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A Warning to Black Elected Officials

by State Senator Robert Ford

Lillian McBride should not be persecuted or fired. Every South Carolina County experienced long lines which is a good thing particular for people of color.

I've notice a strange type of attitude from Black elected officials who represent districts that are majority white. They believe they were elected because they were different from other Blacks. They honestly believe that their White electorate voted for them because of this imaginary difference. As a result of this misinterpretation they develop the distorted opinion they have to represent the district differently than any other elected official.

An elected public servant is just that – they are elected to serve. If you really serve, it doesn't make any difference what constituency you represent. Let me restate that statement, if you serve your constituents they will support and respect you. A good example of what I'm talking about in 1966, now Congressman Tim Scott was my opponent for the South Carolina Senate District 42 race. I defeated my opponent Tim Scott in the General Election with 63% of the White vote in the most conservative Senate District 42 precincts. The White precincts in that district have the same economic and educational status as the majority of White precincts across South Carolina.

I would like to respectfully warn my young Black colleagues who are elected in these type of districts, you don't have to be like Clarence Thomas or Allen West to be accepted by White voters in your district.

- If you do your job and represent your people – they will vote for you.
- To you young Black elected officials who feel you have to be different to represent a district with multiple ethnic groups and diverse cultural differences that is hogwash and garbage.
- Do your job, be fair to everybody and please develop a love for yourself. By developing a love for yourself, you will simply treat everyone accordingly.
- Young Black people under the age of 50 do not have this love for themselves. The reason is simple; they don't know who they are as a people. They don't know nor do they have an appreciation of their history.

Please, stop this hatred and bitterness of people in your quest to be like Clarence Thomas and Allen West. If you are willing to learn from the dream of Selma, Alabama, and find out what the demonstrators that lead to the 1965 Voters Right's Bill that gave you the ability to get elected in the first place really accomplished; I will be glad to show you what a dream can accomplish.

- Even Tim Scott in a district that is less than 18% Black has more love and respect for people than the majority of Black elected officials.

To represent all of your constituents to the best of your ability is the best testament to being a public servant.