

NAACP NEWS

www.naacpga.org

Francys Johnson, President
Georgia NAACP

June 15, 2016

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Constance Wallace
E: communications@naacpga.org
P: (404) 577-8977



PRESS RELEASE

FTC Highlight Georgia NAACP in Reports on Fighting Fraud in African American and Latino Communities

ATLANTA - The Federal Trade Commission today issued a report to Congress describing the agency's substantial work on fraud prevention, law enforcement, and consumer outreach and education in African American and Latino communities, and outlining a strategy to build on this prior work.

The report, [*Combating Fraud in African American and Latino Communities: The FTC's Comprehensive Strategic Plan*](#), sets forth the agency's extensive efforts to combat fraud in not only African American and Latino communities, but every community with an emphasis on raising public awareness and encouraging more fraud reports.

"As our extensive law enforcement and outreach efforts demonstrate, we have made protecting consumers from every community a top priority," FTC Chairwoman Edith Ramirez said. "As our population grows older and becomes more diverse, the agency will continue to develop strategies to ensure that our work benefits everyone, including the elderly, minorities, and low-income consumers."

Two FTC events last year focused on bringing together stakeholders to talk about and raise awareness of the consumer issues in African American and Latino communities. In May 2015, the FTC and the Georgia NAACP hosted a public conference in Atlanta to discuss consumer issues affecting African-American communities. "The Georgia NAACP is committed to our 6 Point Gamechanger Agenda that includes promoting a sustainable economy for all American" said Francys Johnson, Statesboro Attorney and President of the Georgia NAACP.

Mr. Charles Lowery, the Director of Fair Lending and Inclusion at the NAACP, discussed the persistent wealth gap existing between African American and white communities, and focused on the importance of ensuring that government is knowledgeable about the issues affecting African Americans. At that conference, legal service attorneys, community leaders, consumer advocates, and federal, state, and local officials, and others raised concerns about African Americans being denied mortgages; debt collectors threatening consumers with arrest even in situations where they do not owe the debt; scammers falsely "guaranteeing" jobs or offering good government jobs but actually just selling training materials; and the recent uptick in auto loan fraud. Addressing these issues is critical.

As Mr. Hilary Shelton, Director of the NAACP Washington Bureau and Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Policy observed, everyone should get a full opportunity to participate in the economic benefits of this country.

100 Edgewood Avenue NE, Suite 1610, Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Under its plan, the FTC will expand efforts to encourage people to talk about fraud within their communities, and to help the FTC by reporting suspected fraud. The FTC will continue to build networks with community organizations, visit areas with low rates of consumer fraud reporting, and further develop its law enforcement efforts to stop frauds affecting these communities.

The agency will also host a [workshop](#) on December 6, 2016 that will bring together researchers, legal services organizations, and other groups that serve the African American and Latino communities, and state and federal law enforcers to examine how the demographics of this country will continue to change and how these changes will continue to affect fraud prevention work. The workshop will examine prior research showing that African Americans and Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanic whites to be fraud victims and yet research shows that there is serious underreporting of fraud from these communities.

For more information, read [Every Community, 10 Ways to Avoid Fraud](#), [Avoiding Online Scams](#) and [Common Online Scams](#).

The Commission vote to issue the report to the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations Committees was 3-0.

The Federal Trade Commission works to promote competition, and [protect and educate consumers](#). You can [learn more about consumer topics](#) and file a [consumer complaint online](#) or by calling 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357).

For more information about the work of the Georgia NAACP, please visit our website at www.naacpga.org.

Founded in 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. The Georgia NAACP has had an unbroken presence in Georgia since 1917. The Georgia NAACP maintains a network of branches throughout Georgia, from cities to small rural counties. The Georgia NAACP has been the most effective and consistent advocates for civil and human rights in Georgia. The NAACP's half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors.

###