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## All 12 Federal Appropriations Committees Adopt Norton's Minority Ad Spending Measure

*Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton is a living legend with more than 50 honorary degrees and a list of accomplishments the size of her beloved District of Columbia.*

Written by Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Correspondent  
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D.C. Democratic Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton told NNPA Newswire on July 26, that each of the 12 federal Appropriations Committees have adopted language from her Government Advertising Equity Accountability Act [HR 2576], which mandates all agencies include in their annual budget request to Congress the amount of money they spend to advertise in minority-owned media outlets.

Beginning later this year when federal agencies submit proposed budgets to one or more of the 12 Appropriations Committees, those requests now must include a line item detailing what they are spending with minority-owned businesses, which include black-, women- and other minority-owned media outlets.

D.C. Democratic Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton told NNPA Newswire on July 26, that each of the 12 federal Appropriations Committees have adopted language from her Government Advertising Equity Accountability Act [HR 2576], which mandates all agencies include in their annual budget request to Congress the amount of money they spend to advertise in minority-owned media outlets.

She said today's developments mean that her measure doesn't require further action. "This is exactly what we wanted. This is it, we got it," Norton said.

"We got all 12 of the Appropriations Committees to include the language and, in October, when the bills take effect, it will be the law and these agencies will have to comply," she said.

Norton asked for an update on a 2007 GAO report that found, of the \$4.3 billion available for advertising contracts, five agencies: the Department of Defense, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of the Interior, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, spent only five percent with minority-owned businesses.

A subsequent 2018 report revealed that, of the approximately \$5 billion government agencies spent on advertising contracts, just \$50 million went to minority-owned businesses and even considerably less to minority-owned newspaper and media companies owned by African Americans.

"This is important not just for the publications but because those publications reach minorities and women in a way that mainstream publications may not," Norton said.

"We did this because the federal government is the largest advertiser in the United States and this gives it a special obligation to make sure that it is using advertising dollars fairly and to reach all people in the United States," said Norton, who has served in the U.S. House since 1991.

At the request of officials from the National Newspaper Publishers Association (Black Press of America) and the National Association of Hispanic Publications, Norton ordered a Government Accountability Office (GAO) examination on the spending on advertising contracts with minority-owned businesses.

Norton began a fight to change that.

She gathered support from other members of Congress and then, in May 2019, she crafted H.R. 2576 and continued to work behind the scenes to find more immediate solutions.

During budget hearings on Capitol Hill, Norton spearheaded a bipartisan effort for the 12 Appropriations Committees to place the language in their spending bills.

President Trump also urged Republicans to pass the budget bills — though, he had not specifically addressed Norton's measure.

By Thursday, 11 of the 12 committees had agreed to include the language with the Department of the Interior being the lone holdout. However, that changed on July 26, when she secured the commitment of the Department of the Interior.

Despite her diligent work, Norton credited minority-owned media with the success of the legislation.

"I didn't just come up with this out of the blue, I credit Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. [president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association], the Black Press of America, and the National Association of Hispanic Publications because they came to see me about this a couple of years ago," Norton said.

"They came to Congress to seek redress and I met with them, and then, having heard about what looked like a discrepancy, I needed to see if I could document that. So, I asked for the GAO report," she said.

Although the legislation does not mandate federal agencies to spend specific dollar amounts with minority-owned media companies, Norton said she believes publishers and owners of those publications ultimately will be pleased.

"Of course, I think they will start advertising because this is a big encouragement to do so," Norton said. "These are federal agencies under the jurisdiction of the appropriations committees, and they have to come before these committees each year to get their money. When they report back on how many dollars they spent with minority-owned and women-owned publications, they will understand that they will have to do just that and whatever they've done before they'll have to strive to do even better," Norton said.

"Once again the Black Press of America salutes the effective leadership of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton," said Chavis.

During budget hearings on Capitol Hill, Norton spearheaded a bipartisan effort for the 12 Appropriations Committees to place the language in their spending bills.

