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Council on Black - Report to the Legislature.



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**STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS
REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
FEBRUARY 1, 1996**

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COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

FEBRUARY 1, 1996

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STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS

Wright Building • Suite 426
2233 University Avenue • St. Paul, MN 55114 • (612) 642-0811

February 1, 1996

Minnesota State Legislature
State Capitol Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

The Council on Black Minnesotans was created in July, 1980 by the Minnesota State Legislature to advise the Governor and legislators on issues confronting Black people. Prior to the creation of the Council, no state agency responsible for researching issues and advocating on behalf of Minnesotans of African ancestry existed.

The Council on Black Minnesotans is one of four Councils of color required to submit a report to the legislature per Minnesota laws of 1995; Chapter 225, Section 35. Our members and staff met five [5] times to study the request of the legislature and eighteen [18] times with the executive directors and staff of the other councils to coordinate the study. The objective was to achieve the maximum possible consistency in recommendations.

In addition the Council[s] met with legislators, the Governor's office, the Lieutenant Governor and invited guests to discuss the contents of our draft report and final product.

The report contains a number of similar and diverse recommendations. One major recommendation involves the need to utilize the expertise of the councils of color by state agencies: i.e. compliance with Minnesota Statute 3.9225; Subdivision 4 has not been adhered to. By maximizing the expertise of the councils of color, the decision making process will be strengthened and the outcome would be cost effective for the state.

This collaborative effort was educational for all participants. It enabled the parties involved [policy makers, councils and others] to address issues of communication as well as identify strategies capable of enhancing and strengthening the operation of agencies throughout the state of Minnesota.

The report includes a synopsis of the four reports highlighting the mandates and recommendations. If you have questions or comments regarding this matter please contact the Council at (612) 642-0811.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lester R. Collins".

Lester R. Collins
Executive Director

Equal Opportunity Employer

Legislative Report

The Minnesota Legislature has requested that the Council on Black Minnesotans, Spanish Speaking Affairs Council, Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, and the Indian Affairs Council conduct studies and individually and jointly report on each council's membership and operations. The following report is in response to Minnesota Laws of 1995, Chapter No. 224, Section 35.

1. Removal of council members by the governor.

Membership terms, compensation, removal of members, and filling of vacancies for nonlegislative members are as provided in Minnesota Statute, Section 15.059.

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that the Governor remove a council member per Minnesota Statute 15.0575 and based upon the recommendation of the Council's Board of Directors. Removal of any council member requires a quorum with two-thirds of the attending council members voting for removal. The council member being considered for removal is excluded from voting on this issue. Removal of a council member must be based on misconduct or failure to satisfy board meeting attendance requirements. Council members will be notified in writing by the Board Chairperson at least ten days in advance of the Board of Director's meeting where a vote for removal will be taken. The written notification will include the facts and circumstance regarding removal and request a written response from the council member being considered for removal. The Board of Directors will consider the facts, circumstances and written response prior to voting. The removal process applies to voting and nonvoting council members.

The Council on Black Minnesotans further recommends that a voting council member may be automatically removed if s/he misses three Board of Director meetings in a twelve month period of time without cause.

The Council on Black Minnesotans also recommends that non-voting members be removed for the aforementioned reasons.

The Council on Black Minnesotans endorses the recommendation made at a recent meeting with the governor's office, legislators, and the councils of color that non-voting members be appointed for a two year term and rotated.

2. Statutory requirements and qualifications for council membership.

Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 1 states that "A state council on Black Minnesotans consists of 11 members appointed by the governor. The members of the council must be broadly representative of the Black community of the state and include at least five males and at least five females.... Two members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker and two members of the senate appointed by the subcommittee on committees of the committee on rules and administration shall serve as nonvoting members of the council."

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends no changes to the number of council members. The Council on Black Minnesotans will continue to monitor the changing demographics of Black Minnesotans and recommend new

council members for appointment to reasonably reflect those changes. Representation on the council will reasonably reflect specific populations including, but not limited to, African Americans, Africans, Islanders, seniors, youth, metropolitan and rural.

The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 1 should be amended to have the speaker of the house and the chairperson of the subcommittee on committees of the committee on rules and administration consult with the Council on Black Minnesotans chairperson and executive director prior to appointing their respective representatives.

The intent of this recommendation is to ensure that appointees are knowledgeable and interested in the affairs of Black Minnesotans, and will faithfully perform as an active nonvoting member.

