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African immigrants are facing unprecedented financial hardships due to the lack of consumer protection education. One critical problem they are experiencing is how to deal with collectors and creditors. Other issues are of sub-prime lending, unsecured loans and foreclosures. African immigrants, who are trusting people, are being targeted by a large number of unlicensed collectors and creditors who continually call and harass them via mail and email methods.

The African communities in the Twin Cities are facing foreclosures, wage garnishments, debt collections, judgments and court system issues. They are not aware, let alone understand, their rights, for protection, as a consumer. Most often, their economic plight has resulted in loss of income, budget shortage, home foreclosures, etc. In light of these crises, there is a need for community programs and immigrant-serving nonprofit's for proactive services and consumer education that will give these immigrants the basic tools and strategies to empower themselves to take appropriate action to resolve their crises and maintain economic stability and self-sufficiency.

The Minneapolis-based African Chamber of Commerce (ACC) is asking state legislators, city governments, counties, governmental agencies, and civic organizations to help address these economic-driven immigrant issues -- through collaborative partnerships to help save immigrant families from losing their homes, resolve unpaid bills and loss of assets, and other seemingly insurmountable financial problems that lead to greater socio-economic circumstance. For example, the collaborative partners can assist families in need of Home Loan Modifications to avoid foreclosures; debt reduction plans to reduce their monthly mortgage payments; compromise plans on outstanding payments due; dealing with principals for both secured and unsecured loans. They need to enforce strict rules and regulations for a growing number of third-party collectors who are not licensed in the state of Minnesota.

The African Chamber of Commerce is also asking the philanthropic community to continue its funding focus and priorities in these areas, in financial education with a strong consumer protection component. This will help families to how to deal with Collection agencies, ACC is thankful to the Otto Bremmer Foundation, The Minneapolis Foundation, Allianz Foundation, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation, the Christian Sharing Fund, the St. Paul Travelers Foundation, and other philanthropic foundations for their support along these program areas.