



July 5, 2022

Derrick Johnson
President and CEO
NAACP
4805 Mt. Hope Drive. Baltimore MD 21215

Dear President Johnson,

In keeping with the NAACP's historic mission for full social inclusion and an end to racial discrimination, we must stand with the clergy, civil rights and grass roots leaders, and the segregated children, of New Jersey, in demanding that Governor Phil Murphy be uninvited to the 113th Nation Convention in Atlantic City.

We appreciate that Governor Murphy has a history with this great organization as a past board member and major donor, but that relationship cannot be allowed to excuse or obscure his inaction toward and opposition to school desegregation.

New Jersey is one of the worst states in the nation for school segregation by both race and income. Today, it ranks more segregated than any state of the former confederacy outside of Texas. The pandemic has only further revealed and intensified its damage while widening the already expansive gaps in educational opportunity and life chances for poor, Black and brown children.

We know that Governor Murphy did not create this problem, but he has been given a golden opportunity to lead both legally and legislatively, that he has so far squandered with avoidance, resistance, and opposition. As you know, the State Conference is party (along with other plaintiffs) to a lawsuit that Governor Murphy has chosen to fight rather than seek a remedy. And since 2018, even before the suit was filed, a statewide coalition of grassroots leaders, clergy, and local NAACP branches organized support across the state and with key legislators (including the state's Legislative Black Caucus) for a realistic yet meaningful approach to eliminating school segregation.

Governor Murphy has refused to even meet with this group (the New Jersey Coalition Against Racial Exclusion NJ-CARE) led by the Rev. Willie D. Francois or to consider their legislative proposal for desegregation developed in consultation with state and national civil rights leaders including Myron and Gary Orfield, John Brittian, David Sciarra, Linda Darling Hammond, Erika Wilson, and Jonathan Kozol.

We think it is wonderful that the NAACP chose New Jersey for this year's convention. It is also wonderful that a former national board member is the governor of the host state. But what good is having a former NAACP leader in a position of enormous power if he is not willing to use that power to reverse a wrong that destroys lives and is getting worse by the day. If a former NAACP board member won't do it, then who will?

Sincerely,

The Coalition Against Racial Exclusion (NJ-CARE) and supporters.

Sign on to letter [here](#)