



Oregon Black Political Convention

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2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

On April 11-13, 2014, the Oregon Black Political Convention (OBPC) met at the Crowne Plaza Portland Convention Center, 1441 NE 2nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97232, and the delegates to this Convention adopted the 2014 Oregon Black Political Convention Platform and Resolutions. The theme of this Convention was *“Building Influence and Mobilizing Our Voices”*. Below are the planks and resolutions that were adopted:

- I. Political Action
- II. Black Youth
- III. Civil and Human Rights
- IV. Law Enforcement Accountability and Reform
- V. Community Development
- VI. Education
- VII. Access to Justice
- VIII. Economic & Business Development
- IX. Health Care
- X. Black Employment
- XI. Local, State, Federal and World Affairs

I. POLITICAL ACTION

The 2014 OBPC recognizes that all the political parties must work with the President to achieve the collective interests of the United States of America (USA). OBPC recognizes that Black Oregonians must be prepared to work with and in all levels of the political spectrum to achieve the collective interests of Black Oregonians. It is the position of the OBPC that all publicly elected and appointed officials represent the interests of Black Oregonians, regardless of the official's race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, economic status or geographical location. It is the position of OBPC that Black Oregonians must assert how they wish to be represented and whether the quality of this representation is being achieved. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC calls upon Black Oregonians to work with the political party of their choice and to hold their political party accountable for addressing the issues and concerns of Black Oregonians.
2. OBPC calls upon Black Oregonians to get involved in political campaigns of their choice in order to understand the workings of the political process by building political skills, recruiting candidates and volunteers, and increasing engagement within the Black Community.
3. OBPC calls upon Black Oregonians to become Precinct Committee persons within their political party to assure their voices are heard by taking advantage of local political action opportunities.

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

4. OBPC calls upon all U.S. citizens to demand that all elected officials, regardless of their political affiliations, honor their oaths of office and work to make lives better for all citizens of this nation.
5. OBPC expects all members of the U.S. Congress work with President Obama to achieve the collective interests of the United States. OBPC urges all U.S. citizens to vote for members of the U.S. Congress who will represent U.S. interests, not just their parties' interests.
6. OBPC calls upon Black Americans and elected officials to work towards economic equality and recognize that the United States is undergoing a destructive change to push this country towards a two-class society, rich and poor, separate and unequal.
7. OBPC calls upon Americans to recognize and understand that the destructive actions of some members in the U.S. Congress are not based on policies but on the efforts to destroy the administration of President Barack Obama.
8. OBPC finds the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court declaring corporations are people and that money is political speech are detrimental to U.S. democracy. OBPC calls upon Congress to overturn these decisions by preparing for ratification an amendment to the constitution that declares only natural persons are entitled to constitutional rights; that money is not political speech and control of elections is the responsibility of elected officials at all levels of government.

II. BLACK YOUTH

The 2014 OBPC acknowledges that the future of the Black American Community depends on protecting and preparing our children to be actively engaged in the Black community and the community-at-large. OBPC recognizes that the strength of the relationship between parent and child is the most vital and basic component for building the social, emotional and behavioral health of Black children, and that this relationship provides for success in school and beyond. The Black Community must not allow the health and growth of Black youth to be threatened by inadequate systems of education, Black on Black crimes, violence, institutional and internal racism, structural racism, low expectations, biases within the criminal justice system, and lack of access to adequate food, childcare, housing, employment and post-secondary opportunities. OBPC believes that Black youth must learn as they pursue their goals in life that, "Politics is everything and everything is politics." THEREFORE,

1. OBPC calls upon Black youth to become agents of change for the positive development of Black America.
2. OBPC encourages young Black people to learn and share the issues and concerns of the Oregon Black Community with their peers, and local, state and federal elected officials
3. OBPC encourages Black youth to learn and understand the power and responsibilities of citizenship as they prepare for and pursue their goals in life.
4. OBPC calls upon eligible Black youth to register and vote.

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

5. OBPC encourages Black youth to assist with voter registration activities and to work to increase the youth vote.
6. OBPC encourages Black youth to learn about politics and the process in order to effectively represent the concerns of youth before various public bodies.
7. OBPC encourages Black youth to understand that attending and participating in conventions and in the political process is the responsibility they have to be politically involved in defining the needs, goals and aspirations of the Black Community and in communicating the same to individuals who can make the difference.
8. OBPC encourages Black youth to be civically engaged by learning the names and getting to know their elected officials as well as learning the positions of the elected officials on political issues.
9. OBPC calls upon all Americans to support organizations which mentor at risk and gang affiliated youth to give them a positive outlook for their future and stop self-destructive behavior.
10. OBPC calls upon all Black parents and other adults to become involved in the political process (to the extent possible) and share their experiences and knowledge with children and youth.

III. CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The 2014 OBPC recognizes civil and human rights are the foundation of the freedoms to which all people are entitled. OBPC affirms that the Oregon Constitution guarantees fundamental and basic civil rights. The OBPC finds that Black Oregonians' civil and human rights can be abridged and compromised by the efforts of individuals, groups, organizations, and government bodies. These interests maybe in conflict with these rights unless one has access to justice including competent, quality, affordable, and unbiased legal representation. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC encourages all Black Americans to educate themselves about their rights as citizens in civic affairs, and about government duties and responsibilities in the protection of these civil and human rights.
2. OBPC encourages Black Oregonians to empower themselves to hold accountable the legal professions in their responsibilities to provide affordable, equitable, quality, and effective legal representation for Black citizens.
3. OBPC calls upon all organizations and government bodies to stand against any efforts to weaken or eliminate affirmative action, civil and human rights laws, and to enforce these laws. Moreover, OBPC calls upon all organizations and government bodies to further expand the enactment and enforcement of affirmative action, civil and human rights laws.
4. OBPC calls upon all Black Organizations to hold public entities accountable for affirmative action performance by reviewing the plans, monitoring reports, assessing the outcomes, and consistently improving program activities designed to meet the purpose and spirit of the regulations.

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

5. OBPC expects all public entities to hold all contractors and sub-contractors accountable for affirmative action performance/aspirational goals.

IV. LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND REFORM

The 2014 OBPC recognizes that it is the role of law enforcement officials and institutions to serve and protect all people in Oregon. OBPC recognizes that there must be law enforcement accountability and reform to ensure that law enforcement units throughout Oregon are prepared and capable to serve and protect all people in Oregon. Also, OBPC recognizes that law enforcement institutions and public servants are the instruments of the leaders in our executive branch of government to provide safety and security for all the people of Oregon. OBPC believes that law enforcement officials throughout Oregon, including all elected and appointed government employees are responsible for the prevention, investigation, apprehension, and detention of individuals suspected or convicted of violating criminal laws. These employees must be held accountable to ensure the elimination of conscious and unconscious biases against Black Oregonians as well as individuals present in Oregon. When carrying out their duties and enforcing the rule of law, law enforcement institutions and public servants must take steps to prevent the use of unnecessary deadly or near deadly force. The OBPC believes that in all cases where concerns are raised about the use of unnecessary deadly or near-deadly force, justice cannot be achieved without a thorough and unbiased investigation. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC demands the Oregon Governor, Oregon Attorney General, Oregon County Commissioners, Oregon Mayors, District Attorneys and County Sheriffs and all elected leaders and public servants in our executive branches of government in Oregon to require law enforcement units to provide safety and security, without bias, for all the people of Oregon.
2. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Legislative Assembly to pass legislation that would prevent Oregon having a “Stand Your Ground” law.
3. OBPC calls upon all elected officials to hold law enforcers accountable for community relations and performance, and to immediately replace law enforcers who violate their “oath of office.”
5. OBPC calls upon local jurisdictions to establish and implement Community Policing policies and Citizen Advisory Boards, where none exist, to improve relationships and to jointly solve problems.
6. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Legislative Assembly and local jurisdictions to pass legislation requiring all complaints of police use of excessive force be investigated by a team outside of the jurisdiction of the incident. This could be either a separate prosecutor designated by the State Attorney General or some other entity – Governor, courts, District Attorney Association.
7. OBPC calls upon local and state legislators to ensure that all law enforcement agencies work to eliminate the practice of profiling on the basis of race, age, homeless status, mental health, perceived immigration status, national origin, color, disability, sexual orientation and gender expression.

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The 2014 OBPC believes that community development is a process that should be used as one of many tools to heal the United States from its history of slavery and racism. OBPC recognizes that the United States is not in a “post racial period.” OBPC recognizes that there is a greater need for community development to be used by all people in the United States to transform the institutions to serve all people. Oregon and the United States need to be transformed through more community development to remove individual and institutional biases, discrimination and disparity. OBPC believes that there are many opportunities for institutional transformations through community development that will uplift the lives of all people in the United States. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC calls upon all people to recognize and acknowledge that the United States still suffers from its history of slavery and racism and to understand that we must work to eliminate the impact of slavery and racism on the people of the United States.
2. OBPC calls upon Black Oregonians to work with government bodies and organizations in Oregon and the United States to acknowledge and work to remove bias, disparity and all forms of discrimination.
3. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs (OCBA) for greater accountability in fulfilling its statutory duties pursuant to ORS 185.430.
4. OBPC calls upon the Portland Development Commission and City of Portland officials to consistently evaluate their community development assistance grants to ensure equal opportunity in the allocation process.
5. OBPC calls upon Black Organizations to review banking practices around community development grants’ performance to ensure accountability in grant participation and distribution.
6. OBPC calls upon Black Organizations and Oregon Department of Higher Education to collaborate on reviewing and improving the ‘Grading system’ on livability and rating of schools and communities in relation to African Americans throughout Oregon.
7. OBPC calls for the creation of foundations, with the sole purpose of raising monies for funding of African American projects and non-profits.
8. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Assembly for Black Affairs (OABA) to hold meetings between Black Americans and African immigrants to discuss how they can work together to improve conditions for both groups in Oregon and the United States.

