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Butterfield Takes Helm of the Congressional Black Caucus

WASHINGTON, DC - This morning, Congressman G. K. Butterfield (NC-01) was sworn in as the 24th Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) during a ceremony hosted by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) at the U.S. Capitol. The historic ceremony marked the induction of the largest class in the CBC's 44-year history, which includes five new members of which 20 are women.

During the event, Chairman Butterfield recognized Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, and Assistant Democratic Leader Jim Clyburn, who were all in attendance, and welcomed Representatives Alma Adams (NC-12), Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12), Brenda Lawrence (MI-14), Mia Love (UT-04), and Stacey Plaskett (USVI) to the Caucus.

Over the next two years, Chairman Butterfield will lead the Caucus, also known as the "Conscience of the Congress" in carrying out its mission of empowering the African American community and addressing its legislative concerns. (Continued On Page 2)

Cong. G.K. Butterfield held a listening party for his swearing in as member of the Congress and the 24th Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. The event in Durham was at the Hayti Heritage Center on Monday, Jan. 5 Below Andre Vann hosted the event at Hayti. Below are scenes from the event.



Elected Black Republicans Not Expected to be a Plus for the Community

By Freddie Allen

NNPA Senior Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Black Republicans made history during the midterm elections in November by winning in Texas, South Carolina and Texas, but political analysts wonder if the victories will have any long-term impact on the future of the GOP in the black community.

Traditionally, black candidates running for elected offices not only need a large black turnout, but also a majority of the black vote to win statewide and national races.

Senator Tim Scott made history by becoming the first black Republican elected to serve in both the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate. He won with just 10 percent of the black vote and 82 percent of the white vote, according to exit polls.

Representative-elect Will Hurd beat his Democratic challenger Pete Gallego in Texas by a narrow 2.1 percent margin in a predominately Hispanic congressional district (House District 23) to become the first black Republican from Texas elected to the United States Congress since Reconstruction.

When the next congressional term begins, Mia Love, a black Mormon and daughter of Haitian immigrants, will represent Utah's 4th House district in a state where blacks account for just 1.3 percent of the total population.

Lorenzo Morris, a political science professor at Howard University in Washington, D.C., said that the black community shouldn't expect much from the black Republicans during the next legislative session, because they won largely without black voters. In addition, he said, their rank as freshmen lawmakers will limit their influence within the party.

"Their collective impact, if they are really outspoken, will just be on the plus side of zero, barely zero," said Morris. "The obvious impact for Republicans is positive only to the extent that it shows visually, if not substantively, an outreach to minorities."

Scott earned an "F" on the NAACP's legislative report card during the first session of the 113th Congress from January 2013 - December 26, 2013.

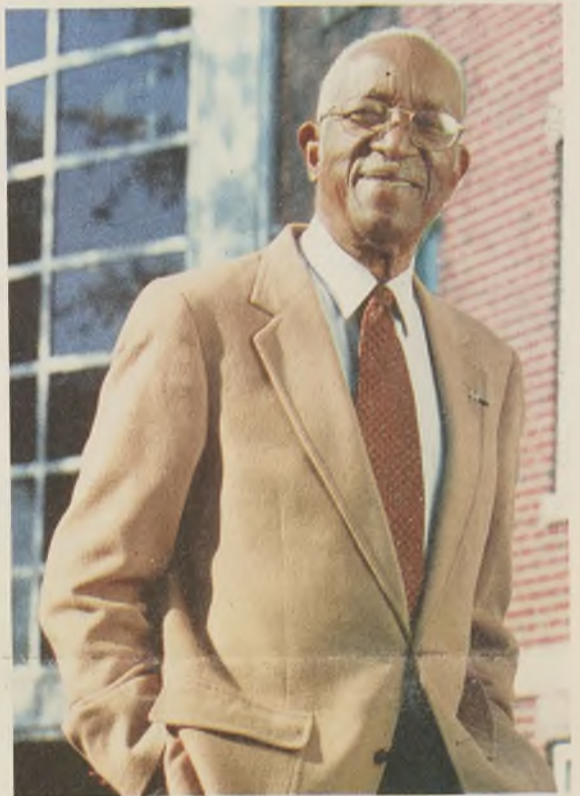
ThinkProgress.org reported that Scott proposed a bill in 2011 to block families from receiving food stamp benefits if one of the adults in the home joined a strike, and as a state legislature Scott supported cuts to South Carolina's HIV/AIDS budget.

In a 2012 speech, Love accused President Barack Obama of "pitting us against each other based on our income level, gender, and social status" and said that, "His policies have failed." Love has also pledged to take the Congressional Black Caucus "apart from the inside out."

If they continue to express views counter to those held by the black electorate that overwhelmingly supported President Obama with more than 90 percent of their votes in back-to-back elections, Morris said, that their presence could actually hurt that visual image of minority outreach, because it will further distance the GOP from the politics that are overwhelmingly characteristic of black voters.

Raynard Jackson, a Republican strategist and the president and CEO of Raynard Jackson & Associates, called Love, "the embodiment of the American Dream" and said

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Monday, January 12 at 12:00 noon at Stanford Warren Library, The Friends of the Stanford L. Warren Branch Library in conjunction with the Department of History at NCCU will host a lunch and learn luncheon honoring the life and legacy of Dr. John Hope Franklin. John Gartrell, Director, John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University will serve as speaker for the luncheon. (DUKE UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE PHOTO)

'Selma' is More than a Movie

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Columnist

The movie Selma, which debuted on Christmas Day, is an eerily timely film detailing a history not taught in American schools on a regular basis. There's the obvious truth we already knew: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is in another stratosphere of leadership compared to the Who's Who on the scene today.

In terms of results, no one has come close to Dr. King before or since. Anyone attempting to define themselves as a leader in the movement around the black agenda today needs to check themselves after watching this movie. The film provides an unintended indictment of the non-strategies that yield no positive results often seen in today's so-called leadership.

Director Ava DuVernay's depiction of the lead up to President Lyndon B. Johnson's signing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act leaves behind huge lessons - many unintentional. The first would be that without constant pressure on those in power nothing will change. Even within the genre of a history we already know on a man we've over-studied, there's that powerful truth.

Selma reminds us of what is required to win results for African Americans with 300 years of history stacked against them. Even with the predictable restrictions brought on by the money-grabbing King kids who forbade the director to use their father's actual words for the film - screenwriter Paul Webb tells us that Dr. King remains one of few people in American life to speak brutal honesty on racism and make a difference.

The film reaffirms that Dr. King worked in service of a mission. In the case of the Selma campaign, it was voting rights. King did not get up in the morning to focus on TV interviews, news conferences or participate on panels. His was a results driven movement. Understanding the domino effects of certain actions in Selma and how those actions would win results and move the needle on voting rights is featured.

It's jarring to consider how unthinkable it was for blacks voting in the South 50 years ago just as it was unthinkable to imagine a black president in the White House. Now, even with both those realities realized, current black leadership still hasn't found a way to win.

The post-King era of civil rights groups is more fixated on corporate sponsorships, endless roundtables and sprawling conferences. It also features meetings with people in power that yield no result

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