

State of Black America Report

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The National Urban League is calling on President Barack Obama to specifically address Black unemployment, foreclosures, education and health care.

According to the annual "State of Black America" issued last week, the Urban League charged that Blacks are twice as likely to be unemployed, three times as likely to live in poverty and more than six times as likely to be incarcerated.

Obama has said that by improving education, employment and health care for all Americans, Blacks people will benefit too. "We have to be more specific," counters Marc Morial, president and CEO National Urban League."

"Our index shows African American status is about 71 percent that of white Americans," in indicators across the board. Morial vowed the organization would not rest until there is no gap between Blacks and Whites in quality of life indexes.

The 288-page report presents 31 specific recommendations including:

- Ensure that the stimulus package's green job creation includes poor urban communities.
- Increase funding for job training and placement for disadvantaged workers.
- Guarantee full-day schooling for all 3- and 4-year-olds.
- Expand the school day to account for working parents and families without nearby relatives to help with after-school care.
- Fund mortgage counseling and education programs for minorities.
- Implement universal health care and a "comprehensive" system to provide blacks with health education, prevention and intervention.