

# Bush pressed to create commission on black males

By James Wright  
THE AFRO NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. Danny Davis (D-Ill.) has issued a call for President Bush to launch a national commission to study the problems of the African American male. Davis says that a commission is needed because of concerns that were raised at the recent Status of the African American Male Initiative recently held in Washington.

"Based upon statistical data, it is my contention that conditions relating to African American males are continuing to decline and thereby require intervention," the letter said. "For example, the

unemployment rate among African American males is approximately 31.9 percent, which is triple the national average. African American males make up six percent of the total population and account for 48 percent of the prison population.

"According to the Census Bureau 30 percent of African American males under 18 live below the poverty line."

Marc Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, noted at the initiative event that "black men lead every negative aspect of almost any statistics compiled." Black men earn less, are deeper in debt, save less, are less educated, and tend to lack employable job skills, he said.

Morial's solution was for the government and the private sector to come together to solve these problems.

In the letter, Davis urged Bush to charge the commission to look at disparities in the health system, criminal justice system, school dropout rates, economic opportunities and cultural trends. Davis said, "It is our hope that the commission will identify causes and recommend both short-term and long-range policy and programmatic directions for positive change."

A commission to study the problems of black men is not new on the state and local level. Washington has a commission to study the problems of black men and boys

in the city that was set up by D.C. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D), and is set to issue a report in 2004. Indiana, led by Jose Evans, established a commission several years ago, and has become a model for others to follow.

For example, in Indiana, each major city has a commission of activists and concerned citizens set to monitor the progress of black men in employment, the criminal justice system and education.

With the support of the Congressional Black Caucus, NAACP, National Urban League, Association of Black Psychologists, National Organization of Concerned Black Men and

National Black Chamber of Commerce, Davis has organized a group of cities where discussions will be taking place, at various times, regarding the status of black men.

The cities are Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Houston, Memphis, Miami, Detroit and Atlanta.

After the discussions, the CBC will issue a final report on the problems of black men and urge the government to take steps.

Davis said that this is the only way to make black males' lives in America more pleasant.

"We are losing far too many African-American males to drugs, gangs, homicides and an overall sense of helplessness and hopelessness. If we are to reverse these trends, special efforts must be put forth and we believe that a national look at these issues and problems could provide realistic problem-solving approaches," said Davis.

# Homelessness on rise throughout U.S.

By Hazel Trice Edney  
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON — Despite recent reports of an improved economy, hunger and homelessness are on the rise, according to a study of 25 major cities by the U. S. Conference of Mayors.

"This survey underscores the impact the economy has had on everyday Americans," says conference president James E. Garner of Hempstead, N.Y. "The face of homelessness has changed and now reflects who we least suspect."

For example, 61 percent of people requesting emergency food assistance in the cities surveyed held jobs.

The annual "Hunger and Homelessness Survey," reports that requests for emergency food assistance increased by an average of 17 percent over the previous year, and requests for emergency shelter assistance increased by an average of 13 percent.

"It is disheartening and disturbing to learn that so many of our fellow Americans are in desperate need of shelter, food, clothing and the other basic necessities of life," says Richard Macedonia, chief operating officer at Sodexo U.S.A., a leading provider of food and facilities management in the U.S. "In nearly every major U. S. city, the problem of hunger and homelessness is steadily growing."

The survey was released only days before the U. S. Department of Commerce released its third and final estimate of the nation's economic performance for the third quarter of 2003. The agency estimated that the gross domestic product (output of goods and services) grew by 8.2 percent in the three-month period that ended Sept. 30, more than doubling the growth rate of the previous three months. The unemployment rate also held steady in November at 5.9 percent with a 1.3 per-

cent drop in the black rate from 11.5 to 10.2 percent.

Yet, there was little to cheer for during the holiday season.

Among the most glaring trends was an 11 percent leap in families with children requesting food to 59 percent in 2003; a record 56 percent of cities having to turn people away without help from food assistance programs, up 24 percent over the previous year and the highest percentage since six years ago when 71 percent was recorded; and 84 percent of cities having to turn away people from homeless shelters because of lack of space, up 38 percent over 2002 and the largest percentage in seven years.

The conference is the official organization of U.S. cities with populations of 30,000; there are 1,139 cities in that category. One Carolinas city participated in the survey: Charleston, S.C.

The data was collected

from the cities between Nov. 1, 2002 to Oct. 31, 2003. Among other findings:

- Twenty cities reported that unemployment and unemployment-related problems were the leading causes of hunger. Overriding causes of hunger in 13 cities were attributed to low-paying jobs and in 11 cities, rising housing costs;

- 56 percent of cities reported that people in need were turned away with no help because of lack of food and resources. More than 14 percent of requests for food assistance are estimated to have gone unmet;

- Fifty-nine percent of those requesting emergency food assistance were members of families with children;

- Twenty-three cities said the lack of affordable housing contributed to homelessness. Other major causes included low-paying jobs, lack of needed services, mental illness or substance abuse problems.

