER HOLMES: Present.

19 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, ma'am.

20 Commissioner Colclough?

21 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Present. And  
22 good morning.

23 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, sir. Good  
24 morning, sir.

25 And Commissioner Dillard?

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1 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Present.

2 MR. SPENCER: Thank you, sir.

3 Madam Chair, by my count, we have achieved  
4 our quorum. Please let the record reflect that we  
5 have achieved our quorum, and I'll turn the meeting  
6 back over to you.

7 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. Thank you,  
8 Mr. Director.

9 b. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

10 CHAIR WILSON: With a quorum in place, I  
11 propose we adopt today's agenda. Are there any  
12 amendments or objections to the current agenda which  
13 you received? If not, we'll proceed with the meeting,  
14 and the agenda is approved.

15 c. NEW ORDER OF BUSINESS

16 I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

17 CHAIR WILSON: And we also approve the  
18 minutes from our previous meeting. Any additions,  
19 corrections? We will consider the minutes approved.

20 ii. CHAIR'S REPORT

21 CHAIR WILSON: As the Chair, I want to  
22 help shepherd this Commission to become the preeminent  
23 organization addressing the challenges faced by Black  
24 men and boys in the United States of America. This is  
25 my life's work. I have been doing this for over 30

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1 years. So this is not new to me, and I am so, so  
2 proud to have a commission.

3 We know that in the United States we have  
4 a Civil Rights Commission, where we are housed, and  
5 within the Civil Rights Commission is the Commission  
6 on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys. Now, the  
7 Civil Rights Commission was established by President  
8 Eisenhower after the passage of Brown v. Board, and  
9 the country was in chaos. And people didn't want  
10 their children going to integrated schools, so there  
11 were fights in the street and governors and mayors and  
12 people -- police with water hoses trying to stop the  
13 integration of schools.

14 President Eisenhower realized that, so he  
15 established the Commission on Civil Rights to shepherd  
16 in a new era in America where schools would be  
17 integrated, Black and white, even if they had to be  
18 bussed to another neighborhood. But he needed a whole  
19 commission to do that. So that Civil Rights  
20 Commission has been in place since 1967.

21 Three years ago, almost four now, we had  
22 the murder of George Floyd. Now, the Commission on  
23 the Social Status of Black Men and Boys is a bill that  
24 I have filed for 13 years. That's how long I was in  
25 Congress filing that bill. And it just sat there.

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1 Nobody ever paid it any attention except me.

2 After George Floyd was murdered, then the  
3 Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys  
4 received wings. It came alive, and our Speaker, Nancy  
5 Pelosi, was very instrumental in waking it up, and  
6 Mr. Marco Rubio in the Senate was the sponsor in the  
7 Senate, and we were able to shepherd that bill  
8 through.

9 So it appears as if any time there is  
10 really catastrophic kinds of incidents that happen  
11 with Black people in America, we get a commission. So  
12 just be proud that you are a part of that second  
13 commission, so now we have two commissions just for  
14 Black people. Well, the Commission on Civil Rights is  
15 not just for Black people, it is all civil rights.  
16 But this Commission is for a specific group. It's  
17 Black men and boys.

18 You know, we always say in the 5,000 Role  
19 Models, which I found it across the State of Florida,  
20 it's -- we say Black and Brown boys, we say boys of  
21 color, but this particular Commission gives us the  
22 actual authority to address a specific population that  
23 we all know needs to be addressed.

24 They are disproportionately affected by  
25 everything from racism to racial profiling to murder,

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1 gun violence, health disparities, educational  
2 disparities, you name it. So we have work, almost  
3 like a mission, a ministry that were established here.

4 So we want to make sure that this becomes  
5 like a think tank, a national think tank, where we  
6 worked with community-based organizations that are  
7 already making robust investments in the lives of  
8 Black men and boys.

9 So the state of the Commission now is --  
10 I'm going to give you a little update. We've had  
11 several achievements from the end of last quarter to  
12 the state -- to the start of our new year. We had a  
13 congressional briefing on Wednesday entitled  
14 Preventing Crime in the Black Community.

15 And the hearing featured experts from Yale  
16 University and Howard University, The Sentencing  
17 Project, Men Can Stop Rape, and Kappa Alpha Psi, all  
18 focusing on how youth and community-based serving  
19 organizations can prevent crime.

