



# NAACP Memphis

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January 23, 2017

The Honorable Bill Haslam, Governor  
State of Tennessee  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, State Capitol  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Dear Governor Haslam:

Recent news reports have made us aware that Commissioner Raquel Hatter will soon resign from the administration. Her resignation will leave your 20+ cabinet with only one commissioner who is not white and none who are African American. This gives us great concern.

If something doesn't change, your cabinet is in danger of being the first cabinet to have zero African Americans in recent memory. We have asked members of the Shelby County Delegation to look into the matter on our behalf. According to their preliminary research, your predecessor, Governor Bredesen had at least three African Americans during his last two years in office—Commissioners Gwendolyn Davis, Deborah Story, and John Keys. Before that, Governor Sundquist had at least two African Americans during his last two years in office—Commissioners Natasha Metcalf and Donal Campbell.

We believe these leadership opportunities should be available to all. We know the Tennessee Black Caucus, the Nashville NAACP, and the Senate Minority Leader Lee Harris have already reached out to you on this matter. We believe, like they do, that it is not possible that you have the best talent available, if you have no African Americans in your cabinet.

If necessary, the Memphis NAACP will assist you in identifying top talent. Please respond if you should need our help. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Deidre Malone, President  
NAACP Memphis Branch

Cc: Beth Harwell, Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Glen Casada, Leader  
Ryan Williams, Caucus Chairman  
Craig Fitzhugh, Leader  
Mike Stewart, Caucus Chairman  
Randy McNally, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the Senate  
Mark Norris, Leader  
Bill Ketron, Caucus Chairman  
Lee Harris, Leader  
Jeff Yarbrow, Caucus Chairman