



WWW.NAACP.ORG

NAACP
Dane County Branch #36AB

July 17, 2017

To: Joe Parisi, Dane County Executive
John Hendrick, Board Supervisor District 6
Al Matano, Board Supervisor District 11
Tim Kiefer, Board Supervisor District 25

From: Greg Jones, President
NAACP Dane County

Subject: NAACP Unit Resolution Opposing the Naming of the City County Building after President Barack H. Obama

Whereas, Barack H. Obama, the first African American to be elected President of the United States of America, served as the 44th President from 2009-2017. Under his leadership, the Civil Rights Division of U.S. Justice Department upheld and extended protections to people facing discrimination, implemented legislation advancing equal pay, carried the torch for voting rights and human rights, engaged in solutions to end police officer shootings, and promoted greater inclusiveness for all Americans.

Whereas, the 2008 election of Barack Obama was filled with tears of joy, screams of pride, and an overwhelming sense of the beginning of redemption for the 400-year American original sin imposed on generations of African Americans. President Obama invoked a sense of pride, hope, and change. The diverse and ecstatic electorate simply agreed – “Yes We Can.”

Whereas, Dane County and City of Madison elected officials claim, “Naming this building after President Obama is a way to celebrate his visit to the building – the only President we know to have done so – as well as to celebrate his successful eight years as president of the United States” and “Barack Obama’s presidency marked a vital step towards the fulfillment of this nation’s promise of equality and liberty and justice for all. In naming the seat of our city and county government, we express our commitment to a community which every person can realize their potential.”

Whereas, on June 27, 2017, the NAACP Dane County Membership expressed deep and convicted opposition to the proposed naming of the City County Building after President Barack Obama. The Membership believes the City County Building, which houses the Dane County Jail, is inappropriate to bear his name and is not representative of his commitment to equality for the following reasons: 1. To name the building located on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, which houses the jail, further minimizes the contributions of two of the greatest African Americans to serve this Country; 2. The Building is symbolic of the extreme racial disparities evident in the treatment of African Americans by the Criminal Justice System of the United States; 3. The Building lacks any historical significance to the legacy of President Obama; 4. The Building has no connection to the promise or commitment to encourage our community the strive to do better; 5. The building in disrepair, deemed unsafe in many aspects for inmates and the public, and noncompliant with building code regulations. For these reasons, the Membership voted to issue a resounding opposition to this proposal.

Therefore, be it resolved that the NAACP Dane County will communicate our concern to both County and City elected officials that naming the City County Building after President Obama is not only an affront to him but to the Dane County Community. We stand together and totally committed against this proposal.