20 Now right now I'm going to introduce our  
21 new members -- our new member who is on with us, who  
22 was a part of the briefing. Mr. Hank Johnson. And  
23 I'm going to give you a magic minute to tell us a  
24 little bit about you, brand-new CBC Commissioner, so  
25 there's people who we know, all of us know.

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1 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Thank you,  
2 Congresswoman Wilson, and thank you for your yeoman's  
3 efforts.

4 CHAIR WILSON: Just a magic minute because  
5 I know you can.

6 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Okay. I got  
7 you. I got you. But I've got to spend a minute to  
8 talk about the fact that I share a name with Calvin C.  
9 Johnson. My name is Henry C. Johnson, Jr. Calvin  
10 Johnson is for that initial. So I share that with you.

11 Also share the fact that I hail from the State of Georgia, where I practiced criminal defense  
12 law for 27 years before coming to Congress. And so I was just reading up on Calvin Johnson and his experience  
13 down in Clayton County back in 1983, totally different county than it is now.

14 And I remember my own experience in terms of representing people. I remember a young  
15 man convicted after I defended him on a rape charge. He was identified by the light of a refrigerator in a totally dark  
16 place. But, anyway, he was convicted. But I feel you, and I congratulate you on your release, and I look forward to  
17 working with you on this Commission, which is so important.

18 I mean, humanity began in Africa. The inception of humanity, Africa. Somehow over the  
19 last 300,000 years, Black people have fell off the top of the mountain, and Black males in particular have fallen to the  
20 bottom of the social ladder.

21 And it's not because we are Black males. There are other factors that have come into play,  
22 and so the work of this Commission should be about identifying those factors and addressing those with some  
23 solutions. And I look forward to being a part of the process, working with people like Larry Elder and all of the others  
24 on this Commission. So thank you for having me.

25 CHAIR WILSON: Was that a minute?

1 (Laughter.)

2 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Well, it was doing a lot better than  
3 I usually do, Madam Chair. That's the best I could do.

4 COMMISSIONER ELDER: It was a Hank Johnson minute.

5 CHAIR WILSON: A Hank Johnson minute?

6 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Yeah.

7 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. All righty. We have other new Commissioners. They are not  
8 with us. So let me just reiterate what the rules are of this Commission.

9 If you miss -- there are only four business meetings per year. Just four. And if you miss two  
10 of those four meetings, then the person who appointed you, we take that up with them and they should be replacing  
11 you. And if they desire for you to continue, and we agree with them, then you remain on the Commission. If not,  
12 "see ya," and they will replace you with someone else, because we have lots of work to do.

13 We have -- let me give you a little update on what happened in our last -- in September, and  
14 just bring you kind of like up to date where we are. We had a -- we partnered with my congressional office to host a  
15 series of events at the Congressional Black Caucus ALC.

16 The events included a brain trust on African American history featuring the Secretary of  
17 the Smithsonian, Mr. Lonnie Bunch, and we did a forum on Stay Woke Africans in America, which featured not only  
18 Mr. Bunch but Representatives Clyburn and Jones.

19 And the next one was Don't Build a Jail for Me: Prevention Not Detention. And our very  
20 own Commissioner, Kristen Clarke, was there. Mr. Don Lemon was the moderator, and we showed videos from  
21 Chair Horsford, Leader Jeffries, and Commissioner McBath.

22 And the last one was on Policing in the Black Community -- and also Mr. Joseph Marshall  
23 came from California, all the way from California, to be with us at these forums. We are -- and the last one was  
24 Policing in the Black Community, and that was sponsored by Yale University's Center for Policing Equity.

25 In the last nine months of the Commission, we have convened 10 congressional briefings

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1 on issues related to the health and well-being of Black men and boys such as colon cancer, health disparities,  
2 education, gun violence, dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, and most recently crime prevention. And we plan  
3 to keep this momentum going into the new year.

4 We have four new Commissioners coming in. Only one of them is here. You heard it from  
5 the -- with his magic moment. Our Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Representative Horsford, has called in  
6 that he will not be here.

