

# Rove

(Continued from Page 1) have to access the highest levels of government, at all times," Boggs McDonald asserted. "I think it's very important that someone at the very highest level of government [hear our concerns]..."

"If the Republican Party does not reach out to African-Americans," she said, recalling that the party was initially the one chosen by Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, "we will never be able to win over that segment of the community. You have to earn every vote."

Boggs McDonald said the discussion was significant, adding that "for us to have this privilege is a very rare and great [opportunity]..."

"It was a two-way dialogue... I think it's very important that the White House hear first-hand the questions and concerns of the citizens of Nevada because they may be unique from [those of people] in other areas of our country."

CAAN is a rapidly growing, non-partisan organization that evaluates candidates and makes its endorsements for elected or appointed offices and takes a public position on issues of concern to the African-American community.

Cordell Stokes, spokesperson for CAAN, said that the sub-committee met prior to meeting Rove to "identify about five to seven questions on topics that have direct impact on the local community." In addition to the ques-

tions asked at the meeting, extended questions on other subjects were printed to get the administration's input. Some of those issues are charter schools; vouchers and funding; the Head Start program and proposed budget cuts; and privatization of social security.

"We submitted written questions for him to take and reply back," Stokes said, referring to the two-page document, "CAAN's Questions and Stance for Response from the White House," which was given to Rove for the administration's written responses that the committee requests be returned within 30 to 45 days.

"We are most interested in him having the White House prepare the statement so that [we can have clarification]... get it right from the administration [on where they stand]," Stokes explained.

Rove gave answers on two of the major topics presented at the meeting: No Child Left Behind and the related standardized state testing and funding for the program; and recent changes to bankruptcy law passed in the legislature.

## NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

Rove spoke about educational funding and the president's initiative: "We've increased funding under No Child Left Behind for Title I, federal aid to elementary and secondary education by 52 percent since this president

came into office—that includes the budget we proposed to Congress this year. So, money's not the issue."

Rove continued, focusing on the testing requirements and state compliance:

"What states are really bridleing at is that No Child Left Behind requires them to test every child, grades three through eight, every year, using a test each state develops to determine whether or not all children are meeting the standards the state has set for learning."

He said that some states are resisting the program's requirement to collect and report "disaggregation data," which would identify student progress overall, but would track by racial, ethnic, income level and other criteria to measure the states' growth, success or failure in teaching all children from all communities.

Rove said the data is important "so we don't hide the failure to teach some kids by having overall successful numbers," adding, "because we do know there's an achievement gap in America. We have children—primarily poor, primarily African-American and Latino—who are not learning at the rate that other children are, and we need to be able to focus extra resources and extra effort on them..."

Rove promotes standardized testing as a "tool for parents, communities, teachers and educators" to know if and where deficiencies exist

to help determine if children are learning.

"What's wrong? Why aren't you teaching?" Rove suggests these are important questions that testing can prompt, but he quickly adds that the emphasis should not be aimed at educators, but rather, "focused on the child. Is the child learning to read?"

"We know that every child can learn to read; every child can learn to add and subtract..."

Rove spoke about areas in the country where "people are doing extraordinary things" to teach effectively despite abject poverty, lack of funding and absence of resources. In addition, he spoke about successes that some school districts are reporting is due to the No Child Left Behind initiatives.

Rove replied to a question about the failure of many students in the Black community to learn reading, writing and arithmetic and how the funding gets to the communities that need the extra help to alleviate the problem.

Rove responded that increased funds have been requested in the budget, restating the amount as 52 percent increase over five years, and that there is a "formula ba-

sis" for allocating money to the states, which is calculated using the number of students in each school district.

## BANKRUPTCY LAW LEGISLATION PASSED

"Let's put the bankruptcy law in the appropriate frame," Rove began. He explained that it applies mainly to about 50 percent of the population who are above the median income. Rove explained that "the average American household was paying \$400 more a year than it should for credit" because of the growing numbers of more affluent consumers who get lots of credit, make purchases and then declare bankruptcy. "It will probably not effect the bottom 80 percent of wage earners. It makes it more difficult for more affluent people [abusing credit and filing bankruptcy]," he concluded. "We need to have access to credit for everybody..."

When asked about predatory lending, caps on charges consumers pay and any White House interest in changing laws, Rove said he believes the existing laws should be preventative.

