

# Republicans earn failing grade on black issues

By Hazel Trice Edney  
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WASHINGTON — If Republican lawmakers want to convince African-Americans that they care about black issues, they will have to point to something other than their record.

According to the NAACP's mid-term "Federal Legislative Report Card" for the 108th Congress, made public this week, 228 Republicans in the 435-member U.S. House of Representatives and all 52 in the Senate earned Fs. Only one Republican, Rep. Mary S. Leach of Iowa, got as high as a D, voting in support of black causes 65 percent of the time.

By contrast, no Democrat received a grade as low as an F on the Civil Rights Report Card. The lowest grade for a Democrat were the Ds earned by Sen. Ben Nelson of Nebraska, with 63 percent, Robert E. Cramer of Alabama and Bill Lipinski of Illinois, both with 65 percent. Among Democrats in both houses, there were 179 As, 42 Bs, 16 Cs and 3 Ds.

"There were no surprises," says Hilary Shelton, director of the Washington Bureau of the NAACP. "But it was more of a confirmation that

this proved to be among the most legislatively divisive terms in legislative history between the hard Right wing and the progressives on Capitol Hill."

Using issues chosen during its national convention in July, such as federal judicial nominations, federal aid to states and funding for job-training programs in the Senate; extended unemployment benefits, and increase funding for homeless programs in the House, the NAACP graded members based on the percentage of times they voted in agreement with the 94-year-old civil rights organization.

An A was awarded for a 90 to 100 percent approval; B for 80 to 89 percent; C for 70 to 79 percent; D for 60 to 69 percent and an F for 59 percent and below.

This grading period was particularly sensitive, given that five Democratic presidential candidates were running for the presidency. The non-partisan group decided not to issue letter grades for presidential candidates because of their heavy election-year travel schedule.

However, grades awarded the previous session of Congress, Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) earned the highest grade of an A with 100 per-

cent; both Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) and Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.) earned As by supporting NAACP positions 95 percent of the time. Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich (D-Ohio), earned an A with a 91 percent voting record.

Former presidential candidate Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.), got a B with 86 percent. Another dropout, retiring Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), received an A with 95 percent on the last report card.

The Republican Party, after receiving only 8 percent of the black vote in the 2000 presidential election, has set a goal of winning 25 percent of the Black vote in November. That will be a daunting task if the grades of the Republican leadership in Congress is any indication.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) set the tone for the GOP with the lowest grade received by any senator, an F, voting with the NAACP only 4 percent or just once. That issue was to give more money to states, which passed 97-3. Senate Majority Whip Mitch McConnell of Kentucky got an F with 7 percent. Senate Republican Conference Chair Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, also got 4 per-

cent.

Only 10 others out of the 100 senators received 4 percent. They included former Majority Leader Trent Lott and Thad Cochran of Mississippi, John Kyl of Arizona, Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, Larry Craig of Idaho, Peter Fitzgerald of Illinois, Pete Domenici of New Mexico, Don Nickles of Oklahoma, Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and Craig Thomas of Wyoming.

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Texas), got an F with 15 percent. Speaker of the House J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) got an I for incomplete (he votes only in case of a tie), House Majority Whip Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) got an F with 25 percent.

Among Democratic leadership, both Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota and House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi of California got As with perfect scores.

House Democratic Whip, Steny Hoyer of Maryland got an A with 95 percent and House Democratic Caucus Chairman Robert Mendendez got an A with 90 percent.

The state representing both extremes was Illinois, with Democrat Richard Durban getting the highest grade of 100 percent and Republican Peter Fitzgerald receiving the lowest grade of 4 percent.

Shelton says each member is given an opportunity to clean up his or her record.

"We send each member of Congress a copy of the legislative report card with an invitation for a meeting on how they can improve on our bread and butter civil rights issues," Shelton says. "Sometimes we do [get call backs]. There are people who want to improve on the civil rights agenda."