7 But we have Mr. Troy Carter from Louisiana's Second District who has indicated to me  
8 that he wants to champion men's mental health. Mr. Maxwell Frost, from the State of Florida, who has indicated that  
9 he wants to champion, along with Lucy McBath, gun violence. Am I missing anyone? That's them.

10 Okay. We have an ambitious plan for the year ahead of us. We are housed in the Office of  
11 Civil Rights. We never -- Larry, we never met there, so in -- we are going to plan to meet there next September. But  
12 in the month of May, because we need time to get -- we're going to get a picture of each of you.

13 We're going to frame that picture and put it on the wall of the Civil Rights Office where  
14 they are going to designate a wall for the Commissioners, our Commissioners. And we're going to put them there.  
15 You all are the inaugural members of this landmark legislation.

16 We will have a ribbon-cutting at that time. At that ribbon-cutting, we're going to honor  
17 Ms. Nancy Pelosi, and we're going to honor Mr. Marco Rubio at that ribbon-cutting. So that we are going to invite  
18 all of our partners, all of the organizations who wrote letters to make sure that this legislation was passed, like the  
19 NAACP, the Urban League, NAN, all of the civil rights organizations, churches, different people who advocated for  
20 this Commission, and we'll have a day people can come in, see where it is.

21 Personally, I brought my boys up this -- for the ALC, and I had the opportunity to go to the  
22 Civil Rights Commission. That was the first time I have ever been. I was impressed, and you will be impressed when  
23 you go.

24 So, in April, we are going to ask everyone on this Commission and every member of the  
25 Congressional Black Caucus to plan a Preventing Crime in the Black Community Forum in your district. It will --

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1 you will own it. It will be on the same day across the United States.

2 Every one of you will have a forum on Preventing Crime in the Black Community. Could  
3 be a Zoom, could be in person, it could be at a school, it could be a march, it could be a rally, it could be with police  
4 officers, it could be with children. It's your choice. But we will highlight on social media and all day long we hope to  
5 see posts from you and everything that you are doing in your community to bring about a change of crime in the  
6 Black community.

7 We also are setting a goal of owning Father's Day. June will -- Father's Day will belong to  
8 the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, because we feel that it's time to lift up our Black fathers.  
9 They have been stereotyped and placed at the margins for far too long, despite ample evidence that Black fathers are  
10 more likely than fathers from any other race to have substantive involvement in their children's lives.

11 And I want everyone to know this. The Commission can do this. And we have several  
12 other things. I'm not going to go through much, but I also want to impress upon Mr. Hank Johnson and my staff --  
13 remember, Hank, we started working on a letter to get Mr. Desmond Meade pardoned. And I think they have  
14 reached out to your office staff to continue that effort, but I want us to be -- that to be an effort of this Commission,  
15 the pardoning of Mr. Desmond Meade, who has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

16 And if you want to know more about him, just Google it or ask Ms. Siri. She will tell you  
17 everything you need to know about Desmond Meade. Okay?

18 So now we are going to help you know and understand that perhaps every week or every  
19 day, whatever, when we find provocative articles that pertain to Black men and boys, my office does that. My press  
20 secretaries, they find articles relating to Black men and boys. Like yesterday's article was from The Chicago Sun  
21 Times, and let me tell you what it says. Young Black men in Chicago and Philadelphia were most likely to die from  
22 guns than troops in battle.

23 So these kind of articles that we see -- another one came out Tuesday from TheGrio, and it  
24 asserted that racism doesn't stem from dislike of Black men and boys, but a perceived threat from Black men and  
25 boys.

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1 So these are the kinds of articles that we'll share with you, and you can use them in your  
2 preparation for your big event that you're going to host in your district or your city where you live under the guise of  
3 the Commission, the U.S. Commission on -- when you said I wanted you all to get in the habit of saying the U.S.  
4 Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys and referring to yourselves as Commissioners.

5 And so each of you -- Mr. Joseph Marshall, you will be doing one in San Francisco, and it  
6 will be huge. And those of you who are from agencies and you are here in Washington, D.C., well, we don't know  
7 what you will be able to do, but we're going to be depending on the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, not  
8 just the Commissioners, on the Congressional Black Caucus.

9 But it's 60 now. It's 60 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, plus you, so we  
10 should have at least 70 forums across the United States in May on the same day addressing fighting crime in the Black  
11 community.