3. Appointment of the council director, including qualifications.

Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 5 states that "The council shall appoint an executive director who is experienced in administrative activities and familiar with the problems and needs of Black people. The council may delegate to the executive director powers and duties under subdivisions 1 to 7 which do not require council approval. The executive director serves in the unclassified service and may be removed at any time by the council. The executive director shall recommend to the council, and the council may appoint the appropriate staff necessary to carry out its duties"

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 5 should be amended to reflect the following language: The executive director should be culturally competent; degreed or equivalent in public affairs, business, political science, social science or related fields; demonstrated competency in developing and promoting legislation and policies to improve the socioeconomic status of Black Minnesotans; demonstrated competency in management; superior written/verbal communication skills; and demonstrated success in building community-based leadership. The council may delegate to the executive director powers and duties under this section that do not require council approval. The executive director serves in the unclassified service and may be removed at any time by the Council. The executive director shall appoint the appropriate staff necessary to carry out the duties of the council.

4. Methods of reducing overall costs of the councils through sharing of staff and administrative expenses.

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that expense reduction and productivity improvement can be achieved through sharing MAPS and SEMMA systems access with the Indian Affairs Council. Additional expense reduction and improved working relationships with the other councils of color can be achieved through joint staff and council member training and orientation. Bulk and joint procurement of supplies and equipment by the councils of color and other state agencies should achieve additional expense savings.

The Council on Black Minnesotans does not recommend co-location or sharing staff with the other councils of color. Co-location itself does not ensure expense reduction and may limit fostering an office environment that is culturally relevant and appropriate. Any expense reduction achieved through staff sharing could be offset by conflicting priorities, different work styles and cultural norms.

5. Methods of improving coordination with other state agencies.

Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 6 states that "Other state agencies shall supply the council upon request with advisory staff services on matters relating to the jurisdiction of the council. The council shall cooperate and coordinate its activities with other state agencies to the highest degree possible."

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that a senior level liaison be appointed by the commissioner of the Departments of Administration; Children, Families, and Learning; Corrections; Employee Relations; Health and Human Services; and the Attorney General's Office with accountability to ensure a high level of cooperation, coordination, and exchange of information and issues between the councils of color and state agencies. Regularly scheduled meetings should be established with an emphasis on agency planning efforts, legislative and policy development, public education and communication.

The Council on Black Minnesotans also recommends that a semi-annual meeting with the governor be established to report on the council's performance per its goals and objectives and identify specific initiatives on the part of the governor and the Council on Black Minnesotans to improve the socioeconomic status of Black Minnesotans. The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that the governor appoint a senior member from the governor's staff who is accountable for coordination between the councils of color, the governor's staff and state agencies.

The councils of color and legislators further recommend that each of the councils address the full Senate and House annually.

The Council on Black Minnesotans also recommends that all state departments or agencies adhere to Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 4 that states "All applications by a state department or agency for the receipt of federal funds which will have their primary effect on Black Minnesotans shall be submitted to the council for review and recommendation at least 30 days before submission to a federal agency.

These changes would contribute significantly to the improved performance and proactive approach of state government to the needs and interests of our communities of color.

6. Methods of reducing burdensome reporting requirements without compromising accountability.

Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 7 states that "The council shall prepare and distribute a report to the governor and legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year. The report shall summarize the activities of the council since its last

report, list receipts and expenditures, identify the major problems and issues confronting Black people, and list the specific objectives which the council seeks to attain during the next biennium.”

Recommendation: The report may also be available to the community.

7. Methods of educating council members in management issues for state agencies, including but not limited to statewide budget and accounting practices, management practices, and legal liability.

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that council members and staff from each of the councils receive training and demonstrate a working knowledge in the above mentioned areas and jointly conduct training for the councils benefit. The Council on Black Minnesotans further recommends that council members and staff participate with legislators in annual legislative training. Expense savings and improved working relationships can be achieved through coordination of learning efforts between the councils. Each council should develop, with assistance from the appropriate state agencies, an orientation process for new council members and staff. Identified training needs for individual council members and/or staff should be provided on an as needed basis.

8. A statement of mission of each council and measurable impact goals for each council.

The Council on Black Minnesotans mission is:

To ensure that the needs of all individuals of African descent in Minnesota are clearly conveyed to state decision makers (i.e., the Governor, legislators, Federal Government, private organizations), and provide equal protection under the law, and guarantee that the African-American community receives and has access to state services and programs.

The Council on Black Minnesotans strives to address ongoing concerns in the State of Minnesota, and addresses new issues as they occur.