## Durham Branch NAACP) to Meet

The Durham Branch of the NAACP will meet Sunday, July 28 at 4 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 305 E Main Street.

The public is invited to attend.  
Rev. Rachel Green, president.

## Photo of armed students at Emmett Till sign is investigated

By Jeff Amy

A photograph of three University of Mississippi students posing with guns beside a bullet-pocked and oft-vandalized historic marker to lynching victim Emmett Till has sparked a possible federal investigation and suspensions of the three by their fraternity.

The Mississippi Center for Investigative Reporting first published a story about it recently, saying the image had circulated on the men's social media accounts.

Ole Miss spokesman Rod Guajardo said the image was reported in March to the university's Bias Incident Response Team, which takes reports of incidents where students, faculty or staff are targeted because of their race or other characteristics. Guajardo said university police asked the FBI to investigate, but says the FBI declined to open an inquiry because the photo "did not pose a specific threat." Brett Carr, a spokesman for the FBI's Jackson office, declined to comment.

However, U.S. Attorney Chad Lamar told the Mississippi Center for Investigative Reporting that federal prosecutors are examining the case. Lamar did not respond to repeated emails and phone calls from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Guajardo called the image "offensive and hurtful" but said the university hasn't disciplined the students because the off-campus picture wasn't part of a university event.

Jesse Lyons, assistant executive director of the Kappa Alpha Order's national office in Lexington, Virginia, said the Ole Miss chapter suspended the three men pictured after leaders learned of the photo. The fraternity has long been associated with Old South and Confederate imagery. Although much of that imagery has been suppressed in recent years, the group still claims Confederate Robert E. Lee as its spiritual founder. Lyons said that history has nothing to do with the photo.

"The making of the photo was unrelated to any event or activity of the chapter. It is inappropriate, insensitive, and unacceptable. It does not represent our Kappa Alpha Order," Lyons wrote in an email.

The fraternity and university say they're working together. Guajardo said Ole Miss is "ready to assist the fraternity with educational opportunities for those members and the chapter."

It's unclear whether the students actually fired at the sign or when the picture was taken. It shows two students standing with guns and a third unarmed student kneeling in tall grass at night, lit by what appear to be the headlights of a vehicle. It's unclear who took the photograph.

The image strikes at what remains one of the nation's most wrenching civil rights cases, decades after Till was slain in 1955. The African American 14-year-old was visiting relatives in the Mississippi Delta when he was kidnapped from a relative's home after an encounter with a white woman at a country store. He was tortured and later shot, with his body found weighted down by a cotton gin fan in the Tallahatchie River. His mother insisted on an open-casket funeral in Chicago, letting people see her son's mutilated corpse and electrifying public opinion.

An all-white jury in Mississippi acquitted two white men in the crime.

Like Till himself, the markers placed by the Emmett Till Memorial Commission have been shattered by violence. The marker in the photograph, at the remote spot where Till's body was recovered, was the third to stand there after two earlier markers were destroyed by vandals.

Patrick Weems, the commission's executive director, said the sign was shot sometime in summer 2018 and again in early fall 2018.

"For me, it is just as sacrilegious as if I took the United States flag and shot it up with bullet holes," commission member Jessie Jaymes said in a video produced by the commission in response to the vandalism. "The hearts of some men never change. They mark their territory with bullet holes."

Weems said the sign was removed last week after the center learned news of the picture was likely to emerge. He said officials feared more attention and vandalism. Weems said the commission hasn't been contacted by the university or federal officials. He said the commission plans a fourth marker that's made of hardened steel, more resistant to bullets. He said the commission is also negotiating a lease for 2 acres (0.8 hectares) at the river's edge for a fuller memorial site.

"We already have a new sign on its way," Weems said.

Susan Glisson, who has helped advise the commission on how to memorialize Till in a way that would further healing and justice, said the repeated vandalism is an attempt to blot out the power of the story of what happened to Till, instead upholding a white-dominated social order.