12 Do you have any input or questions about what I'm saying? Any objection? Okay. Lucy?

13 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Thank you so much, Commissioner Wilson. I really  
14 appreciate that. I'm really glad to hear that, you know, we have new stakeholders, new Commissioners, to the  
15 Commission, and, you know, very, very excited about their leadership as well.

16 In terms of reference to Representative Frost, you know, he and I both worked so  
17 desperately on gun violence prevention. Is it a possibility that he and I could work together in that vein for that  
18 forum in May? And because I think what I want to be able to do, and I'm sure that Representative Frost will probably  
19 agree, a lot of our communities don't know how much money has been secured, allocated, for community violence  
20 intervention programs.

21 I mean, the word is getting out, but not as extensively. Those funds are still sitting there. I  
22 am monitoring from state to state to state how many of the organizations and what governors are actually releasing  
23 those funds. And there have been a few states, but not the number of states that we really need to take access of this  
24 funding.

25 And so, if I may, would that be a good time that maybe Representative Frost and I in May

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1 could create that forum, bring in those stakeholders, community stakeholders, to really make sure that there are --  
2 they understand and know what is available, and push their governors and push the state legislatures, I mean, to go  
3 after the funds before -- you know, because of course we know they may expire, and I just want to make sure that this  
4 money is going out the door to our communities.

5 CHAIR WILSON: Well, the whole plan is for Mr. Frost to do his in Orlando. He lives in  
6 Orlando.

7 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Okay.

8 CHAIR WILSON: So this is in person kind of, but it doesn't preclude you from -- you can  
9 do what you just suggested at any time. You know, you can work with him. But in March, when we do the forums,  
10 it's going to be all 60 in separate districts.

11 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Right. I guess is it possible for us to do one under the  
12 Commission maybe in D.C. as well?

13 CHAIR WILSON: Sure.

14 COMMISSIONER McBATH: And he and I together -- could work together? Because  
15 that's the problem that we're finding is that the execution of the funds is not happening. And I know the CBC is very  
16 concerned about all the funding that we have secured, and yet our communities -- it is either not trickling down to  
17 them or it's coming in very slowly, because they don't know what's available.

18 And so if we might be able to get together to work, he and I, in a future forum, or whatever,  
19 in Washington and bring in our stakeholders, so they know exactly what's made available and they can push that  
20 information out to their communities.

21 CHAIR WILSON: Definitely. We will make sure that -- you know that -- and of course  
22 I'm sure you will speak to him about that.

23 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Yeah.

24 CHAIR WILSON: What we -- what has happened is the White House has established a  
25 bureau so to speak on gun violence. So I think Representative -- Commissioner Frost is in charge of that bureau, at

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1 least that's what I understand.

2 COMMISSIONER McBATH: No. No, he's not in charge of it. He created a bill. The bill  
3 has not passed, but the President made it Executive Order. There are three individuals that are actually directors, and  
4 -- well, two are deputy directors, and one is the official White House director. And so they together are in charge.  
5 They just -- they just created out of his bill the Executive Order.

6 So we would love to be able to bring them in, you know, at that forum if we could. That  
7 would be wonderful. I'm sure they would come, because they have come before to the Gun Violence Prevention Task  
8 Force, which I'm chair -- one of the chairs of.

9 So that would be a wonderful way, once again, outside of just even the task force on the  
10 Hill, to bring in stakeholders if we may.

11 CHAIR WILSON: That would -- that would be great. So we'll look forward to that.

12 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Thank you.

13 CHAIR WILSON: Keep us posted. Okay. If you -- you will remember, I think this was  
14 before you came, Mark, but I know that Mr. Marshall was here, I know that Larry was here, I know that Alexis -- no,  
15 Alexis, you just came from the Department of Education. So I think Ms. Clarke was here.

16 And we -- Mr. Dillard, you were here. We declared the year 2021, I think, as the Year of the  
17 Black Men and Boys. It didn't take off. Nobody cared. They just don't care about Black men and boys. So it didn't  
18 get the wings that we thought it would get.

19 So my staff has been toying with -- and they are making a suggestion -- as the year of 2024  
20 become The Year of Black Men and Boys, and see what we can do to elevate it. And so that's why we're going to do  
21 all of these forums in these local communities to amplify the voice of the Commission, because this is an important  
22 Commission. Everyone should know about this Commission, and no one knows about it, except us.

