

Sequestration is not the best solution

Written by
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The National Coalition of 100 Black Women (NCBW) is concerned about this national "sequester" that went into effect on March 1, 2013. "Sequestration is not the solution," said NCBW national president M. Delois Strum.

Sequestration is a set of automatic across the board spending cuts put into law by the Budget Control Act to apply pressure on Congress to come up with a longer term plan for deficit reduction. However, "sequestration as a strategy will not effectively reduce the national deficit or effectively address our country's financial issues," said Sherese Brewington-Carr, NCBW public policy liaison. "Regrettably it will reduce human potential and adversely impact all communities, particularly African American and other communities of color. These communities already continue to struggle during this country's economic recovery," she said.

According to Strum, "our constituency, who currently has one of the highest unemployment rates, will be subjected to additional job loss, loss of revenue and salary earnings due to furloughs and layoffs and, in the case of unemployment insurance, will face reductions at approximately \$400.00 per person."

"We are aware of expected cuts to Title I that will reduce early education opportunities for our

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most vulnerable citizens and our country's greatest hope for the future -- our children. We regard education as a basic civil right and foundation for early childhood development," said Strum.

According to official testimony and letters from all impacted government agency cabinet heads and secretaries to the U. S. Committee on Appropriations, cuts will apply to the Employment and Training budgets, Workforce Investment Acts, Wagner- Peyser funds and the Office of Job Corps that provide much needed job training to develop America's workforce. The Department of Justice will experience personnel cuts that could impact safety, as well as cuts to Violence Prevention and Protection programs for women and to Public Health Centers that provide much needed community based healthcare, resulting in less services for the sick.

"Our leaders failed to avert this sequestration catastrophe, but they can still reach a compromise going forward," said Strum. "There must be other solutions and we must individually and collectively insist that our national leaders work together to find those alternative solutions that do not punish our most vulnerable citizens," she said.

The National Coalition of 100 Black Women is an advocacy group for African American women. With sixty-three chartered chapters across the country and a core mission focus in the areas of Health, Education, and Economic Empowerment through our strategic alliances and partnerships, we are intentional about positively impacting the lives of our constituents: African American women and girls.