

February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008

Dear Congressional Black Caucus Member,

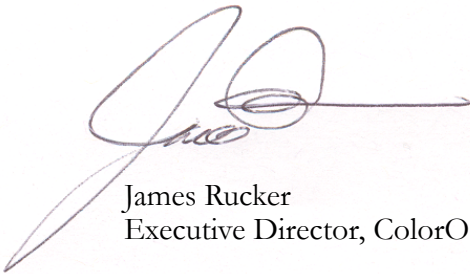
There is a high level of concern, echoed in our membership and in communities across the nation, that some members of the Congressional Black Caucus will use their power as “superdelegates” to undermine the voice of black voters. In most CBC districts around the country, voters, particularly Black voters, have overwhelmingly supported Barack Obama for president—but despite this, as well as the record levels of participation in the primary, some CBC members still plan to vote against their constituents for Hillary Clinton.

As of last night, more than 14,000 ColorOfChange.org members signed our petition asking that as “superdelegates” CBC members make it clear that they will support the will of voters. In addition to signing the general statement below more than 4,000 members wrote their own personal comments.

I would like to suggest that you review some, if not all of these comments, so that you can understand the concerns of our members (the statements that all of them signed you can find on the following page). You can review the signatures and comments from ColorOfChange.org members in CBC districts online, sorted by district, at:

[www.colorofchange.org/superd/cbc.pdf](http://www.colorofchange.org/superd/cbc.pdf)

Thank you for taking the time to consider the views of our members. Several CBC members have already taken a strong public stance on this issue, asserting that the Democratic nominee should be determined by voters, and we applaud them. However, others have not and we hope they take this opportunity to make clear their position. We look forward to a public response.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Rucker', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

James Rucker  
Executive Director, ColorOfChange.org

More than 14,000 ColorOfChange.org members signed the following statement:

Dear Congressional Black Caucus Member,

Over the last several weeks, voters in CBC districts have spoken with clarity about their choice for President—they overwhelmingly support Barack Obama. But the clear mandate they've laid down is threatened by those in your ranks who as superdelegates may break away from their constituents to vote for Hillary Clinton.

The Congressional Black Caucus has worked hard to protect the political voice of Black Americans. You took the lead in 2000 and 2004, insisting that all votes be counted and that they count. Using your status as a superdelegate in 2008 to undermine the people's will would be a tragic reversal.

I'm writing to ask that you use your power as a superdelegate to amplify the voice of the informed, engaged, and diverse electorate in your district and across Black America, not silence it. I urge you to make it clear that as a superdelegate, you will support the voters' will.

We deserve elections determined by the electorate, not by insiders. And we need you to stand with us, as we speak in a strong voice about who we wish to see as the Democratic nominee.

Sincerely,

*Member Name*

The following is a selection of comments from ColorOfChange.org members across several CBC districts:

Meighan Moore (CA\_09):

*As a young black women, I have watched many of my relatives and friends abandon voting, saying that their vote doesn't count. I continue to believe that my vote can make a difference. Please justify my faith.*

Lloyd C. Monroe, Sr. (CA\_09)

*I was, like millions of Americans, ignorant of super-delegates. How is it possible that it is suppose to be our right to have our votes counted as we have chosen, that this is possible? It should not matter whether he is Black or not, but the fact that he is the PEOPLE'S CHOICE, THAT HAS TO BE RECOGNIZED. It is the responsibility of our elected officials to represent the will of it's constituents. Why do they think they are in office. They are not there to determine what we think, what we feel, who we feel will represent this country best. I do not know how this is possible, but if this is what it is, then it needs to be changed. It is NO DIFFERENT THAN THE GENERAL ELECTION, EACH AND*

EVERY AMERICAN WHO VOTES, SHOULD HAVE THEIR VOTE CAST AS IT IS GIVEN, AND NOT HOW SOMEONE DECIDES FOR US. WE HAVE WORKED TOO HARD AND WAITED TOO LONG TO HAVE OUR VOICES HEARD, ONLY TO BE SILENCED BY OUR OWN PEOPLE. THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO EXPRESS MY RIGHT TO VOICE MY OPINION AS A US CITIZEN.