23 So that's the whole goal. We have to amplify the voices of this Commission and spread it  
24 from California to Florida to Atlanta to New York to everywhere, Louisiana, wherever these members of the  
25 Congressional Black Caucus live. And it's 60 of them, and it's approximately 10 of us who live in city, Democrats and

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1           Republicans.

2                                   Now, remember, this is a bipartisan Commission. So crime in the Black community is a  
3           Black partisan -- is a bipartisan Black issue for Black Democrats and Black Republicans.

4                                   Any other questions or concerns about what we're discussing now about our fatherhood,  
5           our -- Hank, are you straight on Mr. Meade?

6                                   COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: On who?

7                                   CHAIR WILSON: Desmond Meade.

8                                   COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Oh, yes, yes,  
9           we'll look into that and work with you on that. I  
10          wanted to ask whether or not crime in general  
11          committed, allegedly, by Black men and boys, is that a  
12          focus also, or is it just crime in the Black community  
13          or is it just crimes committed by Black males in the  
14          Black community?

15                                  CHAIR WILSON: It's a combination of where  
16          you live, what's happening in your city. And I would  
17          suggest that if you have a college, a university, that  
18          you talk with them, partner with them, you know, get  
19          experts from them.

20                                  In my community, I work very closely with  
21          the police, so mine will be with police. I believe in  
22          policing. And so, of course, you know, they help me  
23          with my name, Frederica Prevention Wilson. So my  
24          whole thing is going to be on how you prevent crime,  
25          and I always use the police. And mine will be focused

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1 on children.

2 Some people will -- I know Mr. Marshall  
3 works with adolescence and grown men, so, you know,  
4 that's a different category. Some people work with --  
5 it's up to you. That's why it's so important to have  
6 them because this whole crime is such a mixture of  
7 what causes it. Poverty. Somebody might want to do  
8 homelessness. That's a big issue with veterans,  
9 homeless Black veterans across this nation who live on  
10 the street who are crazy.

11 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Madam Chairwoman, do  
12 you want this to take place on the same day and may  
13 all of our -- is there a day?

14 CHAIR WILSON: We're going to massage that to make sure it's a good day and nothing is  
15 -- and you will know that, before we break for the holidays, you will know what day in May, so you can begin  
16 planning in your respective community. But we want it the same day in every city. Even if you do a Zoom, you might  
17 want to do a Zoom, you know. We know that the agencies here, they have everybody's station in Washington, D.C.,  
18 so they might do a Zoom. The Department of Education might decide they want to do a Zoom with school children  
19 or a college campus talking about what's happening.

20 So many of our college campuses now find themselves in urban districts; there's a lot of  
21 crime surrounding those college campuses that the impact, the children, they're scared to even leave campus because  
22 it's so bad. And so while people are fighting in Israel, we ought to fight here because we have problems that we have  
23 to solve. So that's why I don't want you to forget our mission. Okay. They have Ukraine going on, Hamas, and we  
24 have our Black boys and men who need us at this time. So never close your eyes, never blink your eyes. We are on a  
25 mission. That's what we are. Everybody here --

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1 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Madam Congresswoman, could I ask this question?  
2 So I'm looking at the folks whose faces I can see on the Zoom call, and I know Mr. Elder and I've looked up Mr.  
3 Johnson, but I've not had the opportunity to acquaint myself with the others who are on the Zoom call. Are all of  
4 these commissioners, and how many commissioners are on the Commission, by the way?

5 CHAIR WILSON: Well, we'll let each, I'm going to give each commissioner then a magic  
6 minute so they can introduce. Now, you know how you all are. We're going to let each one, a magic minute or a  
7 magic 30 seconds, to tell us who you are and who appointed you and why you're on this commission. They're from  
8 agencies, Hank.

9 So let's start out with Mr. Dillard. He's been on a long time. Marshall?

10 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Yes. Good morning, everyone. I'm Marshall Dillard. I'm  
11 out of Bakersfield, California. I was appointed by Congressman Kevin McCarthy. And I've been on the Commission  
12 from the very beginning, yes.

13 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Joseph Marshall.

