



Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition

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PRESS RELEASE

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FMCRC and Greenlining Institute Call For Federal Investigation of Florida SB 998 for Violations of the Civil Rights Act (Title VI)

Tampa, Florida:

Florida is a great place to set up shop if you want to redline women, people of color or the poor. Florida S.B. 998 allows for the circumvention of Civil Rights laws by allowing Florida foundations to be exempt from providing any diversity data.

Florida's S.B. 998 allows nonprofit tax-deductible foundations **not to disclose race and gender information** regarding their administrators, staff, and grant recipients. This law legalizes and encourages racial and gender discrimination.

States Al Pina, Chair of FMCRC "Greenlining and FMCRC have requested a federal investigation by the U.S. Attorney General for civil rights violations by the Florida legislature. Florida SB 998 discourages intellectual and moral growth in Florida and allows foundations to avoid civic responsibility. This law is in direct violation of the Civil Rights Act and we will push the Federal Government to intervene. Foundations receive billions of dollars of federal tax relief and hence are accountable to the Civil Rights Act."

Studies have clearly demonstrated to lack of diversity in Florida foundations. In a FMCRC-Greenlining study of Florida foundations found that less than 4 percent of directors were people of color and less than 6% of philanthropic grants were provide to minority organizations.

Protecting the civil rights of women and minorities fosters mutual understanding and respect among Florida's diverse communities. Florida SB 998 denies women and minorities of such protections.

Orson Aguilar, Executive Director of the Greenlining Institute, states “This law encourages racial and gender discrimination by explicitly prohibiting Florida foundations from disclosing the race and gender of their employees, board members and grant recipients.”

Florida legislature and political leaders must understand and be committed to diversity. These elected officials must be held accountable for increasing and supporting diversity as an institutional priority and be willing to implement laws necessary for attaining both short and long term diversity in Florida. Florida leaders must have a commitment to respect and provide equitable treatment of all members of Florida, especially those from historically under represented groups such as women, minorities, gays and lesbians, individuals with disabilities.

“No industry should be above the need for transparency that is a foundation of the civil rights laws. Without diversity data, how can we ever find out if women or people of color are being discriminated?” states Orson Aguilar.

Concludes Dr. Joy Bruce, President of the Asian Federation of Florida “We join FMCRC and Greenlining in voicing the concern that Florida S.B. 998, passed in May 2010, which prohibits Florida government agencies and local governments from requiring non-profit foundations to disclose demographic data of their officer, staff and grantees would represent a violation of the Civil Rights Act. Private foundations, as tax-exempt institutions, should be subject to public scrutiny, to avoid potential discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, and ethnicity.”