



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA ADVISORY

**Black Union Members Gear Up for Key Role in
Mobilizing African American Voters in the Midterm Elections**

800-1,000 expected to attend the annual convention of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) in Atlanta, GA, May 21-26, 2014

- Event:** 43rd International Convention of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU)
- When:** Wednesday, May 21 – Monday, May 26, 2012
- Where:** Hyatt Regency Hotel, 265 Peachtree St., NE, Atlanta, GA
- Sponsor:** Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU)
- Who:** More than 800 union activists and guests from the U.S. and Canada, representing 77 international unions

The 2014 midterm elections will be a major focal point for the 800 - 1,000 workers who will attend the 43rd annual convention of the Coalition Black Trade Unionists in Atlanta, May 21 - 26. Labor unions, and specifically black trade unionists, will play a huge role in efforts to counter the traditional midterm drop-off in voting by African Americans, whose turnout – high or low – could determine which political party controls Congress and many statehouses around the country.

One of every seven union members in the U.S. is African American, making them the linchpin in organized labor's ground game in the 2014 elections. CBTU has over 50 chapters, in the U.S. and Canada, many in key battleground states like Michigan and Georgia.

CBTU President the Rev. Terry Melvin framed the urgency for the black community and unions, paraphrasing an iconic Calvin Klein ad: **"We cannot let anything come between us and the ballot box in November.** But preparing for a high turnout must start now and be sustained with adequate resources, proven outreach methods and authentic messages that resonate – from barbershops to beauty salons, from seniors to the hip hop generation."

Led by retired CBTU President **William "Bill" Lucy**, CBTU has been a major catalyst for voter turnout in union households and African American communities since Harold Washington's historic mayoral campaign in Chicago (1983) up to the epochal Democratic Primary campaign of Barack Obama (2008).

[more]

CBTU Convention Highlights:

- On **Wednesday, May 21**, CBTU will partner with the renowned **Emily's List** to conduct two all-day training workshops that will focus on how to build and maintain effective political operations and how to prepare to run for elective office.
- **The opening session on Thursday, May 22, will feature a panel on "Preparing for the Upcoming Elections: Leave No Vote Behind."**
- CBTU President the Rev. Terry Melvin will deliver his keynote speech during the opening session on **Thursday, May 22**. Melvin, who is also the secretary-treasurer of the New York AFL-CIO, will speak about the political landscape, Obamacare, and justice for low wage workers.
- Lee Saunders, the influential chair of the powerful AFL-CIO Political Committee and president of the 1.6 million-member public employee union, AFSCME, will be the special guest speaker at the opening session, **Thursday, May 22**.
- On **Friday, May 23**, the dynamic Ohio legislator Nina Turner, who is running for Ohio Secretary of State, will be the keynote speaker at the CBTU Women's Luncheon. Turner is a rising progressive star and a frequent presence on national television.
- Rev. Dr. William Barber, president of the North Carolina chapter of the NAACP and architect of weekly Moral Monday demonstrations in Raleigh, will be the keynote speaker at CBTU's awards dinner, **Sunday, May 25**.
- **Town Hall Meeting**
May 21st
"The Struggles of Low Wage Workers"
6 pm
- **Panel**
Saturday, May 26
"Ending the Mass Incarceration Crisis"
9 a.m.

For a complete schedule of convention events, visit our website, www.cbtu.org
For convention updates, follow CBTU on Facebook, <http://facebook.com/CBTU> and
on Twitter @CBTU72, <http://twitter.com/CBTU72>

To arrange interviews with convention speakers or panelists, please contact:

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