

www.rainbowpush.org



Rainbow PUSH Coalition



MISSION

The mission of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition is to defend, protect and advance the civil and human rights of all people.

The life's work of the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the history of contributions of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition chart the six decade long civil rights journey: The 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision to end legal segregation. Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The Selma-Montgomery voting rights. The enactment of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act. Rev. Jackson's historic presidential campaigns of 1984 and 1988. Today we work to complete the unfinished business to make America better: To restructure loans and not repossess homes; to find solutions to the global economic crisis; to reinvest in America and put America back to work; to increase student grants and lower student loan rates so higher education is accessible to all our youth.

And with the historic election of Barack Obama, it is critical to continue the fight to even the playing field for all Americans, and to build a "floor upon which no American should fall." With the worst global economic crisis gripping the world since the Great Depression, with businesses shutting down and unemployment threatening to soar above 10%, clearly there is unfinished business and more work to be done. In this crisis there is also opportunity to "redeem the soul of America," as Dr. Martin Luther King implored us. It's also time to end the war in Iraq, and redirect resources to a new war on poverty at home.

CORPORATE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Corporate fairness and economic justice need to be restored. To lift out of the current crisis we must eradicate greed and enforce fair lending laws.

Rainbow PUSH advocates for consistent and rigorous regulation with checks and balances, and vigorous oversight by Congress and regulatory agencies.

Rainbow PUSH supports a massive economic stimulus plan that unreservedly tackles poverty and meets the needs of "the least of these," not just Wall Street. The economic stimulus package must hold corporations accountable, be transparent, and have clearly defined strategic goals.

Rainbow PUSH also advocates measurable corporate minority inclusion and participation programs. African Americans and people of color must be included on corporate Board of Directors and senior executive leadership positions. Strong minority procurement initiatives must be implemented. And corporations should forge "win-win" partnership with minority companies. There must be a mutually beneficial, reciprocal relationship between minority businesses and corporate America.



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DEFEND CIVIL RIGHTS

Forty-four years after the passage of the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965, our voting rights are under attack. The U.S. Supreme Court will be hearing a case in late 2009 that can strike down the essential provisions that enables the Voting Rights Act to be enforced today. Already the courts struck down the major section of the Voting Rights Act that enabled Blacks and other minorities to create fair voting districts and elect representatives to Congress.

The Rainbow PUSH Coalition will be working alongside other legal and civil rights organizations to protect the voting rights, and the civil rights victories achieved over the last six decades.



PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE – HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

The Rainbow PUSH Coalition encourages students and youth to PUSH for Excellence. **We serve to mobilize and organize all stakeholders – elected officials, religious leaders, educators, unions, teachers, parents and students - to achieve educational excellence and uplift the community.**

Rev. Jackson calls on students to believe “if your mind can conceive it, and your heart can believe it, I know you can achieve it.” But a battle must be waged on two fronts, eliminating the “funding gap” and the “achievement gap” that stand in the way of an equal, high quality education and a level educational playing field for all students.

PUSH for Excellence promotes the Parent Pledge designed to encourage active participation in the educational process and to promote an environment of educational achievement in the home. The Parent Pledge program:

Parents pledge to:

- 1) take their child to school at the beginning of each semester;

- 2) exchange telephone numbers with their children's teacher;
- 3) pick up their child's report card and meet with their child's teacher each grading period;
- 4) review their children's test scores and homework assignments;
- 5) turn off the TV and provide a quiet two-three hour study period each school night; have their child/have or have their child to read to them.
- 6) take their child to church, synagogue, temple or mosque.
- 7) fight for equal high quality education for all students.

FIGHTING HOME FORECLOSURES

Mitigate the home foreclosure crisis. Nearly three million foreclosures took place in 2008, up 80% from 2007, 225% since 2006. Ten percent of homeowners are now behind in mortgage payments, and another 2 million foreclosures are projected for 2009.

It is time to permit homeowners facing foreclosure to modify their mortgages as a matter of right in Chapter 13 bankruptcy. This is the only system that has the capacity already in place to provide relief in a timely, equitable manner. Rainbow PUSH strongly endorses proposals to pass H.R. 703, and “the need for a broader-scale loan modification program, the need for the federal government to exercise its authority to purchase troubled assets in an effort to stem the foreclosure crisis, and the need for enhanced consumer protection through comprehensive anti-predatory lending legislation.” [NCRC]

REDUCE THE RATE.ORG – MORE STUDENT GRANTS, LOWER STUDENT LOANS

With college costs continuing to soar and more college graduates struggling to make their student loan payments, Rainbow PUSH has launched a new website campaign, reducetherate.org calling on Congress to:

- Reduce the interest rate on federally subsidized student loans to 1%.
- If banks can be bailed out at 1%, then so should our students.
- Extend the grace period before loan repayment begins from 6 months to 18 months for students who graduate.

In these tough economic times, it takes a college graduate an average of 6 months to a year to find a job. The rules should reflect this reality.

- End the penalties assessed to schools for student loan defaults.

Schools should not be held accountable for students who don't pay back their loans.

- Increase Pell Grants to \$10,000 rather than the proposed \$5,300 in the stimulus package currently under consideration.

The Rainbow PUSH Education Stimulus Plan will help students, their parents, and schools. It will contribute to our productivity and strengthen our consumer market. It will be a substantial benefit for the nation.

International Missions on Peace, Human Rights, Tackling Poverty

Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition have a long tradition of international missions in support of peace, human rights and tackling poverty. A noted international diplomatic negotiator, Rev. Jackson has won the release of hostages held captive in Syria, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Cuba. Recently Rainbow PUSH has led delegations to the Middle East, Haiti, Tanzania, Ghana, India and elsewhere advocating the peaceful non-violent principles of Gandhi and Dr. King, putting a spotlight on the need to eradicate poverty and disease, and foster economic development. In 2007, Rev. Jackson participated in a nine city, 40 event tour of the UK to launch Equanomics-UK and to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Slave Trade Act in Britain.