Kiera D. Lytle (GA\_13)

*Those who came before us fought and died for our right to vote. And still, that right isn't permanent. As distressing as it is to me to encounter those among us who don't believe that their votes count, it is unspeakably daunting to entertain the thought that they might be right. The notion that the power given to me by my forefathers and foremothers may be negated by the very ones that we selected to represent us is not only tremendously disheartening, it is insulting and infuriating beyond words.*

Mannie Wilks (CA\_33)

*Now is not the time for back room politics. If you do not vote with the people the people will vote against you the next election!*

Cheryl Gay (AL\_07)

*My husband and I are extremely concerned that our vote is not going to count. If this happens, it will undermine all that the CBC holds itself out to stand for. Unless we as citizens have a TRUE VOICE in the voting process, we will not be an example to the world and will discourage the younger generation from using his/her right to vote because BIG BROTHER AND BIG SISTER gets to make the final decision.*

Jalondra Davis (CA\_35)

*As a resident of Inglewood, California who canvassed my community for the Barack Obama campaign, I found overwhelming support, in myself and my neighbors, for Barack Obama. As residents of your district, we support you in your elections, and in those of the candidates and propositions you support. Please support us by respecting our choice for president, and reflecting that choice in your decision. The people should choose our leaders, but in a representative democracy, we must choose representatives to choose for us. But to represent someone means to represent their wishes and interests. You have fought tirelessly for our rights to be acknowledged in the American political process. Do not ignore our voices now.*

Coral Lopez (CA\_35)

*Like it or not Obama has moved many within our country and motivated us to vote. Many of these new voters are young people and Black people. The apathy towards our electoral process has been broken by Obama's moving words and the hope he has give us.*

*To go against the voters will only prove what many of these new voter's believed: that voting DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE. If our country doesn't believe in voting, or the electoral process or any government office....then we really can only expect for things to get worse.*

Earl Chandler (CA\_37)

*If for some reason you decide to vote against the people. I will find out who you voted for and personally take action to let everyone know that you should be voted out of office, for betraying the people you are suppose to represent.*

Sharon E. Smoot (GA\_04)

*My vote should count. How outraged we were when the Supreme Court awarded the presidency to George Bush in 2000. If the Superdelegates award the nomination to Hillary despite the voter's clear choice, it will be equally outrageous!*

Rog (GA\_05)

*John Lewis, I recently read that you changed your vote and will cast it for Obama. Your early support for Ms. Clinton, was premature. I am hopeful that you can persuade your colleagues to follow your lead and vote the will of the people and avoid being irrelevant.*

Earnest E. May, Jr. (GA\_05)

*Members of the CBC please don't take my vote for granted....there will come a day when you will be held accountable for your vote.*

Melissa Smith (GA\_13)

*We as Americans and good standing citizens take time away from our jobs, some that will not pay you for the time, even to vote, to cast our votes. We demand that our vote be respected as such and that our vote be counted.*

Jesse Bernhardt (WI\_04)

*As a progressive voter I lean toward the Democratic party, but if this primary is decided by the superdelegates I will not show up for the general election.*

Patty R Jones (TX\_30)

*I have voted since I was allowed to vote when I turned 18 years of age in 1983. I have a twenty one year old son that he and I went together to vote for the President of The United States in 2004 for very first time to vote. My mother taught me the importance of the one man/woman's vote and I passed that importance on to my son. So my question is to the super delegates what gives the right to over ride and take away the vote of my 75 year old mother, my 54 year old husband, my 21 year old son and yes my 42 year old vote what gives the super delegates that right?*

Michelle Robinson (TX\_18)