14 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Thank you, Commissioner Prevention Wilson. My  
15 name is Dr. Joe Marshall. I was appointed by Speaker Pelosi. I run a nonprofit working with the young people. I do  
16 a violence prevention radio talk show, and Congressman Wilson read my book, so she said she liked it. So thank you.

17 CHAIR WILSON: It's a wonderful book. Wonderful. We're going to have a book signing  
18 for you at our ribbon-cutting.

19 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Thank you.

20 CHAIR WILSON: Alexis.

21 COMMISSIONER HOLMES: Good morning. Alexis Holmes representing the United  
22 States Department of Education appointed by Secretary Miguel Cardona. Thank you so much.

23 CHAIR WILSON: Alaysia.

24 COMMISSIONER HACKETT: Good morning. Dr. Alaysia Black Hackett representing  
25 the United States Department of Labor. I was appointed by Acting Secretary Su, and I was hoping to get an

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1 opportunity, because I am a new commissioner and I am president, as well. Thank you so much, Congresswoman  
2 Wilson. Oh, and I'm the Chief Diversity Equity Officer at the Department of Labor, which is why I'm here.

3 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. The Elder.

4 COMMISSIONER ELDER: I am Larry Elder. I have been a radio and TV host for some  
5 40 years, so I've been talking about the issue of the problems in the Black community regarding crime committed by  
6 and against Black men and boys at least as long as Congresswoman Wilson has. I ran for governor in a recall election  
7 in California. I recently ran for president. And I wrote a book about the importance of fathers in the lives of people  
8 called Dear Father, Dear Son: Two Lives . . . Eight Hours. I recommend it. And I was appointed by President Trump.

9 CHAIR WILSON: Calvin Johnson.

10 COMMISSIONER C. JOHNSON: Yes. I'm Calvin Johnson. I am representing the U.S.  
11 Department of Housing and Urban Development. I was appointed by Secretary Marcia Fudge. And, Commissioner  
12 Johnson, I am not the Calvin Johnson that you looked up, but I do know of that Calvin Johnson.

13 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Okay. You look like him, too.

14 COMMISSIONER C. JOHNSON: I get that. He may be a family member. I have five  
15 Calvins in my family, so he might be, you know, like a distant relative. But I do want to wish you a happy Founders'  
16 Day.

17 COMMISSIONER H. JOHNSON: Thank you. I appreciate it.

18 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Who is missing?

19 COMMISSIONER MARTIN: I can introduce myself. I am Tina Louise Martin. I'm with  
20 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. I have 35 years of service with the Commission, and I've been appointed by the  
21 staff director, Mauro Morales.

22 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Tom Colclough. I'm with the United States Equal  
23 Employment Opportunity Commission. I was appointed by Charlotte Burrows. In my day job, I am the Director of  
24 Field Management Programs for the agency.

25 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. I remember Mr. Calvin Johnson telling me about his work in

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1 the penal system because one of my goals, initiatives, is to take you all to a federal prison, and I specifically want you  
2 all to just visit death row inmates. So I think that Mr. Calvin Johnson and, of course, Commissioner Clarke can help  
3 us with that because I think it's important. There was an article that came out about federal prisons and how long  
4 Black men are in solitary confinement, and there are agencies and organizations trying to get rid of solitary  
5 confinement because it drives you crazy. And then these people come out of prison and they are on the streets, and  
6 they're crazy. So this adds to the homeless population and what you see happening in America and what happens to  
7 Black men.

8 And then also there was another article, Commissioner Clarke, about how many Black  
9 men are actually in jail for years because they can't make bond. They haven't been convicted of anything, and they're  
10 in jail. So these are some of the issues that we have to dig deeply into. You just get arrested, you drive them out on  
11 the streets, you get arrested because you don't have a tail light. When they stop you, you don't have a license, and you  
12 go to jail. You don't have money to bond out, so you are there. You might see a judge the next morning. You go  
13 right back to jail awaiting trial because you have no money to come out. So these are some of the issues.

