

Team Obama: Black Vote is Key

Written by Bankole Thompson
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President Barack Obama's campaign said that there is a sense of urgency for African Americans to come out and vote during a roundtable briefing with black journalists at the Charlotte Convention Center ahead of Obama's nomination speech.

- Valerie Jarrett

Obama senior advisor Valerie Jarrett told the roundtable of journalists that the assault on voting rights should motivate blacks to get to the polls in November.

“The fact that laws are been made difficult should motivate people,” Jarrett said. “Whatever the new laws are it should motivate people even more than ever before to exercise their right to vote. ”

The wave of new voter restrictions and requirements in key battleground states according to critics has been a ploy to decrease the voter turnout for Obama among African Americans.

Some of the new voter laws are requiring photo ID which has drawn the watchful eyes of the U.S. Department of Justice with Attorney General Eric Holder suing states putting more voting requirements ahead of the November election.

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She said Holder has “been vigorous in fulfilling his duties for the Voting Rights Act.”

Patrick Gaspard, Executive Director of the Democratic National Committee said the campaign is very much aware that it would score big among African Americans, Latinos, Asians and other minority groups because of the issues that are at stake for those communities.

When pressed to give an overview of what a second term under Obama would mean for minorities, Gaspard only said the political interest of those communities will speak for itself.

Taking a swipe at Gov. Mitt Romney, Gaspard said the Republican nominee has been trying to “appeal to the worst elements in that party.”

On President Obama’s support of same sex marriage, which has upset some African American ministers, Gaspard said “I respect those pastors but I don’t think they are representative of their congregations’ views.”

Broderick Johnson, a senior advisor to the Obama campaign said the majority of black pastors are urging their congregation members to go out and vote.

However, Johnson said the campaign still takes serious the concerns of those ministers opposed to gay marriage, “but we also know that’s a minority perspective. There is great enthusiasm out there and we have great voter engagement, so we are going to make sure people get out and vote.”

Asked about the impact of the economy in the Black community, Jarrett said “A lot has been done that has greatly benefited the Black community,” citing investments in small businesses, stimulus and the saving of the auto industry.

She said a Romney/Ryan plan would be devastating to the middle class, decimate the department of education.

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President Obama is really looking forward to having the chance to debate Gov. Romney, Jarrett said.

(Bankole Thompson is a Senior Author-in-Residence at Global Mark Makers Publishing House in Iowa where he is writing a groundbreaking six-part book series on the Obama presidency. His book "Obama and Black Loyalty" published in 2010 follows his recent book "Obama and Christian Loyalty" with a foreword by Bob Weiner former White House spokesman. His forthcoming books in 2012 are "Obama and Jewish Loyalty" and "Obama and Business Loyalty." He is the first editor of a major African American newspaper to have a series of sit-down interviews with Barack Obama. Thompson is also a Senior Political News Analyst at WDET-101.9FM Detroit [NPR Affiliate] and a member of the weekly "Obama Watch" Sunday evening round table on WLIB-1190AM New York and simulcast in New Jersey and Connecticut.){jcomments on}