On the other hand, there are some in public office who show no interest in the NAACP issues. Instead of giving presidential candidates a grade, the NAACP issued a "Civil Rights Questionnaire" on issues such as affirmative action, reparations, predatory lending, job creation, minimum wages, drug offenses and after school programs.

No letter grades were issued based on those

responses. Each of the presidential candidates who responded said they oppose all efforts to weaken affirmative action and all said they support the formation of a federal commission to study the effects of the slavery on African-Americans. (H.R.40 on Reparations).

Said Shelton: "The only two candidates who didn't respond to the questionnaire were Lyndon Larouche and George Bush."

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



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## NAACP LDF chief calls it quits

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The head of the NAACP's Legal Defense and Education Fund is stepping down from the post she's held for the past 11 years.

Elaine R. Jones told her staff last week she would leave her job as president and director-council effective May 1. She's been with the organization, considered the legal arm of the civil rights movement, for 32 years.

"I am stepping down — not retiring — confident that change is a good thing. Change is something we should all embrace. I also am convinced that more than one person can lead, and it is time for new leadership," Jones said in a statement.

She said she would continue to promote the organization's litigation and other programs "in any way the board and my successor

deem helpful."

Jones was only the fourth person — and first woman — to head the NAACP's legal fund since it was founded by Thurgood Marshall in 1940.

Jones has spent her career defining civil rights, defending equal rights in education, criminal justice, labor law and politics. She began her career representing death row defendants in the South.

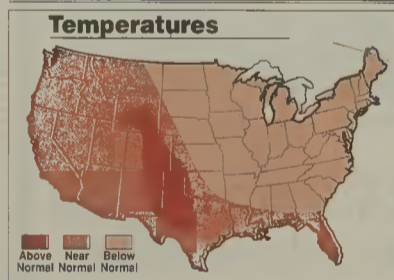
## Forecast for Charlotte, NC

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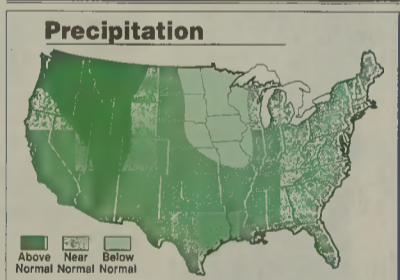
### LOCAL 7-DAY FORECAST

Thursday	Thu. night	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Sunshine and some clouds.	Mostly cloudy.	Some sun.	Partly sunny and cold.	Mostly cloudy and cold.	Partly sunny.	Sunny and cold.	Partly sunny and cold.
50	30	52/34	40/28	40/30	52/28	47/25	43/21

### THE WEEK AHEAD



### THE WEEK AHEAD



### U.S. TRAVELER'S CITIES

City	Today			Friday			Saturday			Sunday			Monday		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Allanta	52	34	pc	52	38	pc	46	27	s	46	36	c	51	30	pc
Boston	34	24	pc	34	20	pc	28	18	sn	26	16	pc	37	20	c
Chicago	28	12	sf	20	6	pc	18	10	c	24	14	c	22	10	pc
Cleveland	29	26	c	28	10	c	18	12	c	35	24	c	30	15	pc
Denver	54	26	pc	54	20	pc	38	15	pc	38	17	pc	46	12	c
Des Moines	30	15	c	24	14	c	22	11	c	20	6	pc	23	7	c
Detroit	26	16	sf	22	10	sf	16	8	sf	29	20	c	25	13	c
Houston	64	46	c	66	46	s	68	48	pc	62	38	c	56	36	c
Indianapolis	37	23	sf	28	22	pc	31	21	pc	36	19	pc	32	16	pc
Kansas City	37	29	c	44	28	c	39	20	c	29	15	s	30	14	c
Los Angeles	70	50	s	68	50	pc	68	48	s	70	50	s	71	47	pc
Miami	73	61	s	77	64	c	78	63	c	79	62	pc	77	59	pc
Minn.-St. Paul	7	-10	c	-1	-11	c	4	-3	c	7	-5	c	14	-1	c
New Orleans	63	51	c	66	45	s	68	49	pc	63	42	c	58	38	s
New York City	35	30	pc	36	28	c	30	23	pc	27	27	pc	38	22	c
Omaha	25	16	pc	31	15	c	27	10	c	20	9	pc	26	8	c
Phoenix	66	45	s	70	47	pc	72	45	s	70	43	s	70	45	s
San Francisco	58	46	pc	56	44	c	56	46	c	56	47	c	58	43	pc
Seattle	48	42	r	46	38	sh	44	38	c	48	37	pc	48	37	c
Washington	41	26	pc	46	26	c	34	24	pc	32	24	pc	46	23	c

