

CALL TO ACTION

Latino and Black leaders have come together on the eve of one of the nation's most important presidential elections to acknowledge our shared struggles and to call for a partnership with all Americans in creating a more inclusive society.

Our communities are in trouble. One in three Latino babies and two in four Black babies are born into poverty; an African American boy born in 2001 has a one-in-three chance of going to prison in his lifetime and a Latino boy has a one-in-six chance; only about half of African American and Latino students graduate from high school on time. Our people live in neighborhoods that are affected by poor air and water quality and that lack access to healthy foods, contributing to poor health outcomes, and even early death.

Now is the time for action.

WHEREAS:

Whereas, people of color in America represent a growing demographic force and have the potential of being a powerful voice for fairness and justice;

Whereas, African Americans and Latinos have a shared history in this country marked by both exclusion and contribution and by countless examples of leaders who sacrificed their lives for the larger goal of social justice;

Whereas, the notion of citizenship has not provided Black and Latino people with equal access to opportunity and has not been broad enough to encompass the rights of all residents to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect;

Whereas, a global economy has resulted in the rise of a low-wage Black and Latino labor force that is cut off from upward mobility;

Whereas, the conditions for full inclusion remain absent from our communities as shown by high poverty rates and continuing stark disparities in areas such as health, education, criminal justice, and immigration policy;

Whereas, we seek to achieve equity, defined as just and fair inclusion, and to create a society in which all people, including Black and Latino people, can participate and prosper and reach their full potential;

Whereas, we, as Latinos and African Americans, realize that to have the kind of alliance that achieves fundamental changes we must systematically expand our strategic relationships to include Asian Americans, Native Americans, White Americans, and all people of good will to advance a common agenda for change;

Whereas, we acknowledge that race has been used as a wedge issue to divide us and has made it difficult to build the kind of sustainable networks needed to advance a progressive and multiracial political agenda;

Whereas, we acknowledge that differences exist within our individual communities, that we are not monolithic groups and that we must work to overcome class, gender, national origin, and generational divides;

Whereas, by 2042, a demographic shift will result in the transformation of our society from a majority White society to a majority minority society, ushering in a new era for leadership that must value inclusion and collective action;

Whereas, the nation's future economic and social vitality will depend greatly on our two communities, and with this power comes the responsibility to awaken our communities and to build networks of leaders that positively influence local, state, and national policies;

Whereas, we, as part of the emerging majority, want to do more than repeat the past and want to be stewards for an inclusive and a transformational democracy that includes the needs and concerns of underrepresented and disenfranchised people of color on the national and international levels;

THEREFORE:

Therefore, be it resolved that the leaders gathered at the first National Black Latino Summit will devote their time to forming an alliance that will help lead the nation into a twenty-first century in which all can participate and prosper;

Therefore, be it further resolved that we will work to build this multiracial coalition with a level of respect that values our individual historical and cultural journeys and responds authentically to the history and barriers that have kept us apart;

Therefore, be it further resolved that we will work for more sustained collaboration between our diverse communities to promote more equitable policies in the areas of criminal justice, education, job creation, health, transportation, environmental justice, housing, and immigration reform;

Therefore, be it further resolved that the leaders of the Black Latino Summit will reach out and engage our communities and other communities in ensuring that the goal of equity for all people is included in the agendas of the next Presidential Administration and Congress, as well as in the agendas of state and local governments.