***A Community Voice***

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Immediate Release

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A Community Voice

Charges

City Contractors Violate the Civil Rights Act

&

HUD’s Equal Opportunity Policy

Press Conference

Tuesday, July 3rd

Caffin & Claiborne (1600 Caffin)

1pm (Assemble at Sanchez Center parking lot)

1:10pm Picket line to Trinity Lutheran (3523 N Claiborne)

1:45pm Press Conference

***Councilmember Jon Johnson & State Rep. Wesley Bishop in attendance***

Hundreds of complaints about Civil Rights violations against Black New Orleanians who want to work at Recovery projects have prompted the members of A Community Voice to picket and organize a campaign to HIRE NOLA at Recovery projects all over town.

“We are coming out to fight for jobs because none of our folk are getting hired and there are billions of dollars coming into our City. It is discrimination and a violation of the Civil Rights Act,” says Vanessa Gueringer Vice-President of A Community Voice.

African American Veteran Joseph Polk says “I have been trying since Katrina to get a job. Every place I go, I get turned down and told that they are not hiring. All this money coming into New Orleans, and there are still no jobs.”

Construction projects that utilize CDBG money must follow the Civil Rights Act and HUD mandates to provide equal opportunities to all residents, including minority and DBE businesses. Hundreds of complaints have been turned into A Community Voice from residents, DBE businesses and African American contractors around the fact that they cannot get jobs on any of these recovery projects. The Civil Rights Acts dictates that employers cannot discriminate based on race. Additional mandates around HUD’s section 3 requires that CDBG funded project such as the current Streetscape projects on St. Claude and Claiborne hire local and low income residents. This contractor, Plus Concrete, is out of Detroit, MI and has another big contract to fix up the French Quarter for the 2013 Super Bowl.

Durr Construction who has been contracted to demo the Sanchez Center parking lot recently came to a community meeting and stated that they have all the employees they need already in place and not looking to hire residents. Subcontracts are not being properly bidded out to allow minority contractors and DBE’s to apply.

These practices violate Civil Rights laws, HUD laws and the Mayor Landrieu’s 5 point program to reduce crime which states that city contracts need to include a “hire residents” component. A Community Voice is filing a discrimination complaint with HUD today to have these contractors investigated and held accountable to the law.

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