

# Edwards, Cheney rights' records starkly different

**By Hazel Trice Edney**  
*Special to Sentinel-Voice*  
WASHINGTON (NNPA) — There are many differences between U. S. Sen. John Edwards, the Democratic vice presidential candidate who grew up in a poor family in Robbins, N.C., and Republican Vice President Dick Cheney's middle-class upbringing in Casper, Wyo. But there is one difference that overshadows all other differences — their civil rights records.

Edwards, picked by Democratic presidential challenger Sen. John Kerry [D-Mass.] as his running mate last week, has received straight A's on the NAACP Civil Rights Report Card since his term in Congress began five years ago. As for Cheney, during his entire 11 years in the U. S. House of Representatives (1987-1989) he received straight F's. The report card grades members of Congress on their votes on issues of particular

importance to African-Americans. "These are the issues that our members brought to us and said these are what African-Americans really need to be addressed. These are the bread-and-butter civil rights issues of the NAACP," says Hilary Shelton, the organization's Washington bureau director. More than 1,000 delegates convene each year — this week in Philadelphia — representing the organization's

500,000 members, 1,700 branches, 150 college chapters and prison and military base chapters, to discuss key issues facing Blacks. Following each convention, Shelton monitors congressional voting on issues deemed important by the delegates. In an NNPA News Service review of the archived reports, Cheney never supported issues important to the NAACP more than 30 percent of the time. His lowest grade was 10 percent for the 100th Congress. He left after that session to become secretary of defense for President George H. W. Bush, the incumbent president's father. Cheney opposed major legislation important to African-Americans:

lished by Congress in 1974 to provide legal assistance to the poor. It was reauthorized at a lower level with a smaller budget and less power;

- In the 99th Congress (1985-86), Cheney voted in opposition to sanctions against South Africa's apartheid regime, a measure that eventually passed;
- In the 100th Congress (1987-88), Cheney initially voted for the Civil Rights Restoration Act, but then voted to sustain President Ronald Reagan's veto of the act. The veto was overridden;
- In that same Congress, he also voted against the hate crimes statistics act that would have gathered data on the number of hate crimes that occur nationally. The bill failed.

By contrast, Edwards earned a grade of 95 percent for the 107th Congress and 100 percent in the 106th. He has been unflinching in standing with the NAACP in opposing Right Wing extremist judges nominated by President Bush. The one issue on which Edwards differed with the NAACP in the 107th Congress was an amendment for reauthorization of Title I funding. Edwards voted to oppose the NAACP-supported amendment that would allow states to defer annual high stakes testing requirements unless Congress fully funded Title I federal money for school districts that serve poor and low-income populations. Political observers have been gauging which of the two vice presidential candidates is likely to help the top of the ticket. Kerry, running slightly ahead of Bush, got a small boost in the polls when he announced the Edwards selection last week. African-American voters traditionally give 80 to 90 percent of their vote to the Democratic Party's presidential ticket.

## Almost half of Democratic Party forum's delegates are minorities

WASHINGTON (AP) — Minorities will be represented in record numbers among the delegates to this month's Democratic National Convention in Boston, convention organizers said Wednesday. Nearly 40 percent of the more than 4,300 delegates are of a minority background, including record numbers of Blacks, Asians, American Indians and Hispanics, the Democratic National Convention Committee said. Delegates to the convention, to be held July 26-29, are expected to formally choose John Kerry as the Democratic presidential nominee and John Edwards as his running mate.

about 68 percent of U.S. residents were White, 14 percent Hispanic, 13 percent Black, 4 percent Asian, and just less than 1 percent were American Indian. Each state has a delegate selection plan that includes diversity goals. The plan must be approved by the DNC, though party officials have noted that goals aren't quotas and that neither a state nor a presidential campaign is penalized if they don't reach them. States are required to have roughly equal numbers of men and women in their delegations. Nationally, that goal was met again this year. Some states also have goals to recruit gay and lesbian delegates. Germond said that so far, the party is slightly behind the 2000 goal of 3.7 percent of Democratic delegates who identified themselves as homosexual, though data for 2004 delegates on that characteristic is still incomplete. For the most part, numerical goals don't exist for delegations to the Republican convention, to be held in late August in New York. GOP rules state that participation in primaries and the delegate process "shall in no way be abridged for reasons of sex, race, religion, color, age or national origin," while encouraging the "broadest possible participation" among all groups.

"This will be the most successful convention ever in terms of diversity," said Alice Germond, secretary of the Democratic National Committee. According to Germond, the 2004 delegation breaks down this way:

- Blacks: 20.3 percent, up from 20 percent in 2000.
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 3.9 percent, up from 3 percent.
- Hispanic: 11.3 percent, up from 9 percent.
- American Indian: 1.7 percent, up from 1 percent.

Census Bureau figures show that in 2003,

## Florida scraps flawed felon rolls


TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida elections officials said Saturday they would not use a list of people believed to be convicted felons to purge voter rolls, acknowledging a flaw that left off some Hispanics. The problem in compiling the list was unintentional, said Nicole de Lara, a spokeswoman for Secretary of State Glenda Hood. "Nevertheless, Supervisors of Elections are required to uphold their constitutional obligation" and will find other ways to ensure felons are removed from the rolls, Hood said in a statement. The decision was made after it was reported that the list contained few people identified as Hispanic; of the nearly 48,000 people on the

list created by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, only 61 were classified as Hispanics. That was because when voters register in Florida, they can identify themselves as Hispanic. But the potential felons database has no Hispanic category, which excludes many people from the list if they put that as their race. The law enforcement list was compared to the voter rolls to determine who should be barred from voting. The flaw in a state that President Bush won by a margin of just 537 votes could have been significant — Hispanics in Florida tend to vote Republican. Elections supervisors in Florida's 67 counties had

begun reviewing the list of 47,763 potential felons identified by state law enforcement in May. The purge of felons from voter rolls has been a thorny issue since the 2000 presidential election. A private company hired to identify ineligible voters before the election produced a list with scores of errors, and elections supervisors used it to remove voters without verifying its accuracy. A federal lawsuit led to an agreement to restore rights to thousands of voters. Florida is one of only a handful of states that does not automatically restore voting rights to convicted felons once they've completed their sentence.

Follow the Rainbow to...

# Good Health!



When your family counts on you to stay healthy, you can count on Rainbow Medical Centers' board certified family physicians to provide the highest quality of primary and urgent care services. Our facilities offer lab, x-ray, and are open evenings and weekends for your convenience. Rainbow Medical Centers has also been awarded Joint Commission Accreditation (JCAHO) for maintaining national standards of quality healthcare.

Track your health at **My Health Zone**  
You'll find it at... [www.rainbowmedical.com](http://www.rainbowmedical.com)

**RAINBOW Medical Centers**

**PRIMARY & URGENT CARE**

Board Certified Physicians  
Most Insurances Accepted

<b>West</b> 255-6657 1341 S. Rainbow Blvd.	<b>East</b> 438-4003 821 N. Nellis Blvd.	<b>North</b> 655-0550 4920 Lone Mtn. Rd.	<b>Rampart</b> 254-9192 8522 Del Webb Blvd.	<b>Galleria</b> 436-5800 1397 Galleria Dr.	<b>Golden Triangle</b> 657-9555 1302 W. Craig Rd.	<b>Boulder Hwy</b> 898-1405 4241 S. Nellis Blvd.
--	--	--	---	--	---	--