He said the best way to combat predatory lending practices is by using federal laws already in place to en-

sure there is "open transparency of fees and rates" to allow people to make their own decisions.

Stokes said he felt the meeting was productive. He commented that Rove was "affable and seemed comfortable and engaging as he spoke with people one-on-one."

Rove's meeting with CAAN lasted longer than the organizers anticipated. "We were originally expecting only about 30 to 35 minutes," Stokes said, "but he met with us for over an hour."

Boggs McDonald suggested that the process can be furthered through future workshops with federal agencies such as HUD and the Department of Labor, along with the White House representatives, that would come to discuss topics such as faith-based initiatives and business development with local organizations to explain how to better partner and access funding and resources.

Stokes said that CAAN is hopeful for "continued access" at the White House level and hopes the process and communications will continue, though we may "agree to disagree."

Grazell Howard contributed to this story.

# Mayors

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Monica Anderson, foundation development manager for the NAACP, also admits to being a former smoker.

"Once you decide that's not something you need to do, you stop drinking and smoking so much, and you find that you're living a much healthier life," Anderson said.

Anderson says the NAACP is making anti-tobacco and health issues a part of its civil rights agenda by establishing a Web site on racial health disparities and a national leadership roundtable to push for universal

health care. "When there's a fight on the [Capitol] Hill for universal health care, for universal health insurance, we need to be there," Anderson said.

The question is whether Black people will fight for their own lives, said Troutman.

"We can talk this for the next two centuries, but if we don't want to be healed and if we don't, once and for all, ferret out internalized racism and love ourselves to be healed, we'll be talking about this 200 years from now. They'll say, 'There used to be a time when there were Black folks, but they're all dead now.'"

# Kilpatrick

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predecessor, Dennis Archer, said he never billed taxpayers for alcohol and normally paid out of his own pocket or from other funds for meals above \$40.

"The city really had no funds to entertain anybody," he said.

Kilpatrick has cultivated an image as a fun-loving leader with a hip-hop lifestyle, but has been dogged by complaints about wild parties, lavish entertainment and use of city vehicles for personal family travel.


"He just does not get it," said City Councilwoman Sharon McPhail, who is running to unseat Kilpatrick in what is expected to be a tough re-election fight this year. "These

are very immature, irresponsible actions... charging lobster and crab legs and champagne."

Kilpatrick's salary was about \$176,000 before he said he would cut it by 10 percent, or \$17,600, to help close the shortfall in Detroit's \$1.6 billion budget.

The mayor's proposed budget for the fiscal year starting July 1 calls for 754 layoffs and assumes unions will agree to a 10 percent pay cut, as well as changes in health benefits.

An April telephone poll of 402 likely voters showed Kilpatrick running neck-and-neck with McPhail and former Deputy Mayor Freman Hendrix in the Sept. 13 primary.



## Better diversity and quality teachers

By  
Reg Weaver,  
President,  
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May 3rd is National Teacher Day—a day to honor America's classroom teachers.

When it comes to expectations, we have high ones for America's public school teachers. We want them to help students to learn to read and write and understand math and science. We want them to help students learn to think, analyze and create. We want them to model and teach values such as hard work, respect and responsibility.


We want teachers to care. We want them to see our child as an individual, and we want them to tailor instruction to how our children best learn.

America's public school teachers rise to the occasion in all of those areas. But when it comes to investing our hopes and dreams into what teachers do, we should also be willing to invest in enhancing the teaching profession. Compensation is part of it. Salary, health care and retirement ought to be set at levels that truly attract and keep quality people in jobs that are physically, intellectually and emotionally challenging.

We should also invest in the kinds of efforts that make a difference, such as better preparation programs, good mentoring programs and quality professional development. And we should treat teachers as professionals, not just test prep coaches, as is increasingly the case with the so-called No Child Left Behind Act.

At the same time that we address teacher quality and the role of teachers in the classroom, we should also work to enhance the diversity of the teaching profession. A more diverse teaching force advances significant educational goals—preparing students for the workplace they will encounter, making sure students of both genders and all racial and ethnic backgrounds are taught by people they can identify with, and making sure every school has a ready resource for understanding cultural distinctions and how they affect learning styles.

If you can read this, thank a teacher. And if you want to help improve America's schools, give teachers the thanks and support they deserve.



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