### THE NATIONAL SUMMARY

Cold air will remain entrenched across the Midwest, Northeast and mid-Atlantic. Milder air will be found across the Front Range of the Rockies. Meanwhile, the jet stream will steer storms into the Pacific Northwest. A cold dome of high pressure will keep the northern Plains dry.

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

### WORLD TRAVELER'S CITIES

City	Today			Friday			Saturday			Sunday			Monday		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Amsterdam	34	29	sn	35	29	pc	38	35	pc	46	38	r	45	41	c
Berlin	27	16	sn	24	20	pc	29	22	pc	37	29	sn	38	30	c
Buenos Aires	92	65	pc	88	63	pc	83	59	t	80	60	r	80	56	c
Cairo	70	49	pc	69	41	pc	62	42	pc	65	43	s	64	43	s
Jerusalem	58	43	s	59	38	pc	52	35	s	53	35	s	57	39	s
Johannesburg	84	58	s	84	56	pc	84	61	pc	86	57	pc	81	59	pc
London	35	31	pc	36	31	pc	44	40	c	48	39	pc	48	47	c
Madrid	49	35	pc	52	41	c	53	44	pc	53	41	pc	56	41	pc
Mexico City	65	35	c	66	41	pc	66	38	s	65	46	c	71	44	s
Moscow	25	14	sn	24	10	sn	20	8	sn	15	3	c	14	9	c
Paris	32	24	pc	34	28	pc	40	36	pc	45	35	pc	43	38	r
Rio de Janeiro	80	70	pc	80	70	pc	81	70	c	83	70	c	82	70	pc
Rome	46	31	pc	47	40	c	47	45	r	53	45	pc	59	45	pc
San Juan	83	71	s	84	71	s	84	71	s	84	73	s	84	72	s
Seoul	40	21	pc	40	26	s	45	29	s	46	28	c	36	12	c
Sydney	86	67	s	87	66	pc	82	65	s	82	67	s	86	65	pc
Tokyo	49	33	pc	44	31	s	45	36	s	49	40	pc	57	48	r
Toronto	22	12	c	20	4	c	16	4	c	28	19	sn	25	9	pc
Winnipeg	-15	-26	sn	-7	-19	c	1	-13	c	-1	-14	c	-4	-15	pc
Zurich	21	18	sn	33	30	pc	38	35	pc	47	35	c	41	34	sn

### SUN & MOON

Sunrise		Sunset	
Thu., Jan. 29	7:25 a.m.	5:48 p.m.	
Fri., Jan. 30	7:25 a.m.	5:49 p.m.	
Sat., Jan. 31	7:24 a.m.	5:50 p.m.	
Sun., Feb. 1	7:23 a.m.	5:51 p.m.	
Mon., Feb. 2	7:22 a.m.	5:52 p.m.	
Tue., Feb. 3	7:22 a.m.	5:53 p.m.	
Wed., Feb. 4	7:21 a.m.	5:54 p.m.	

Moonrise		Moonset	
Thu., Jan. 29	11:51 a.m.	12:57 a.m.	
Fri., Jan. 30	12:21 p.m.	1:56 a.m.	
Sat., Jan. 31	12:56 p.m.	2:54 a.m.	

Moon Phases			
First	Full	Last	New
Jan. 29	Feb. 6	Feb. 13	Feb. 20

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