



THE GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF BLACK WOMEN ATTORNEYS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Advocacy for Action and GABWA Continue
Community Discussion on Georgia's Judicial Diversity***
Advocacy organizations partner to present Macon seminar

Macon, Ga., Jan. 15, 2014- Advocacy for Action and the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (GABWA) will host an interactive discussion on the importance of and how to achieve judicial diversity in Georgia. "The Conversation on Justice – Diversity on the Bench II" will be held on Feb. 22, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at New Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church in Macon.

"The seminar is a unique opportunity for the community to hear from renowned speakers about how to influence who sits on the bench," Suzy Ockleberry, Advocacy for Action co-convenor, explained. "It is imperative in 2014 and beyond that the community knows who is judging them, their children, their families, and their neighbors. And, once we know who these judges are that are appointed, we must become proactive in working hard to obtain a bench that has the best and brightest legal minds. We have a judiciary in Georgia that has a disappearing number of African Americans and we have to do something to stop the erosion of diversity on our bench. This is a 'must attend' event for everyone."

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The seminar will feature panel discussions on the changing judicial landscape and the plan of action for 2014 and beyond. Speakers include Georgia Congressman Tyrone Brooks, U.S. Congressman Sanford Bishop Jr. and Macon City Councilmember Elaine Lucas. Attendees will also hear a special message from Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League, and a keynote speech from Reverend Carlton Johnson of Macedonia Baptist Church in Macon.

“It is critical that we have African-American women serve on the bench,” Tracee R. Benzo, president of GABWA, added. “As practicing lawyers, we need judges who ‘get it.’ We need judges who understand the struggles of the average citizen. We need judges who know what discrimination feels like. We need judges who have an array of backgrounds, which inherently make it easier to understand the legal issues before them. GABWA’s goal is to ensure that the Georgia bench reflects the population it serves.”

The Conversation on Justice – Diversity on the Bench II will be held at New Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, located at 4388 Robinson Rd. in Macon. To pre-register or for more information, please visit www.advocacyforaction.com.

About Advocacy for Action

Advocacy for Action, Inc. is primarily dedicated to educating the community about the importance of and how to achieve a diverse and representative judiciary in Georgia. Action for Action Fund was formed to raise funds for and in support of diverse

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candidates seeking judicial offices throughout Georgia. The goal of both of the AFA organizations is to create a more diverse and representative judiciary in the State of Georgia. For more information, visit www.advocacyforaction.com.

About GABWA

GABWA was founded in 1981 by a group of African American women who desired to form a voluntary bar organization with a focus on women and children's issues, increasing black female representation in the judiciary and in public offices, and taking a proactive stance on political issues. Today, GABWA has an active membership of nearly 700 women and men who strive each day to fulfill the organization's mission: to nurture, support and galvanize the power of Black women attorneys, advocate for women and children and empower our communities. In furtherance of this mission, GABWA has successfully spearheaded several signature programs that have had a profound impact in Georgia, including its *Legally Speaking* television show, *Sister to Sister* Mentoring Program and its Professional Development Academy.

For more information, visit www.gabwa.org.

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