The Council on Black Minnesotans vision statement is:

- The Council on Black Minnesotans will remain viable and autonomous.
- The Council on Black Minnesotans will increase community involvement and support. We will aggressively communicate the purpose, activities, and accomplishments of the Council.
- Specific action plans will be implemented to execute the Council’s immediate goals and objectives.

Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 3 states that “The council shall:

- (a) advise the governor and the legislature on the nature of the issues confronting Black people in this state;
- (b) advise the governor and the legislature on statutes or rules necessary to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in

this state;

(c) recommend to the governor and the legislature any revisions in the state's affirmative action program and other steps that are necessary to eliminate underutilization of Blacks in the state's work force;

(d) recommend to the governor and the legislature legislation to improve the economic and social condition of Black people in this state;

(e) serve as a conduit to state government for organizations of Black people in the state;

(f) serve as a referral agency to assist Black people to secure access to state agencies and programs;

(g) serve as a liaison with the federal government, local government units, and private organizations on matters relating to the Black people of this state;

(h) perform or contract for the performance of studies designed to suggest solutions to problems of Black people in the areas of education, employment, human rights, health, housing, social welfare, and other related areas;

(i) implement programs designed to solve problems of Black people when authorized by other statute, rule, or order;

(j) review data provided by the commissioner of human services under section 257.072, subdivision 5, and present recommendations on the out-of-home placement of Black children. Recommendations must be presented to the commissioner and the legislature by February 1, 1990; November 1, 1990; and November 1 of each year thereafter; and

(k) publicize the accomplishments of Black people and their contributions to this state.

Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 4 states that "All applications by a state department or agency for the receipt of federal funds which will have their primary effect on Black Minnesotans shall be submitted to the council for review and recommendation at least 30 days before submission to a federal agency.

Recommendation: The Council on Black Minnesotans recommends that the 12 duties described in Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 3 be amended to a smaller number of comprehensive goals that would have measurable annual objectives established. The measurable annual goals would provide the basis for evaluating the performance of the council members collectively and staff members individually. The language should reflect an positive asset approach versus a deficit or problematic approach (ex. achieve equitable utilization of Blacks in the state's work force versus eliminate underutilization).

The Council on Black Minnesotans further recommends that Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 3, Mandate (c) be amended to reflect the following language: "(c) recommend to the governor and the legislature any revisions in the state's affirmative action and diversity programs and other steps that are necessary to eliminate underutilization of Blacks in the state's work force;

The Council on Black Minnesotans also recommends that Minnesota Statute, Section 3.9225, Subdivision 3, Mandate (j) be deleted and added to the ombudsperson for families statutory requirements.