14 Commissioner Clarke, we're giving everybody a magic minute to tell who they are,  
15 introduce themselves.

16 COMMISSIONER CLARKE: I appreciate the opportunity, Chair Wilson. I was  
17 appointed by you, and I'm very grateful to have the opportunity to serve on this most important commission. I also  
18 serve as the Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, and I think the work  
19 of this commission is really critical. Issues of racial justice and racial equity inform all of the work that we do when it  
20 comes to enforcing our federal civil rights laws, and so working to address all of the issues in the criminal justice  
21 system from the disproportionate incarceration rates of Black men and Black boys; the conditions that we see inside  
22 our jails and prisons; the voter suppression and voting discrimination issues which are disproportionately targeted at  
23 Black people, including Black men, thinking access to the ballot box; the issues in the education space when it comes  
24 to over-disciplining, harsh suspensions, entanglement in the criminal justice system, I think, are issues that this  
25 commission can really break ground on.

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1 So I've appreciated this opportunity to serve, Chair Wilson, and I'm looking forward to  
2 prison visits and other opportunities for us, as commissioners, to get out on the ground and engage with communities  
3 to promote reform.

4 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. We're so honored to have you on our commission. You're  
5 like a superstar to all of us, and we appreciate you. You're like Mr. Elder who is the household word, his name is a  
6 household word.

7 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Next meeting -- any other questions or concerns? Okay. Our  
8 next meeting, our second meeting, is Thursday, February 22nd. Put that in your calendars. It's another Zoom. And  
9 then our third quarterly meeting is Tuesday, May 28th, so by that time we should have had our big, big day of action,  
10 I guess you would call it, where almost half of the country will be addressing crime in the Black community because  
11 everybody will be doing something.

12 And then our fourth quarterly meeting, we're going to try to have it at the ALC in  
13 September. We don't know what the date is, but whatever that date is we'll center our meeting around it. And we're  
14 going to have it in-person at the Commission on Civil Rights office. And right across the hall from that is the  
15 Council of Great City Schools, who is one of our partners as we deal with the education crisis that we find our Black  
16 boys and men because, if you don't have a good education to start with, you're going to have some issues as a man.  
17 Once we conform that last date, we'll let you know.

18 And now we'll have the report from Mr. Mark Spencer, who is our Director of the  
19 Commission. He will give us the Director's Report.

### 20 III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

21 MR. SPENCER: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. You've covered much of the ground that  
22 we were going to speak to. As you mentioned, and I would just, in the sake of brevity, just refer the commissioners to  
23 a Director's report for this meeting but also our past Director's report.

24 As the Chair mentioned, we have engaged with a number of advocacy groups and think  
25 tanks focusing on the misuse and the disparate use of solitary confinement, particularly as it is used

1 disproportionately against Black men who are incarcerated at all levels. So that will continue to be a focus, and one of  
2 the leading groups in that was the Unlock the Box Coalition.

3 You'll see in my report that we talk about other engagements of community-based  
4 organizations, think tanks, and advocacy groups. One of the leading groups there has already been engaged by the  
5 Chair, and that's the Action Collaborative for Black Men in Medicine, trying to expand the number of Black men  
6 coming into the medical profession but also allied health professions and the importance of that in terms of  
7 improving the delivery of health care services to the African American community.

8 We also attended a conference in September with the National YMCA's Boys and Young  
9 Men of Color initiative, and that's an important collaboration for us. They do great work and mentorship and  
10 entrepreneurial development across the country. And at that meeting, it was highlighted by the surprise visit from  
11 Vice President Kamala Harris. You'll see the link in the Director's report, so please take an opportunity to hear her  
12 greetings there.

13 We've engaged with a number of groups across the country, to include Mr. Shawn Dove,  
14 and the whole idea of the Black Male Achievement program. You can see his information. The group Cities United  
15 out of Louisville, Kentucky, which is focused on crime prevention in the Black community and preventing gun  
16 violence. We also talked with Mr. Walter Lanier of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who was focused on many of these same  
17 issues, particularly economic empowerment and health care and education delivered to Black children.

18 You'll see a reference to the Black Holocaust Museum, which is engaged also in Milwaukee  
19 in trying to educate people, you know, as the Chair has pointed out, the need to make sure that African American  
20 history is included and taught to people so that they understand the real history and contributions of African  
21 Americans in this country.

22 We also talked with a long-time advocate in Cincinnati, Ohio, Ms. Iris Roley, who leads the  
23 Collaborative Agreement in Police Accountability, and they also have community initiatives focused on preventing  
24 gun violence, and we'll continue to follow up with them on their initiatives.

