



For Immediate Release

What Matters Most to You? Tell Somebody!

CHICAGO, Illinois, September 23, 2014-

Tuesday, November 4, 2014 is Election Day. This time we get to choose several different city, state and federal offices including Governor, Cook County Board President, US Senators and Illinois senators and representatives. (See the second page of this release for a complete list).

We will also have a chance to weigh in on an increase of the minimum wage to \$10.00 per hour.

People will tell you that voting does not matter. They will say that it is a waste of time. It is not!

When you vote, you are telling the world what matters to you. **Voting is your voice!**

We are living in hard times. Hard times that are, in many ways, the result of choices and decisions made by other people. People who you may not know and you may not have voted for, shape the things that are happening.

African Americans are unemployed and underemployed, overextended and living in and near neighborhoods where violence and police brutality is normal. Keeping our homes is harder. Neighborhood schools have been shut down and the ones left continue to fail our children. Even with ObamaCare, too many of us use emergency rooms as doctors and can't afford the tests they suggest. And if you live on the south side of Chicago, you have no trauma center.

We are living on the edge.

What matters to you? Jobs -- tell the people in charge that you want jobs paying a living wage so that you can take care of yourself and your family.

What matters to you? Safety -- tell folks how tired you are of the violence in your community and mistreatment from those who are supposed to keep us safe.

What matters to you? Education -- let them know that you believe that our children have the right to go to schools that teach them well and they should be able to go to college and not spend their entire lives paying back loans.

What matters to you? Feeling Good -- tell the candidates that you want better health care, healthy food and safe places to exercise and play in our communities.

What matters to you? Creating sustainable wealth in our Communities -- tell all candidates you want increased focus on economic development in our community and creating an environment for our businesses to grow and prosper.

What matters to you? A Government full of people who serve You -- make them hear you!

When politicians don't hear our voices, they believe that we don't matter. We become invisible. When they hear from us (when we make time to vote), we make a difference.

We, as African Americans, must tell our elected officials what we expect from them and that we will hold them accountable after the election.

In hard times, it is easy to give up – easy to stop trying and caring. But it is in the hard times, that it is even more important that we keep trying. Keep trying to make a difference.

If you are tired of political malarkey and plans without substance – make time to vote. If you are done with empty promises delivered to ensure re-election and not to serve us, vote! Our votes can be used to give a candidate a seat and remove them if they fail to deliver.

The Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL) strongly urges each and every one of us to get out and Vote on November 4. Let's make our expectations known!

THINGS TO DO

- 1. Make sure you are registered to vote. If not, get registered. The last day to register is Tuesday, October 7. (See the links below for post-Oct. 7 Grace Period dates/locations)**
- 2. Make sure that you know where you have to go to vote. Precincts and wards have changed in the City of Chicago. Go to: <http://www.chicagoelections.com>**
- 3. If you live outside of the city, in suburban Cook County. Go to: www.cookcountyclerk.com**
- 4. Vote early - Early Voting for the Nov 4 General Election starts Monday, Oct. 20 and ends Sunday, Nov. 2.**
- 5. If you know people who may have trouble getting to places where they can vote, give them a ride.**
- 6. Remind people that November 4 voting hours are between 6:00 am and 7:00 pm.**
- 7. Commit to identifying 5 friends/family and ensure that they also vote and that each of them, in turn, identifies their own 5 friends/family.**

The Illinois minimum wage increase question asks voters whether they support increasing the hourly minimum wage to \$10 by January 1, 2015. Today the hourly minimum wage is \$8.25

FULL LIST OF OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION

- United States Senator
- Governor & Lieutenant Governor
- Attorney General
- Secretary of State
- Comptroller
- Treasurer
- Representatives in Congress
- State Senators
- Representatives in the General Assembly
- Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (3 to be elected)
- President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners
- County Clerk of Cook County
- Treasurer of the Cook County
- Sheriff of Cook County
- Assessor of Cook County
- County Commissioners of Cook County (17 from single member districts)
- Commissioner of the Board of Review of Cook County (District 3)

- Supreme, Appellate, Circuit and Sub-circuit Judges (to fill vacancies if required)
- Regional Superintendent of Schools
- Sanitary District Trustees
- Local Offices (if applicable)
- Retention Judges

*The Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL) believes that it is important to examine the critical issues confronting the African American community where injustice, inequality and the absence of access and opportunity continue to prevail, thereby negatively impacting us as a people. C.O.A.L. is an assemblage that advocates and organizes for appropriate and responsible public policy change, system behavior change and equality of opportunity. We aim to achieve for **all** of **our** people the fullness of the life experience without any form of racism or exclusion as a deterrent. We believe we must prepare ourselves for the opportunity of this full participation, thereby achieving the necessary education and training to participate.*

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