

# Social Action Committee

The Federal City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated



## Political and Legislative Updates January 2009

**Social Action Committee**  
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Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta  
Sorority, Incorporated



**Committee Co-Chairs:**

**Soror Pia Miller**

**Soror Michelle Rose**

**To join the Social Action  
Committee and receive our  
emails, contact us at:  
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### This month in Black history:

1811, Charles Deslandes leads slave revolt in Louisiana.

1851, Sojourner Truth addresses the first Black Women's Rights Convention.

1926, Violette Nealy Anderson becomes the first Black woman lawyer to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

1971, Congressional Black Caucus Founded.

1977, Patricia Roberts Harris becomes U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, first Black woman to hold a Cabinet position.

1990, L. Douglas Wilder becomes first African American governor since Reconstruction.

### D/M/V Legislative Tracking Report

#### District of Columbia

**"DC Public Schools and Public Charter Schools Suspension Reform Temporary Act of 2008," Bill 17-1082.** This bill would establish, on a temporary basis, a time certain that the Office of the State Superintendent of Education will implement standards for disciplinary policies and procedures within the District of Columbia Public Schools and Public Charter Schools. This bill was approved at the January 6, Legislative Meeting.

**Get DC Residents training for Jobs Now Temporary Act of 2008," Bill 17-1057**To require, on temporary basis, the Mayor to develop and present to the Council a plan to establish evening and weekend career technical training for District residents at the Academy of Construction and Design at Cardozo Senior High School, the Roosevelt Hospitality High School and the Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering Academy. This bill was approved at the January 6, Legislative Meeting.

**"Juvenile Speedy Trial Equity Amendment Act of 2007," Bill 17-0431.** To amend Title 16 of the District of Columbia Code to provide speedy trial rights for juveniles ordered to shelter care. This bill received its First Reading at the December 2, Legislative Meeting and final approval at the December 16, Legislative Meeting.

**Transfer of Jurisdiction Over a Portion of Fort Dupont Park Emergency Approval Resolution," PR18-0069.** The National Park Service will transfer a portion of Fort Dupont Park for the construction of a youth baseball academy and an expansion of the existing ice rink. This resolution was approved at the January 6, Legislative Meeting.

At the last Legislative Meeting of Council Period 17, on December 16, the Council approved the **"Taxation Without Representation Street Renaming Act of 2008," Bill 17-909 (Act 17-0638).** By this the Council renames the portion of South Capitol Street, S.E., between N Street, S.E., and Potomac Avenue, S.E., in Ward 6, as "Taxation Without Representation Street, S.E."

#### Maryland

**High School Dropouts:** Senate Bill 264/House Bill 953 (both passed) require the local board representative to provide information on alternative education and general educational development (GED) programs to each individual who has dropped out of high school. More than 10,000 students per year dropped out of Maryland public high schools from 1998 to 2007.

**Physical Fitness:** Senate Bill 849/House Bill 1411 (both passed) requires the State and each local board of education to guarantee students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in mainstream physical education programs and try out for and, if selected, participate in mainstream athletic programs.

**Medicaid:** The fiscal 2009 budget increases funding for Medicaid, the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP), and the Primary Adult Care program by \$425.3 million or 8.7 percent.

**Lead-containing Children's Products:** House Bill 62 (passed) prohibits a person from manufacturing, selling, importing, or distributing any children's product containing lead. This ban includes products such as accessories and jewelry, clothing, decorative objects, furniture, lunch boxes and eating utensils, and toys. The bill requires a manufacturer of a children's product to test whether the product is a lead-containing product by using an independent, accredited third-party testing company.

#### Virginia

**Going Green-** Gov. Kaine has announced that his biggest legislative and executive priorities in 2009 will be energy and the environment. His "Renew Virginia" initiative seeks to make Virginia a leader in conservation and environmental protection. -No bill number yet.

**Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit-** The General Assembly will vote during the January 14th session to make localities' health care programs eligible to receive tax credits that can be transferred to professionals donating their services to the programs. - HB 1597

**Higher Education-** The General Assembly will vote during the January 14th legislative session for automatic acceptance to institutions of higher education for Virginia resident students who graduated from a public or private high school in Virginia with a grade point average in the top 10 percent of such student's graduating class and have been honorably discharged from service in the United States Armed Forces, the United States Armed Forces Reserves, the Virginia National Guard, or the Virginia National Guard Reserve. -HJ 623

**Civil Rights-** The General Assembly will vote during the January 14th legislative session on a constitutional amendment to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of nonviolent felonies who have completed service of their sentences. The present Constitution provides for restoration of rights only by the Governor. - HB 1608

### National News



**H.R. 7321 the Auto Industry Financing and Restructuring Act,** to provide financial assistance to the automotive industry was passed in the House. The Resolution is to provide bridge loans or lines of credit to Ford, GM, and Chrysler. It is intended to support the automakers' plans for long-term sustainability, including investment in technology that promotes energy independence, substantiating expenses, and restructuring of debt.

**The 111<sup>th</sup> Congress reconvened on January 6, 2009.**

**President-Elect Obama named Virginia Governor Timothy Kaine to head the Democratic National Committee.**

**President-Elect Barack Hussein Obama will be sworn in as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States on January 20, 2009. The Presidential Cabinet has been named as follows:** Secretary of State – Sen. Hillary Clinton (NY); Secretary of Treasury – Timothy Geithner (NY President of Federal Reserve); Secretary of Defense – Robert Gates (former post); Attorney General – Eric Holder (former Deputy Attorney General); Secretary of Interior – Sen. Ken Salazar (CO); Secretary of Agriculture – Sen. Tom Vilsack (CO); Secretary of Commerce – OPEN (Gov. Bill Richardson, NM, turned down post due to impending investigation); Secretary of Labor – Rep. Hilda Solis (CA); Health & Human Services – Tom Dashle (former Senate Majority Leader); Housing and Urban Development – Shaun Donovan (NY Commissioner of Housing Preservation and Development); Transportation – Rep. Ray LaHood (IL); Energy – Steven Chu (professor UC Berkeley); Education – Arne Duncan (CEO Chicago Public Schools); Veterans' Affairs – Eric Shinseki (former Army Chief of Staff); Homeland Security – Gov. Janet Napolitano (AZ); UN Ambassador – Susan Rice (Obama foreign policy advisor); and Environmental Protection Agency – Lisa P. Jackson (NY Commissioner of Environmental Protection).