25 Just some administrative updates. The Commission continues to, we've hired a web

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1 developer, and our independent website is under construction. We hope to see that roll out sometime in May, April  
2 or May of the coming year. We're also working on the annual report for 2023, which the initial draft has been  
3 completed. We're scrubbing that document. We will be presenting it to the Chair in short order. We hope to be  
4 ready to publish that before the end of the year, hopefully by the first week of December.

5 We also have some focus on special projects, like we're calling it the white paper on  
6 education and equity, where we partner, in part, with Morgan State University, and their new Tier 1 Center for  
7 Education and Equity Investigation, they call it NCEED, and we hope to partner with them to roll out and convene,  
8 form discussion on education and equity led by our education scholars.

9 Lastly, we have highlighted things in our report, for example like the official letter from the  
10 Secretaries of Education and Agriculture to a number of governors of states, particularly in the south, alerting them  
11 that the federal government is watching their obligation to invest more than \$13 billion in HBCUs, and so that will be  
12 a point of us to investigate and also follow up on those obligations to invest in the higher education of Black students.

13 And with that, Madam, that's pretty much my report.

14 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Thank you so much, Mr. Director. Commissioner Director. I  
15 just want to bring you up to date on a couple of bills that I think we should support as a commission. I know that this  
16 is a bipartisan commission and everybody doesn't have the same views, but when I first came to Congress I filed the  
17 assault weapons ban. The bill was taken from me; I lost it because I didn't file it fast enough the next term. Then the  
18 next term, I filed it first and got it back again. And then the next time, me and the same gentleman been fighting with  
19 this assault weapons ban over and over.

20 So it doesn't matter to me whose bill it is, but it does matter. I think we, as preventing  
21 crime in the Black community, know that when the assault weapons ban was in place, crime in our communities, our  
22 communities, dropped. So when we speak of crime, we're not concentrating on school shootings. We have a  
23 different issue. I told you, I just read you what the article said about Chicago and Philadelphia, so all of these states  
24 can have these local laws and gun things and everything like that, and it doesn't help. What's going to really help this  
25 nation is that.

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1 I have a bill, and I know it's going to be controversial, but I'm going to file it anyway. I've  
2 been working on it for a couple of years, and I'm using the Native Americans space in Congress that the United States  
3 has given them, and it's a bill that actually addresses descendants of slaves who want, this is their choice, to attend an  
4 HBCU can do so tuition free. And we have the bill drafting and all of the research defined, descendants of slave. The  
5 work has been worked on with community groups. We have our own little think tank in our office on this bill. And  
6 it doesn't cost that much, but do you know what will happen to a little second-grade Black boy if he is told that if you  
7 stay in school, show up every day, listen to your mother, study hard, be a good boy, obey the law, stay away from loud  
8 and negative children who mean you no good, you can go to college and be somebody.

9 And this is what my next door neighbor, who is a rabbi, this is what they say to their little  
10 children. They don't say you should play for the NFL and put a football in their crib or keep them out at night  
11 playing football. They say you're going to go to college, you're going to be a lawyer, you're going to be a doctor. No  
12 matter how poor you are, that's what you're going to be because we're going to make sure that happens. This nation  
13 would change, it would change. Right before our eyes, it would change.

14 So I'm hoping to get the Commission on this, you know, to see it, to support it. I'll give  
15 you copies of it. You can't file it, you know. You can't vote on it. But it would be good to have some amplification of  
16 it across the country so that, when we do file it, that it will help us move forward with actually preventing crime in the  
17 Black community.

18 So how do you prevent crime in the Black community? You offer universal pre-K. That's  
19 number one. If all the little Black bad boys, and I had plenty of them in my school, if those little Black bad boys had  
20 the opportunity to go to school at three years old, their vocabulary would have tripled by the time they got to me at six  
21 years old.

22 If they had the opportunity just to have free lunch in school, not worry about, and they  
23 used to take a little package home for dinner. We could get just the child tax credit back in place to lift people out of  
24 poverty. You can't hardly buy a gallon of milk nowadays. You know how much a loaf of bread costs?

25 So let us consider to forge ahead with our mission and our purpose. And if there's nothing

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else from any of you, we're going to declare that the meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 12:02 p.m.)

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