*Our electoral system is screwed up enough already. The last few presidential elections, we just have not been able to get it right. Yes, superdelegates have their own opinions and should have a right to cast a vote for the nominee they feel is best, but if THEY are allowed to have an open vote, then EVERYONE in our party should. Instead of voting delegates, there should just be a universal vote and the winner should be whoever has the highest cumulative votes. I believe this is ridiculous that someone actually has to tell them that this isn't fair. How can we live in a "democratic" society and these types of injustices continue to happen! We wonder why voter turn out is so low, it's because of things just like this. Regardless, of what people like to tell you, it does not seem that American people have much of a voice. Here's another example of our voices being limited once again.*

Romona Simon (TX\_18)

*I like to tell the Congressional Black Caucus listen to the voices of the people. You cannot speak for us. You are not the elite. I am in Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee's District and I am not looking at her the same way.*

Jane E. McKinney (PA\_02)

*In 2000 your voice was heard loud and clear that every vote counts. Today, you seem to be saying only a superdelegate's vote counts. That's unfair. Let the voices of the American people be heard. Vote as your constituents vote.*

Monique Hughes (PA\_02)

*Presidential elections should be about what the people want and therefore voters should decide who the president will be. While there may be many things that politicians control, the choice regarding who will run this country needs to be left up to the people of this country.*

Fredde Hollman (OH\_11)

*You would do a great disservice to your constituents if you ignore their choice. We aren't children who must be shown the error of our ways! We placed you in power; please respect our ability to choose for our selves; and support that choice!*

Pele Bauch (NY\_15)

*It's been a while since we've had an election that was truly democratic. Changing the integrity of our elections can start with you.*

Rashied K. Sharrieff-Al-Bey (NY\_11)

*Part of what makes people not see a point in voting is the classic belief that their vote doesn't really count. In response, they abstain altogether. Please do not confirm their suspicions; instead, vote as the constituency's votes have indicated as regards their real choice. Vote the conscience, not the fear.*

Ashleigh Jones (NC\_12)

*As a college senior at a historically Black university, I fear that if the opinion of the voters is overturned due to the political advance of your superdelegate vote, many of our youth will opt out of all political participation. I know for a fact that many of my friends and colleges here at Johnson C. Smith University feel as though their vote does not count, please do your part in changing the opinions of the younger population by listening to the opinions of those who are taking their time to vote. Utilize your political power to empower and uplift rather than to undermine. As a young democrat I am begging you, please create a positive change for this nation and for those generations to come. Thank you so very much for your consideration!*

Sandra Callier (MO\_01)

*I voted for Obama. I am appauled that there is so much fuss being made about this whole matter. Why do we have the right to vote, if in the end those in a small minority are going to make the ultimate decision.*

Chantay Leonard (MI\_13)

*The voice and votes of the people should be counted fairly in the electoral process. After allowing President Bush to steal two elections, the American people our owed the right to elect the candidate of their choice. Do not discredit the American government and discount the desire of the people once again by giving us our due democratic process!*

Jean W. Richie (MD\_07)

*Please vote in the manner that reflects your constituency's popular vote. It would be a wise choice because of the reality is that when we are elected to any office , whether it be professional, or social, political, we are there at the will of the people. You are valued for your commitment; please help us to keep you in your office.*

Patrice Frasier (MD\_07)

*It is an abomination of justice when politicians warp the political process for their own personal gain. Your job is to represent the people and that's the bottom line. So if your constituents that elected you want Obama or Clinton it is your duty to vote the way they want. It is an insult to the regular citizens' intelligence and an act of condescension when supedelegates vote differently than the popular vote.*

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Syreeta Swann-Joseph (MD\_07)

*Please remember that your job as a Congressperson depends on your respect and acknowledgement of your constituency. A vote against our chosen candidate will surely become a vote against your reelection. Is a backroom deal with the Clintons worth your political career?*