

MR. GAMBLIN: Mr. Chairman to the Eisenhower Foundation, on behalf of New Detroit, I would like to thank you for the invitation to be here today.

My name is David Gamblin. I'm the Director of Economic Equity at New Detroit, for those of you who may not be familiar with New Detroit, an organization that was founded following the unrest in 1967 by the then-governor, Michigan Governor George Romney, Mayor Jerome Cavanagh, and business executive Joseph Hudson.

There was a call to the leadership across our community, and they convened New Detroit to identify and address the systemic challenges that led to the unrest. Since then New Detroit has been a place where Detroit's leaders from the business, civic, grass root, and religious communities come together to plan cooperative strategies. The coalition serves as advocate, convener, facilitator, and resource to the region. We work in four specific areas and are directed by our mission to be a coalition of Detroit area leadership, addressing the issue of race relations by positively impacting issues and policies that ensure economic and social equity.

The four areas that we work in specifically, the first being economic equity. We're very focused on entrepreneurial development in our community. We work with the development of a number of entrepreneur organizations in our city, many that could be listed along with one of the most successful entrepreneur camps at two of Michigan's largest universities.

We are also involved in the development of fostering additional real estate and business development. We've conducted many successful community investment tours, informing business leaders and developers about the opportunities that exist in Detroit.

We're also involved in a financial literacy initiative and partnership with Operation Hope in Los Angeles that was founded by a gentleman named John Bryant following the unrest subsequent to the Rodney King trial. We've literally trained thousands of young people in financial literacy education at our Detroit Public Schools with a core of volunteer banker teachers that have been funded -- funded and staffed, candidly, by the area banks.

We're involved with One D, the civic organizations that have come together to begin to work as a region versus individual organizations, and we are equally concerned about the challenges of foreclosures. In fact, New Detroit was called to the mayor's office recently to participate in a panel, really trying to focus on some solutions to this menace in our community right now.

We're also involved in youth development and education. We conducted one of the largest teacher surveys in the history of the United States.

We have been involved with the transition of leadership for many of the schools, superintendents and leaderships from boards to elected and state appointments and elected following subsequent and consider that part of the important focus that you should be involved in if you are going to address this issue.

We're also involved in capacity building for small community-based organizations. There are a number of organizations in our community that are focused on finding solutions, not necessarily broad-ranging solutions but more substantive local solutions -- the challenges that they face, many people in their community. We're committed to helping those organizations and have a federally funded program that allows us to help them "professionalize, " to learn how to raise money, build their boards, and be more effective community organizations.

And then, finally, we are involved in race relations. That's obviously part of our name.

We are focused on the entire -- all of the communities of color in Detroit -- five specific that we focus on.

But we consider ourselves the stewards of the conversation on race. Those are conversations that include stakeholders in conversations -- many stakeholders across the community in conversations that lead to action, in 2006, the first time the notion of race was broached at the conference at Mackinac. And there are a number of conversations on race that are happening all across the community. We think that that's the beginning of many of the challenges that we face in terms of what relations are between each other.

Those conversations are also happening along what we describe as emerging leaders. These are young, up-and-coming leaders where they have their own challenges, and we have conversations and subsequent action that follows those.

And then we're very involved with the whole list of immigration challenges that our community faces. Again, being involved in the five communities of color, there's many, many challenges on the immigration issue -- in immigration issues that, unless you are part of those communities, you really don't have a chance to deal with on a consistent basis, and we're involved on that. Many of you perhaps participated in our leadership summit on race. It was a regional conference with national speakers, but, again, we are very sincerely focused on this challenge. It is a menacing challenge and one that is not going to be solved easily.

We believe that every community has a conscience. It is an unspoken sense of right and wrong that people share, a fair agreement of how people ought to be treated. Somehow our community has become disconnected from its conscience; otherwise, we wouldn't tolerate such a gap between the way things are and the way they ought to be.

New Detroit, since its founding, remains committed to restoring the community conscience in closing the gap that exists between the way things are and the way they should be.

Thank you.