

# OPINION

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## TriMet Honors King Legacy

BY BRUCE WATTS

Martin Luther King's work began by advocating for transit-dependent people.

By increasing service on this Martin Luther King Day, beyond typical holiday schedules, TriMet ensures that no one is left behind.

If you plan to ride the bus this MLK Day, be thankful TriMet didn't run its usual holiday schedule and leave thousands of riders stranded.

A group of TriMet operators raised some questions about TriMet's service on the King Day. TriMet General Manager Fred

Hansen's conclusion not to operate a reduced holiday schedule was sound. He cited "the effect this would have on transit dependent riders who may have to give up a day of pay or even put their job at risk if they are unable to get to work because of lack of transportation."

While we sympathize with our TriMet brothers and sisters working during the King Holiday, such a schedule would not be in keeping with Dr. King's legacy. Fred Hansen's policy increased the service, over a typical holiday schedule, to ensure members of our community have access to their jobs

and Martin Luther King Day activities.

By the way, this is only an issue because quite a few businesses and organizations don't recognize the Martin Luther King Day as a holiday. If they did, there wouldn't be a need for increased transit service.

Maybe other businesses should set up and create policies that meet the true spirit of Dr. King's work. Equal access for all.

*Bruce Watts is a local African-American leader and director of diversity and transit equity for TriMet.*

## Paying for Public Opinion

Propaganda illegal, dangerous and covert

BY U.S. REP. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

I am appalled to learn that the U.S. Department of Education has apparently used taxpayer dollars to influence public opinion by paying political commentator Armstrong Williams \$240,000 to promote the No Child Left Behind Act.

Furthermore, it is unbelievable that the Bush Administration used limited taxpayer dollars to self-promote No Child Left Behind, while underfunding money for our schools, books, technology, and after school programs.

Sadly, it appears that this is not an isolated incident. The Government Accountability Office just reported that video news releases concerning the dangers of marijuana, involving actors pretending to be reporters and distributed by

the Office of National Drug Control Policy, constitute "covert propaganda."

Covert propaganda to influence public opinion is illegal, unethical and dangerous. It violates fundamental principles of open government, it distorts the free press and

Congress authorized approximately \$122 billion to improve public schools and close achievement gaps. However, to date, this effort has been underfunded by \$27 billion.

I am disappointed that the Administration gave priority to help-



*The fact that the Administration would spend valuable taxpayer dollars to hire Mr. Williams to help mislead the public about its true efforts in education reform is unforgivable.*

the public's right to know.

These latest reports are appalling. The fact that the Administration would spend valuable taxpayer dollars to hire Mr. Williams to help mislead the public about its true efforts in education reform is unforgivable and deserves immediate answers.

"Under No Child Left Behind,

ing a political commentator profit while refusing to provide funds promised for academic support for low-income students, after-school programs, and other NCLB initiatives."

*Congressman Cummings represents the state of Maryland and is member of the Congressional Black Caucus.*



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## Bush Appointees Do Not Reflect America

BY JUDGE GREG MATHIS

Much has been said about the diversity of President Bush's cabinet appointments, but a close look at all of his administration appointments reveals that such diversity is an invention of the Bush spin machine. The reality is the same as his fiscal and tax policies: to benefit the status quo.

A recent "Newsday" report revealed the gross under-representation of Bush's cabinet picks as opposed to Clinton's. In fact, the numbers are so low, they demonstrate a definite under representation of African Americans in the federal government. The report concluded that of Bush's 2,800 administration jobs, blacks only hold 7 percent of them. In contrast, under Clinton, blacks held 16 percent. Even more shockingly, Bush awarded over half of his



*Bush proves time and again that his interests are not in line with ours.*

appointments to white men. In contrast, Clinton awarded 57 percent of his appointments to women and minorities.

Do not be deceived by a few black faces in high places. We must demand a government that is totally inclusive from top to bottom. What we have now is a government in which white men fill 91 percent of senior executive level federal positions.

From his attack of Affirmative Action

to the proposed privatization of Social Security, Bush proves time and again that his interests are not in line with ours. It makes sense that in order to push his policies forward, he needs an administration full of others who look, think and act like him.

A few smiling faces here and there cannot make up for policies that negatively impact our community. Rather than spotty face time, Bush needs to provide a reflection of the people and interests that make up this country. To do so is a mark of "compassion." To do otherwise is...well, more of the same we have come to expect from him.

*Judge Greg Mathis is chairman of the Rainbow PUSH-Excel Board and a national board member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.*

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**Letter to the Editor**

### Stop this Nonsense

As a young African-American citizen, I have done research on how the government is making Social Security harder to come by. Social Security is supposed to be a retirement plan for those who can't work anymore and have paid their due. Instead it's going to the rich who haven't done a thing but complain about taxes. The government is even making it harder for low-income African Americans to receive Social Security. African-American families with single incomes have been denied Social Security benefits as two-income Caucasian households qualify. The government needs to draw the line and stop this nonsense.  
**Tiffany Hall**  
Southeast Portland

### Protecting Our Right to Vote

Remedy needed for election irregularities

BY U.S. REP. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

This past Thursday, the House and Senate convened a joint session of Congress to certify the electoral ballots of the November 2004 Presidential election. I, along with Sen. Barbara Boxer raised a formal objection to the counting of the State of Ohio's electoral ballots. My colleagues

*How can we possibly tell the millions of Americans who came out the polls in record numbers, particularly our young people, to simply get over it and move on.*

U.S. Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones

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Bangport Street, 1941, by renowned African-American artist Jacob Lawrence, in the permanent collection of the Portland Art Museum. Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Jan de Graaff

from the Congressional Black Caucus joined me in this effort. I raised these objections neither to put the nation in the turmoil of a proposed overturned election nor to provide cannon fodder or partisan demagoguery for my fellow Republican Members of Congress. I raised these objections because I felt it important to conduct a formal and legitimate debate about election irregularities. I raised the objection to debate the process and protect the integrity of the true will of the people. While some have called our cause foolish, I can assure you that my parents, Mary and Andrew Tubbs did not raise any fools. As a lawyer, former judge and prosecutor, I am duty bound to follow the law and apply the law to the facts as I find them. In this case the facts are clear. There were numerous irregularities in Ohio including large percentages of rejections among Provisional ballots, numerous problems

the halls of Congress. If we can send our young men and women overseas to give their lives so that the people of Iraq and Afghanistan can have the right to vote, then surely we here in Congress can begin the discussion to improve our system so that we can ensure that every eligible American is afforded their vote as well. If we can send people all over the world to monitor elections in other countries then surely we can have a system in place to monitor our own elections. Again, this objection did not have at its root the hope or even the hint of overturning or challenging the victory of the President; but it was a necessary, timely and appropriate opportunity to review and remedy the most precious process in our democracy, our right to vote. *Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones is the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Ohio.*