



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 02/23/10

CONTACT: Allen Richardson 218-428-0290 arichardson@chumduluth.org
Or Archie Davis 218-590-1617 adavis@trilliumservice.com

MN Legislative Report Card on Racial Equity Findings Released

Members of the Organizing Apprenticeship Project (OPA) will be joined by representatives from American Indian communities and communities of color for a 12 noon press conference Friday, February 26th on the ground floor of the Holiday Center, 207 West Superior St., in Duluth to discuss OAP's 2009 Minnesota Legislative Report Card on Racial Equity.

The Report Card evaluated how well the Governor and legislators advanced racial equity in the laws they passed in 2009. The Report Card also assessed the potential negative impact of the Governor's unallotment decisions on communities of color and low income families. For Duluthians this negative impact affects people who use GAMC and/or have seen a decrease in their renter's rebate. These cuts disproportionately affect communities of color.

Key Findings of the 2009 Minnesota Legislative Report Card on Racial Equity include:

- More individual legislators earned top grades through leading and supporting racial equity legislation than in the past. The honor roll included 31 lawmakers who were from both political parties as well as from urban, suburban and rural districts throughout the state.
- Legislature and Governor showed a huge improvement on passing racial equity bills. The Legislation passed and signed into law included promoting hiring in green jobs, banning the box on statewide public

employment, covering more kids with health insurance, and strengthening efforts to revitalize the Dakota and Ojibwe languages.

- Budget decisions undermined racial equity progress. Stalled budget negotiations led to the Governor using his unallotment authority to balance the budget. The Governor's cuts hit communities of color and low-income families hardest as it deepened their economic hardship.
- When the Governor cut aid to local governments, eliminated the GAMC program and cut \$51 million dollars from the Minnesota's renters' credit program, he damaged many safety net programs that were created to advance economic, social and economic justice throughout the state.

Comments on the report include;

"Last session...Minnesota made progress toward racial justice. Progress included requiring hiring equity for green jobs and advancing parity in the criminal justice system," said Jermaine Toney of Organizing Apprenticeship Project.

"Unfortunately, the unilateral unallotment cuts to programs providing critical support for communities of color and low-income families undermined many of the good legislative accomplishments in the 2009 session."

As lawmakers and the Governor face another budget deficit of historic proportions, Toney recommends "elected leaders integrate racial and economic equity as core elements in budget decisions, to prevent long term damage to all Minnesotans."

-END-

Links

OAP's website <http://www.oaproject.org/>

OAP names Senator Prettner-Solon as a Champion for Racial Equity;
<http://www.senate.mn/senators/07Prettner%20Solon/update/2010/February%2019th%202010.pdf>

[2009 Minnesota Legislature was "at its best, and at its worst ...](#)

[Asian American Press | AAPress.com - http://aapress.com/](http://aapress.com/)

[Paul Thissen for Governor 2010 » Blog Archive » Thissen Earns ...](#)

[Transportation spending, projects bypass communities of color](#)