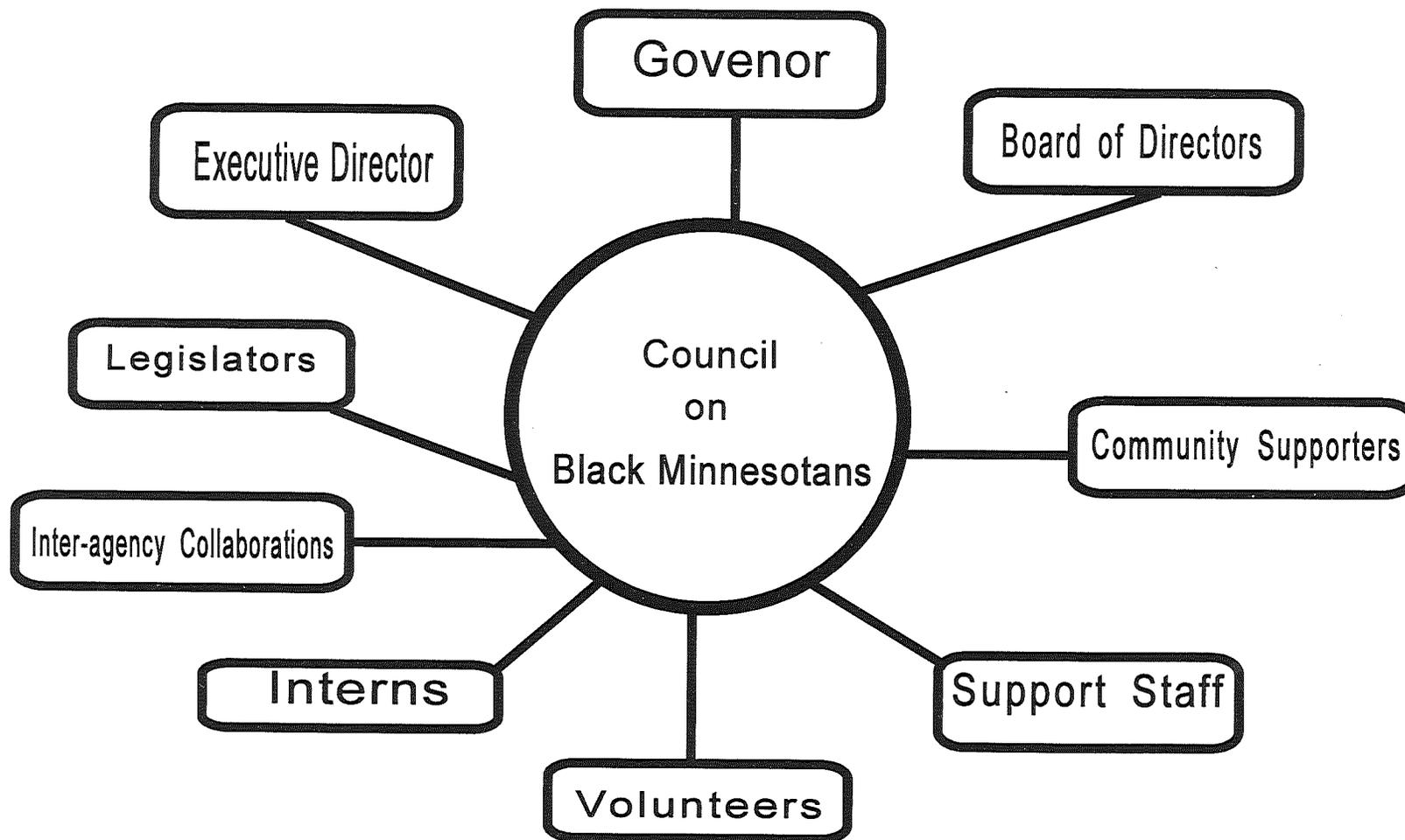
b. Each council must make all feasible efforts to coordinate its study with each other council's study, to achieve the maximum possible consistency in recommendations.

The Council on Black Minnesotans have met 5 times to study the Minnesota Legislature's request and develop a series of recommendations that will improve the performance of the council and state government. The Council on Black Minnesotans have met formally with the other councils of color staff 18 times to develop recommendations that are coordinated and consistent yet reflect our unique circumstances. The reports from each of the councils of color contain similar recommendations.

c. Each council must consult with the governor's office in studying paragraph (b), items (1) to (3).

The four councils of color have met with the Legislature, invited guests, the Governor's Office, and the Lieutenant Governor to discuss our reports.

Council on Black Minnesotans Operational Participants



MINNESOTANS OF AFRICAN HERITAGE INCREASE SEVENTY EIGHT [78] PERCENT

According to the 1990 census; the percentage of Minnesotans of African heritage increased more than any other state. Blacks in Minnesota are the largest population of non-Europeans. According to the 1990 census, the number of persons of African heritage rose seventy-eight [78%] between 1980 and 1990; a smaller figure than the actual count per the State Demographer. This represents a much sharper increase than expected by the United States Census Bureau, which projected that Minnesota would not reach the 100,000 mark for persons of African descent until the year 2010.

This significant increase is attributed to efforts of the Council on Black Minnesotans and a number of community organizations and individuals encouraging participation in the gathering of personal information.

	Total Population	Caucasian	Black	American Indian	Asian Pacific Islanders	Other	Latino Chicano
Minneapolis	368,383	288,967	47,948	12,335	15,723	3,410	7,900
St. Paul	272,235	223,947	20,083	3,697	19,197	5,311	11,476
Suburb Hennepin County	664,048	633,354	12,168	2,577	13,865	2,086	6,078
Suburb Ramsey County	213,530	302,730	2,593	812	5,595	802	2,414
Dakota County	275,227	264,854	3,411	893	4,643	1,426	4,025
Anoka County	243,641	236,791	1,289	1,865	2,934	762	2,269
Washington County	145,896	141,266	1,601	687	1,648	694	1,895
Scott County	57,846	56,583	267	362	534	100	407

