

January 15, 2016

To whom it may:

As the Community Program Specialist for the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage in the Rochester Office, I would like to be clear that the comments below are my alone and do not represent the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage.

As you meet today to discuss the economic disparities facing Minnesotans of African Heritage, I strongly call on you to consider the needs of African Heritage Minnesotans and not just the residents of the twin cities.

The September report of the US Census Bureau noted that Black household income dropped from \$31,000.00 to \$27,000.00 between 2013 and 2014. All Black Minnesotans are experiencing these disparities not just those living in the twin cities.

The Wall Street Journal 24/7 of January 2015 that identified Minnesota as the second worst state in the nation for blacks did not report these findings for only residents of the twin cities but all of black Minnesotans. The state Demographer report as published in the Star Tribune did not say only residents of the twin cities were experiencing these disparities. It states "the shift to low wage jobs has been particularly hard on African American Minnesotans. Based on the American Community Survey data, jobs held by Black Minnesotans are much less likely to be in well-paying occupations and are much more likely to be in lesser paying service occupations".

The cry for equality from all Black Minnesotans rings loud and clear throughout the state. Minneapolis and St. Paul are not the only cities in Minnesota where Minorities live. In Rochester, Minnesota for example, the Public School District has been under federal investigation for the despair treatment of black students for five years. In Mankato, Somali women are losing their jobs and housing because they want to learn more about this culture.


The call for equality has never been as loud as it is now in this time of great depression for African Heritage Minnesotans.

It will be great mistake and injustice to only fund organizations that provide services only in the twin cities and forget the rest of the people. Putting other minority's communities on hold at this time will be inaccuracy on the part of this committee. The proposal before you today needs to be expanded to include greater Minnesota communities of color.

Should the funding requests put forth in these proposals as submitted by Senator Champion be approved by this body, the organizations mentioned must be required to provide services to all Minnesotans of color by having representation in greater Minnesota.

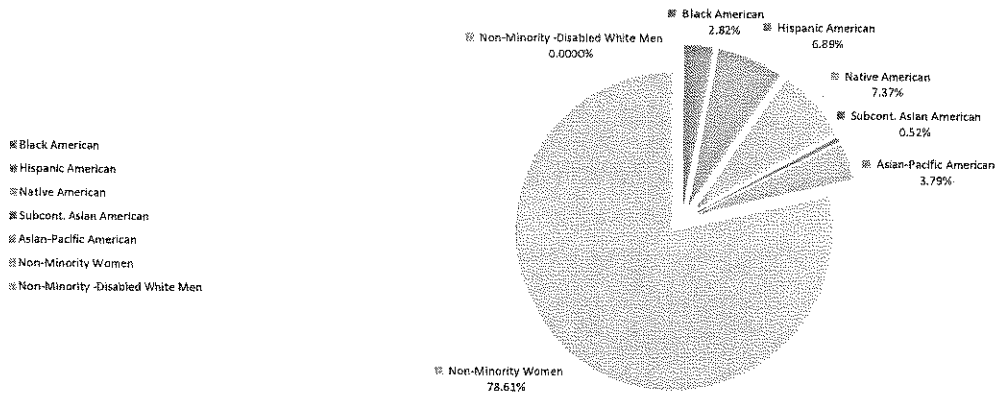
It is with great urgency that we call on you to take these matters before you seriously. We trust that you will do everything within your authority to ensure equality becomes the way of life for all Minnesotans.

Thanks,

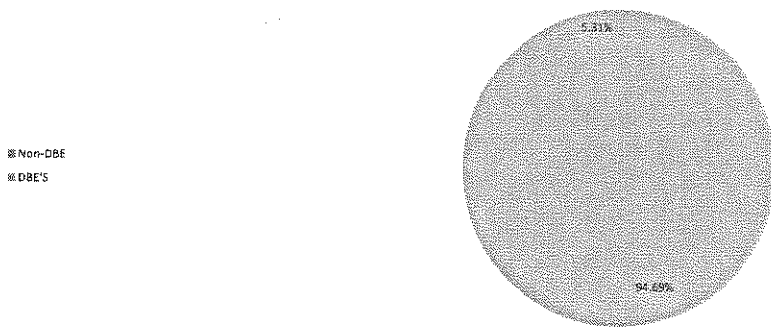


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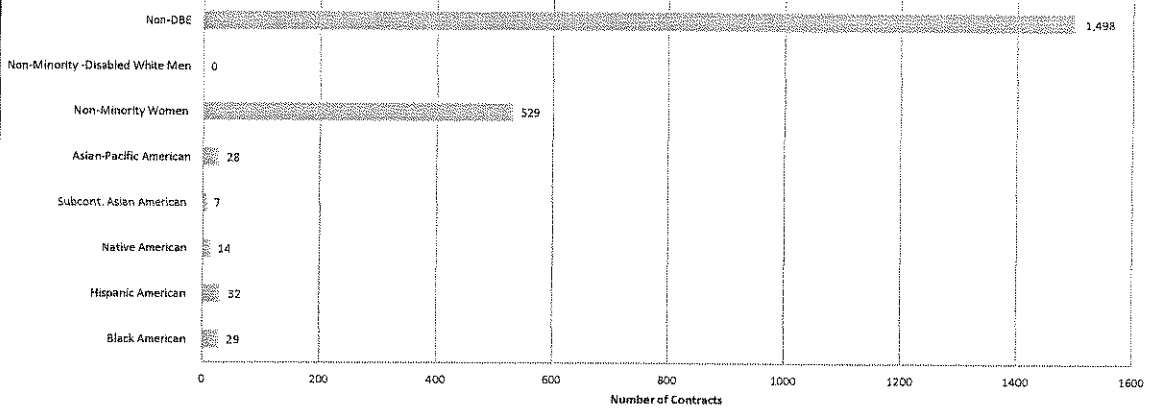
2015 DBE Disbursement of Funds



2015 MnDOT Total Funds



2015 MnDOT Contract Disbursement



Chris Packer