

Race Initiative

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 16, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR SYLVIA MATHEWS

FROM: Bruce Reed
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SUBJECT: Timing of Race Initiative Policy Ideas

Below is a suggested timetable to announce the policy ideas the DPC and NEC have developed for the race initiative.

January

Hispanic Education Action Plan -- This initiative will increase funding for a number of existing programs to improve education for Hispanic Americans and other limited English proficient (LEP) children and adults. It would double our investment in training teachers to address the needs of LEP children; boost the Migrant Education Program by 16 percent; increase the TRIO college preparation program by 10 percent; and create a 5-year, \$100 million effort to disseminate best practices in ESL training for adults. We would accompany these program increases with administrative actions to help Hispanic students complete high school and succeed in college.

College-School Partnerships -- This initiative, which builds on Eugene Lang's model of helping disadvantaged youth, will provide funding for college-school partnerships designed to provide mentoring, tutoring, and other support services to students in high-poverty schools, starting in the sixth grade and continuing through high school. The six-year funding path will provide help to nearly 2 million students. The proposal also will include Chaka Fattah's idea of early notification to disadvantaged 6th graders telling them of their Pell Grant and loan eligibility.

Notes: We should do the Hispanic Action Plan in Texas. Announcing the College-School Partnerships Program the same week (even the day before or after) could strengthen both events, given their mutually reinforcing messages.

We also will have our Martin Luther King Day event this month. As I think you know, we strongly support a service event -- not a Town Hall.

February

Education Opportunity Zones -- This initiative will provide funding to about 25 high-poverty

urban and rural school districts for agreeing to adopt a “Chicago-type” school reform agenda that includes ending social promotions, removing bad teachers, reconstituting failing schools, and adopting district-wide choice.

Employment Discrimination Enforcement -- This initiative will fund reforms to the EEOC, allowing it to expand its mediation program (so that more than 70 percent of all complainants to choose mediation by the year 2000), increase the average speed of resolving complaints (from over nine months to six) and reduce the EEOC’s current backlog (from 64,000 cases to 28,000). We can also announce reforms to other civil rights offices in the federal government, although these are far less dramatic.

Note: These are two good announcements for right after the State of the Union and the budget. (Of course, we’ve already told the press about the concept of EOZ’s, but haven’t provided any details.) We should push EOZ’s early in the legislative session, and it’s important to announce fairly soon an initiative focusing on civil rights enforcement.

March

Housing Opportunity -- This announcement can combine a number of initiatives in the budget, none of which will get much play alone: proposals to expand homeownership, improve housing portability, increase vouchers, and attack housing discrimination. (The fair housing proposal can go either here or with the EEOC announcement; we think it fits best with a package of housing opportunity proposals.)

Community Empowerment Fund -- This initiative establishes a public/private fund (“Eddie Mac”), which will invest in inner-city businesses and create a secondary market for economic development loans (like Fannie Mae).

Note: By this point, we’ll have presented most of our education initiatives; housing and economic opportunity seem the natural next issues. We also must announce the housing package (at least if it includes the fair housing proposal) before or during April, which is the thirtieth anniversary of the Fair Housing Act.

April

Assisting the Unbanked -- The electronic funds transfer regulation, due in April, will bring as many as 10 million people into the banking system.

Racial Disparities in Health Care -- This initiative will address racial disparities in six areas of health care: infant mortality, breast and cervical cancer, heart disease and stroke, diabetes, AIDS, and immunization. The proposal includes additional funding (\$50 million) to established public health programs to adapt and apply their prevention and education strategies to eliminate racial disparities. It also includes funding (\$30 million) for up to thirty local pilot projects to test

innovative approaches to reach this goal.

May

Community Prosecutors -- This initiative will provide grants to prosecutors for innovative, community-based prosecution efforts, such as Eric Holder adopted in the District of Columbia. A full 80 percent of the grants will go to pay the salaries and training costs associated with hiring or reassigning prosecutors to work directly with community residents.

June

Indian Country Law Enforcement and Education -- The current budget includes substantial additional funds for law enforcement activities and school construction in Indian Country.