



MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS INITIATIVE

NEWS

NEWS ADVISORY
October 6, 2004

Contact: Chetly Zarko
734-730-4842

MCRI PUTS END TO MINORITY GROUP FIGHTING FOR RACE PREFERENCES

Two recent news stories highlight the struggle that race preferences create among different minorities and even within the same ethnic groups. The proposed taxpayer-funded "African Town" in Detroit - and a proposal to limit race preferences to only one sub-group of blacks - share in common a fear of other minority groups and operate on a theory that those groups are "stealing resources" from each other. The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) would prohibit governments from implementing such ill-conceived policies..

Harvard University Professor Lani Guinier recently proposed to *divide* African Americans further into two categories - giving race-based preferences only to 'authentically-American' blacks that had an ancestry dating back to slavery and taking those preferences away from blacks that have immigrated recently and even are second-generation immigrants. Such proposals show the never-ending slippery slope that the mindset leading to race preferences will create

Guinier justifies her recommendation based on her surveys of major elite universities' admission demographics, noting that two-thirds of Harvard's "African American" student body hails directly from immigration. Unfortunately, Guinier would rather sharpen the sword of racial preference than focus on measuring need regardless of race. MCRI's solution is to end all racial preference - but still allow schools and governments to use "affirmative action" as it was originally conceived (e.g - outreach programs to repair the underlying problems in K-12 education that *everyone* has the same opportunity for admittance).

MCRI would explicitly prohibit the second proposal, the taxpayer-funded "African Town" business district pushed by a Detroit City Council override despite a mayoral veto. According to *The Detroit Free Press*, African Town is to be a zone in Detroit created using a

-- more --

taxpayer-funded corporation that lent money only to blacks and only in the African Town area.

The Detroit Free Press story (Sept. 21, 2004) reports that the proposal is based on a report that blames inner-city African-American poverty on Mexican, Asian, and Arabic immigrants stealing resources and jobs from blacks, suggesting that immigrating individuals from those groups be viewed suspiciously because they might have "their own agendas."

"No group or individual American," said Ms. Jennifer Gratz, Executive Director of MCRI, "should be treated better or worse than any other American because of their skin color, gender, race or national origin." The reality is that race preferences divide a pool of resources that never change in size - rather than properly focusing on solutions that increase the size of the pool for everyone. The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) would force governments to address real problems by helping everyone; rather than smaller and smaller groups. Race preferences are destructive to society because they foster a battle for resources based upon-group identity, rather than individual effort.

The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative Committee (MCRI), a Michigan-based Ballot Question Committee, is dedicated to giving the people of Michigan the opportunity to end preferential treatment based on race, gender, ethnicity, or national origin by State or local governments. MCRI will make Michigan a place of equal opportunity for all, not a State that uses discrimination as a tool to create "diversity." Achieving "diversity" and "affirmative action" should never be an excuse to discriminate!

- - ### - -

Paid for with regulated funds by the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative Committee
PO Box 1398, Southgate, MI 48195 734-730-4842 www.michigancivilrights.org