



**National  
Urban League**

**To Be Equal #39**

**September 26, 2012**

**Angela Basset, Eric Benét and Other Celebrities Join Urban League's Get-Out-The-Vote-Campaign**

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*"Your vote is your voice. Stay silent, and your opinion is lost. Protect your right to vote."* Occupy the Vote ad campaign

Occupy the Vote is taking its message of voting rights and civic engagement directly to the American people with the release this week of a powerful pro-voting TV, radio and print public service campaign. The ads, featuring Angela Bassett, Rev. Al Sharpton, Eric Benet, Kim Coles, Lamman Rucker and other celebrities, urge citizens to register and vote. They also ask viewers to join the National Urban League's Occupy the Vote campaign designed to empower citizens in the fight against voter suppression laws and tactics that could keep millions of eligible voters from the polls on November 6.

The proliferation of voter ID laws across the country, along with new registration restrictions in some states, the elimination of early voting in others, and an organized campaign of intimidation by an army of partisan poll-watchers, threatens the integrity of this year's presidential election. These efforts are primarily targeted at people of color, the elderly, students and people with disabilities – the very people whose lives could be most affected by the coming election.

While the Justice Department has blocked several of these laws and a coalition of civil rights, human rights and social justice organizations is fighting back in the courts, the National Urban League, through our Occupy the Vote campaign, is organizing direct citizen engagement and opposition to the voter suppression movement. Since the beginning of this year, we have been asking citizens to make sure they know the current law in their states, prepare themselves to comply, and most importantly, vote.

The celebrity voices in our new ad campaign have the potential to boost national awareness and reach millions more people with the message that with so much at stake in this year's election, we must make every effort to get to the polls and make our voices heard. The

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campaign was created in partnership with global award-winning advertising agency, Drafftcb. Its release on Tuesday, September 25, coincides with National Voter Registration Day, the goal of which is to prevent a recurrence of 2008, when six million Americans failed to vote because they missed a registration deadline or did not know how to register.

In addition to our national Occupy the Vote ad campaign, the National Urban League has launched grassroots voting efforts in several states. We're inviting supporters to become modern day "Freedom Fighters" -- knocking on doors, making phone calls and engaging the community to educate and motivate citizens who may not be aware of changes in the law.

The Urban League Movement is keenly aware of the overwhelming sacrifice our predecessors made to secure the right to vote. We will not stand by and allow voter suppression efforts to turn back the clock on our constitutional rights.

Protect your right to vote. It's time to be heard. To register to vote or report a problem at the polls call 1-866-MYVOTE-1. To volunteer or get involved visit: [www.occupythevote12.org](http://www.occupythevote12.org).

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