VI. EDUCATION

The 2014 OBPC concludes that education is the key to all change in a society. OBPC finds that one must understand Black American History to understand U.S. History. The Black Community must use education for cultural, intellectual and economic development, and growth. The OBPC supports high quality

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

public education and opposes efforts to deny public education to any child in Oregon or in any other state. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC strongly recommends that the Black Community focuses attention and energy on issues affecting Black students in both public and private schools, and actively assisting those students in their preparation to learn and become productive citizens.
2. OBPC calls upon all educational institutions to recognize methodologies, such as the emerging technologies & historical, formal and informal education, which are fundamental for the development, enhancement, productivity and intellectual well-being of the Black Community.
3. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Black Community to question the direction of the Oregon Education Investment Board as to its benefit to the education of Black Students in Oregon.
4. OBPC opposes the use of vouchers and tax dollars to support private and for-profit educational institutions to educate school children while the tax dollars for public schools decrease.
5. OBPC calls upon all school districts, community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities to include local, national and international Black history in all curricula.
6. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Legislature to provide for every Oregon student to have a full range of core subjects funding services, such as early childhood education, counseling, critical thinking, citizenship, the arts, history, civics physical education, vocational and career education, health education, library service, and political process training.
7. OBPC calls upon the presidents of Oregon colleges and universities to get their faculties and administrators to work and encourage Black American college students to learn and participate in political processes that would benefit themselves, their colleges and society-at-large.
8. OPBC calls upon the Oregon State Legislature to direct the Oregon Department of Education to require the ongoing training of teachers to include proficiency in teaching anti-bias curriculum, and all public schools to implement this curriculum at all grade levels.
9. OPBC calls upon the Oregon State Legislature to strengthen legislation to eliminate disproportionate discipline against Black students in educational institutions.

VII. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The 2014 OBPC recognizes that many Black Oregonians experience multiple barriers to accessing justice, and that strategies are necessary to remove these barriers and increase access to justice. Areas of concern include but are not limited to: (1) Accessibility and affordability of legal representation; (2) Conscious and unconscious bias among lawyers, judges, jury members, court staff, corrections and probation officers, law enforcement officials, government and private institutions; and (3) Civil and criminal justice practices and

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

policies that disproportionately and negatively impact Blacks and Black Oregonians. The OBPC believes that addressing these barriers will benefit Blacks Oregonians as well as all Oregonians. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Assembly for Black Affairs (OABA) to work with the Oregon State Bar (OSB) to ensure that barriers to accessing justice are removed.
2. OBPC calls upon the Oregon State Bar Board of Governors to enact ethical rules of professional conduct that prohibit bias and prejudice against clients based on race and other protected classes or other historically marginalized classes.
3. OBPC calls upon all attorneys licensed by the State of Oregon to ensure that all people of Oregon have access to justice that is affordable.
4. OBPC encourages the Governor of Oregon to use the appointment process to diversify the bar and bench.
5. OBPC calls upon the Oregon State Bar to use recommendations to the Governor to fill vacancies on the bench for purposes of diversification and adopt strategies to increase racial diversity of the members of the Oregon Board of Bar Governors.

VIII. ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The 2014 OBPC supports the efforts and activities of Black people to increase their participation in economic, financial and business development. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC supports and promotes the development of competitive Black businesses.
2. OBPC calls upon the African American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) to host a conference or seminar on economic, financial and business development at the local level, and in the expanding global marketplace.
3. OBPC calls upon the Governor and Legislature to provide tools and resources that assist small businesses with planning, marketing, and financial management.
4. OBPC strongly calls upon the Governor to make state agencies accountable for increasing diversity in their contractors.
5. OBPC calls upon all general contractors to evaluate their contracting practices to assure Black contractors are included in consideration and participation.
6. OBPC calls upon all governmental entities to identify barriers to fair and equitable contracting and to develop strategies for removing those barriers.