"For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thy wounds, saith the Lord." - Jeremiah 30: 17



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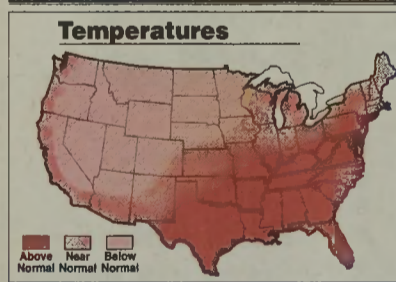
## Forecast for Charlotte, NC

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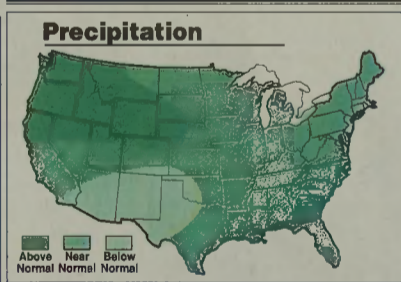
### LOCAL 7-DAY FORECAST

Wednesday	Wed. night	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
60	34	64/40	60/42	60/42	62/43	61/41	63/31

### THE WEEK AHEAD



### THE WEEK AHEAD



### U.S. TRAVELER'S CITIES

City	Today			Thursday			Friday			Saturday			Sunday		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Atlanta	56	40	s	64	42	s	62	46	c	62	46	pc	64	46	pc
Boston	45	32	pc	48	30	s	38	30	pc	42	34	c	46	32	c
Chicago	42	26	pc	42	32	c	46	34	c	44	28	c	41	27	c
Cleveland	46	30	pc	42	36	pc	50	40	c	52	38	c	44	33	pc
Denver	50	32	pc	54	28	pc	56	30	pc	58	28	s	44	12	c
Des Moines	31	23	pc	43	32	pc	48	32	pc	47	32	c	41	10	c
Detroit	42	26	pc	40	30	pc	44	34	c	46	33	pc	43	31	pc
Houston	68	56	pc	72	58	c	70	56	c	72	58	pc	74	56	pc
Indianapolis	48	30	pc	44	35	pc	50	40	c	50	36	pc	50	35	pc
Kansas City	42	30	pc	53	37	c	58	35	pc	48	28	pc	32	18	pc
Los Angeles	65	46	pc	63	46	s	62	46	c	63	44	pc	61	42	c
Miami	79	65	pc	78	65	pc	79	64	pc	79	66	pc	79	64	pc
Minn.-St. Paul	26	14	c	32	22	c	40	26	pc	36	21	c	24	-2	c
New Orleans	65	53	pc	71	55	c	71	57	c	71	56	pc	71	50	c
New York City	46	38	s	49	32	s	38	35	pc	46	40	c	51	38	c
Omaha	32	23	pc	44	32	pc	50	30	pc	49	25	c	37	0	c
Phoenix	68	46	c	62	42	pc	64	44	s	62	42	c	62	38	pc
San Francisco	54	42	pc	55	47	c	55	44	c	51	44	c	52	38	c
Seattle	41	36	c	38	32	c	38	30	c	41	33	c	41	29	c
Washington	49	36	s	52	34	s	48	36	pc	52	42	c	56	40	pc

### THE NATIONAL SUMMARY

Cold air will press southward into the Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin during the period. Temperatures from Montana to northern Arizona will average 10 to 15 degrees below normal. Storms will bring rain and mountain snow to the Northwest. Unseasonably mild weather will cover the Southeast, Tennessee Valley and the Middle Atlantic.

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, h-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, l-ice.

### WORLD TRAVELER'S CITIES

City	Today			Thursday			Friday			Saturday			Sunday		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Amsterdam	34	28	s	42	32	sn	40	27	c	36	27	sn	31	24	sn
Berlin	31	22	pc	32	20	c	33	19	sn	27	19	sn	31	24	sn
Buenos Aires	71	54	s	77	61	s	84	66	pc	84	70	pc	93	74	pc
Cairo	73	53	s	77	55	pc	68	44	s	65	46	pc	65	45	s
Jerusalem	63	48	s	69	53	s	63	43	pc	62	44	pc	58	41	pc
Johannesburg	77	55	r	79	58	pc	77	54	c	80	55	pc	79	54	pc
London	41	40	pc	45	36	sh	46	37	c	45	32	pc	33	26	c
Madrid	48	37	c	56	43	pc	58	42	pc	59	40	pc	47	29	c
Mexico City	65	43	c	71	46	pc	72	48	s	73	50	s	74	49	c
Moscow	27	21	sn	29	18	sn	21	10	sn	13	2	c	7	-2	sn
Paris	32	27	pc	46	34	pc	47	34	c	53	36	c	44	36	c
Rio de Janeiro	84	67	t	75	62	r	71	60	pc	73	58	pc	73	62	pc
Rome	48	36	r	47	36	pc	47	34	c	53	36	c	44	36	c
San Juan	82	71	pc	82	71	pc	83	72	pc	83	70	pc	82	70	pc
Seoul	38	20	pc	37	17	pc	30	15	s	32	14	pc	28	11	s
Sydney	90	72	c	87	65	pc	84	65	s	87	68	s	88	72	pc
Tokyo	49	40	r	52	42	s	54	39	pc	49	38	s	44	31	pc
Toronto	42	30	c	38	28	pc	40	32	c	44	30	c	43	28	c
Winnipeg	13	1	sf	28	13	c	27	11	c	20	2	c	7	-11	c
Zurich	27	22	sn	36	30	sn	40	27	sn	38	28	sn	29	19	c

### SUN & MOON

Sunrise		Sunset	
Wed., Dec. 31	7:32 a.m.	5:21 p.m.	
Thu., Jan. 1	7:32 a.m.	5:22 p.m.	
Fri., Jan. 2	7:32 a.m.	5:22 p.m.	
Sat., Jan. 3	7:32 a.m.	5:23 p.m.	
Sun., Jan. 4	7:32 a.m.	5:24 p.m.	
Mon., Jan. 5	7:32 a.m.	5:25 p.m.	
Tue., Jan. 6	7:32 a.m.	5:26 p.m.	

Moonrise		Moonset	
Wed., Dec. 31	12:57 p.m.	1:12 a.m.	
Thu., Jan. 1	1:23 p.m.	2:09 a.m.	
Fri., Jan. 2	1:51 p.m.	3:07 a.m.	

Moon Phases			
First	Full	Last	New
Dec. 30	Jan. 7	Jan. 14	Jan. 21