Note: Includes state's 10 largest counties only

SUMMARY OF REPORTS

◆ **Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans**

◆ **Council on Black Minnesotans**

◆ **Indian Affairs Council**

◆ **Spanish Speaking Affairs Council**

Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans

1. Removal of council members...
 - Removal for cause and/or missing three consecutive meetings.
 - Removal requires two-thirds vote.
 - Some reasons for cause are listed.
2. Statutory...for council membership.
 - Membership recommended to change from twenty three to nineteen.
 - Only one member from each ethnic heritage group.
 - Factors for appointing council members are listed.
 - Ex-officio appointing authorities consult with the executive director and chair before appointments.
 - Council members be allowed to serve no more than two four year terms and ex-officios may rotate off every two years.
 - Definition of Asian-Pacific is changed.
 - Liaisons may be designated but are not voting members.
3. Appointment of the council director...
 - Executive director shall appoint staff.
 - Executive director's qualifications have been expanded.
4. Methods of reducing overall costs...
 - Maintain its own office and staff.
 - Cost savings through different approaches to training and purchasing.
5. Methods of improving coordination...
 - Every state agency and the governor's office appoints a liaison.

Council on Black Minnesotans

1. Removal of council members...
 - Removal for misconduct and/or missing three meetings in a twelve month period.
 - Removal requires two-thirds vote.
 - Misconduct is not defined.
2. Statutory...for council membership.
 - Ex-officio appointing authorities consult with the executive director and chair before appointments.
3. Appointment of the council director...
 - Executive director shall appoint staff.
 - Executive director's qualifications have been expanded.
4. Methods of reducing overall costs...
 - Maintain its own office and staff.
 - Cost savings through different approaches to training, systems and purchasing.
5. Methods of improving coordination...
 - Specific state agencies and the governor's office appoints a liaison.
 - Semi-annual meeting with the governor be established.
 - Each council addresses the legis.
 - State depts. and agencies adhere to MN Statute, Section 3.9225.

Indian Affairs Council

1. Removal of council members...
 - No changes are recommended.
2. Statutory...for council membership.
 - No changes are recommended.
3. Appointment of the council director...
 - Executive director's responsibilities and qualifications have been listed.
4. Methods of reducing overall costs...
 - Maintain its own office and staff.
 - Cost savings through different approaches to training, technical assistance and purchasing.
5. Methods of improving coordination...
 - Creation of a policy analyst position.

Spanish Speaking Affairs Council

1. Removal of council members...
 - Removal for misconduct and/or missing three consecutive meetings
 - Removal requires two-thirds vote.
 - Some reasons for misconduct are listed.
2. Statutory...for council membership.
 - Membership recommended to change from seven to eleven.
 - Two members of the House and two members of the Senate would be appointed as ex-officios.
 - Factors for appointing council members are listed.
3. Appointment of the council director...
 - Governor's approving appointment of the executive director is deleted.
 - Executive director's qualifications have been expanded.
4. Methods of reducing overall costs...
 - Maintain its own office and staff.
 - Cost savings through different approaches to training and purchasing.
5. Methods of improving coordination...
 - Every state agency appoints a liaison.
 - All councils plan educational forums for the Chicano/Latino community.

Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans Continued

6. Methods of reducing burdensome...

- No changes are recommended.

7. Methods of educating council...

- Additional training and orientation needs/approaches are identified.

8. A statement of the mission...

- Delete MN Stat. 3.9226, Subd. 3, Mandate 14.
- Councils coordinated reports with each other.
- Councils met with Lt. Governor Joanne E. Benson.

Council on Black Minnesotans Continued

6. Methods of reducing burdensome...

- No changes are recommended.
- The report may also be available to the community.

7. Methods of educating council...

- Additional training and orientation needs/approaches are identified.

8. A statement of the mission...

- Revise MN Stat. 3.9225, Subd. 3 to a smaller number of comprehensive goals.
- Councils coordinated reports with each other.
- Councils met with Lt. Governor Joanne E. Benson.
- Add diversity program to MN Stat. 3.9225, Subd. 3, Mandate c.
- Delete MN Stat. 3.9225, Subd. 3, Mandate j and add to the ombudsperson for families statutory requirements.

Indian Affairs Council Continued

6. Methods of reducing burdensome...

- No changes are recommended.

7. Methods of educating council...

- Additional training needs/approaches are identified.

8. A statement of the mission...

- Develop marketing strategies to coordinate information materials.
- Councils coordinated reports with each other.
- Councils met with Lt. Governor Joanne E. Benson.

Spanish Speaking Affairs Council Continued

6. Methods of reducing burdensome...

- No changes are recommended.

7. Methods of educating council...

- Additional training and orientation needs/approaches are identified.

8. A statement of the mission...

- Councils coordinated reports with each other.
- Councils met with Lt. Governor Joanne E. Benson.