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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Racial and Economic Disparities within City of Jacksonville to Be Addressed In Community Hearing on January 30th at Jacksonville City Hall

Jacksonville City Council Member Glorious Johnson (At-large, Group 5) will host the official launch of **Access Jacksonville** at a **Community Hearing** set for **January 30th at 2:00 p.m. in the Jacksonville City Council Chamber**, 1st floor, City Hall, 117 W. Duval Street in downtown Jacksonville.

The primary mission of **Access Jacksonville** is “The empowerment of minority communities and businesses, largely through economic access, participation and development. To pursue development and growth that meets the small business, health, housing and employment needs of minority communities that will ensure a better quality of life for all minority communities of Jacksonville” states Councilwoman Johnson.

In the United States, nearly a century and a half after the end of slavery, social life in Jacksonville is still characterized by significant racial stratification. Substantial disparities in Jacksonville exist between minorities and whites in wages, unemployment rates, income and wealth levels, ability test scores, incarceration and criminal victimization rates, health and mortality statistics.

Al Pina, Chairman of the Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition states “The discrimination and economic exclusion experienced by minority groups in Jacksonville favor the emergence of social behavior that appears to justify racial stereotypes about poverty and antisocial conduct”

The economic distress of minority communities is one of the most pressing issues facing Florida. The lack of businesses and jobs fuels not only a crushing cycle of increasing poverty but also crippling social problems, such as drug abuse and crime in our minority communities. The establishment of a sustainable economic base together with employment opportunities, wealth creation, role models, and improved local infrastructure is critical to the future well-being of these communities and the State of Florida.

The minority communities and businesses in Florida have been long neglected in Florida but none as much as in Jacksonville. This socio-economic neglect has significant negative implications for all of Florida and Jacksonville. According to FMCRC Chair Al Pina, “To ensure that we have adequate minority community input on this issue, FMCRC and Councilwoman Johnson will co-host a **Community Hearing** that will enable their voices to be heard. After hearing that Mayor Peyton called the Latino community of Jacksonville irrelevant, it is obvious that such a hearing is necessary”.

Research has clearly demonstrated that the economic health of all major cities in the state of Florida is directly linked to the economic viability of its inner cities. The challenges facing the minority community in Jacksonville are many, but the most prevalent is the lack of ability for minority communities to

determine their own future in Jacksonville. Our challenge is introducing a new market based community economic development paradigm shift in Jacksonville which serves minority families and their local leadership in nourishing their human and capital assets. At the foundation of [Access Jacksonville](#) is that minority communities in Jacksonville must be allowed to drive the solutions to these very pressing issues.

“The City of Jacksonville’s leadership should and must be at the forefront of creating an environment of access, inclusion, accountability and transparency. It has become evident that this may not be the case and the result being a rising of poverty, crime and unemployment in the minority communities of Jacksonville. This is an issue that affects all of Jacksonville both socially and economically. It is my intention to provide a path of solutions that will be both inclusive and proactive for all of the citizens of Jacksonville” states Councilwoman Johnson.

Minority community leaders and activists will be invited to the Community Hearing along with key financial institutions and representatives of federal agencies. The Community Hearing will be recorded with copies hand delivered to leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Caucus and President Obama Administration officials in Washington D.C., in hopes to engage national leaders in the significant racial disparities within Jacksonville Florida.

Results of Disproportionate Reinvestment Dilemma in Jacksonville:

Less than 1% of all available private equity is invested in minority firms in any given year, despite minorities representing over 38 % percent of Jacksonville population
More than 70% of minority families reside in Low and Moderate Income communities (poverty level)
Less than 38% of minorities graduate from High School
More than 65% of minority families headed by single mother live in poverty
Less than 15% of minority households meet median income levels
More than 70% of minorities lack a usual source of health care
Over 28% percent infant mortality rate in African American community
Over 68% of all home loans to minorities are subprime
Over 75% of all auto loans are subprime

The Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition was formed to empower minorities in the areas of housing, community reinvestment, small business, health, sustainable development and employment. At the core of our mission is the creation of a paradigm shift in community reinvestment for minority communities.
<http://www.fmcr.org>

For further information contact Councilwoman Johnson at 904-630-1387