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

7. OBPC calls upon all governmental bodies to annually review economic activities and resource allocation decisions to assure inclusion and fair contracting practices.
8. OBPC calls upon all contractors to encourage greater opportunities for Black Americans participating in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training.
9. OBPC calls upon Black Americans to become more involved in the technology industry as owners, developers and employers.

IX. HEALTH CARE

The 2014 OBPC recognizes the importance of quality, affordable, appropriate, and accessible healthcare for all people. OBPC has concerns about health care disparities; lack of affordable, accessible and quality health care and resources; and lack of outreach and educational programs directed toward the Black Community. OBPC believes health care is a fundamental right, and not a privilege. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC supports the Affordable Care Act and full coverage for all Black Oregonians.
2. OBPC supports reproductive rights and preventative health care for women.
3. OBPC calls upon all health entities to utilize an “equity lens” for the evaluation of their programs and service, requiring program impact statements regarding program policy and services to the Black Community.
4. OBPC calls upon all healthcare providers, related health groups and organizations, to actively commit to the Black Community to find solutions to reduce health risk and disparities.
5. OBPC calls upon the legislative assembly to review the Oregon Prioritized List and mental health laws, including mental health resources/rehabilitation services, to empower physicians to provide adequate treatment to the mentally ill.
6. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Governor and County Commissioners and their agencies to ensure that there is greater accountability and monitoring of the delivery of mental health services to Black Oregonians.
7. OBPC supports examination for early detection and preventive health care for women, men and children including early child welfare and parenting support.
8. OBPC calls upon Oregon institutions of higher education to increase the number of Black American students enrolled in health science professional programs.
9. OBPC supports every person’s right to make all medical decisions over their body without interference or fear of reprisal upon medical advisors or political entities.

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

10. OBPC supports guaranteeing healthcare for all through Medicare for all, or another similar approach at either the state or federal level.

X. BLACK EMPLOYMENT

The 2014 OBPC recognizes that the unemployment and underemployment rates among Black Oregonians are significantly higher than White Oregonians. OBPC believes that Oregon Black organizations must encourage the Oregon Governor, legislators, county commissioners, and city mayors and council members to create jobs in the Black Community. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC calls upon Black organizations that deal with Black employment, unemployment and underemployment to host a conference on Black employment.
2. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Legislative Assembly to pass legislation that requires enforcement of "Equal Pay for Equal Work" laws and regulations to include all protected and historically marginalized classes.
3. OBPC calls upon the Governor to hold state agencies fiscally accountable for failure to meet the lowest threshold for increasing Black employees in the state agencies.
4. OBPC has identified the high rate of Black unemployment and calls upon all governmental entities to work towards correcting this problem.
5. OBPC calls upon governmental entities to assure that their human resources programs are working to support affirmative action programs and eliminate artificial barriers in their recruitment, testing, and other processes, such as at will state policies.
6. OBPC supports the President Barack Obama's American Jobs Act of 2011.

XI. LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL AND WORLD AFFAIRS

The 2014 OBPC finds that the constitutions or charters of government units mandate these units to represent the interests of all citizens, including Black Americans. OBPC believes that public officials are obligated by their oath of office to faithfully discharge the duties of the office to which the public official is elected or appointed. The OBPC acknowledges that public policies affect how the United States, as a nation, involves itself in the global economy and international affairs. The OBPC encourages Black Americans to get involved in local, state, national and world affairs. The OBPC supports the participation of Black Americans in the establishment, control, monitoring, and implementation of public policies that not only embrace but also promote Black involvement at the local, state, national and world levels. THEREFORE,

1. OBPC calls upon all Black Oregonians to recognize that they are citizens at multiple levels of governments and that they need to be responsible in their engagement at all governmental levels.
2. OBPC opposes efforts to downplay provisions of the U.S. and Oregon Constitutions, and calls upon the U.S. and Oregon to uphold voting rights of all citizens by not creating obstacles to vote and to appeal

2014 OBPC PLATFORM & RESOLUTIONS

April 11-13, 2014

voter laws for those that are currently incarcerated so that they have the right to vote inside prisons and state jails.

3. OBPC calls upon the Oregon Legislative Assembly to pass legislation declaring that it is an oath violation when an elected official knowingly lies to the press and the public.
4. OBPC calls upon the Oregon World Affairs Council to reach out to extend membership and participation opportunities to the Black Community.
5. OBPC calls upon all public bodies to evaluate their recruitment and appointment processes to public boards and commissions to ensure Black Americans' opportunity to participate in these decision making bodies.
6. OBPC calls upon the legislative units at all levels of government to eliminate the privatization and contracting out of government functions.

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