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ASSOCIATION OF BLACK FOUNDATION EXECUTIVES (ABFE) STATEMENT ON U.S. CENSUS BUREAU DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT

(April 24th, 2010, Denver, Colorado – Annual Conference) -- In the year leading up to the US 2010 Census count ABFE has taken the lead to organize our Black Philanthropic Network (BPN) around Census work in their respective regions. As a result, in various parts of the country there has been a significant mobilization around getting Black communities represented in the Census count. This work includes raising much needed resources, providing grants to nonprofits, creating learning communities and deploying technical assistance and human resources. It has been a good faith effort with demonstrated results that has effectively aided the US Census Bureau in reaching what it defines as “hard to count” communities. ABFE and BPN have significantly contributed to the goals of the US Census Bureau.

ABFE recently learned that a discrimination lawsuit has been filed against the Census Bureau for alleged discrimination in its hiring of temporary workers. The lawsuit has not been resolved; however, ABFE is monitoring developments and is deeply concerned that a public entity we have effectively assisted has allegedly discriminated against the very communities we are invested in.

The 2010 Census comes at a time when the national unemployment rate is just under 10%; and for Black communities that number is 16.5% and greater in some parts of the country. The US Census Bureau has created temporary employment opportunities and those opportunities should be open to all to benefit from. However, the alleged policy barriers in the hiring process make it so that Blacks cannot benefit from these employment opportunities.

We are encouraging our members of philanthropists and grantmaking institutions to also monitor developments in the lawsuit. It is a contradiction of effort to on the one hand aide an entity that does not respond to Black communities equitably, inclusively and in fairness.

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For details about the lawsuit we recommend visiting

<http://www.censusdiscriminationlawsuit.com/>

Woman at the Center of Census Lawsuit

http://www.philly.com/philly/business/homepage/20100414_Philadelphia_woman_at_center_of_census_lawsuit.html

New York Times Editorial

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/21/opinion/21wed2.html?ref=opinion>

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