



***For Immediate Release***  
**June 25, 2013**

**STATEMENT FROM ROBERT L. JOHNSON ON THE RECENT DECISIONS ON  
CIVIL RIGHTS AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION  
BY THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES**

“The recent decisions by the Supreme Court of the United States on the affirmative action and the Voting Rights Act indicate there is little legal support for programs and policies that address racial inequalities and economic discrimination in the United States. Furthermore, a gridlock and dysfunctional Congress does not seem to show any desire to take on issues on how to address racial inequalities in employment, access to capital, and a growing wealth gap. Because of these developments and their impact on minorities, particularly African Americans, I believe it is vitally important now that we urge companies, organizations, and businesses that believe in the need for creating opportunities for minorities in every sector of our economy to adopt enhanced best practices to ensure that minority Americans, the fastest growing population in the United States, are full participants in the competitive landscape of the American economy.

“That is why I am encouraging corporate America, once again, to adopt the RLJ Rule. The RLJ Rule, which does not require legislation or suggest quotas, is adapted from the National Football League’s (NFL) *Rooney Rule*. The RLJ Rule is a voluntary proposal designed to encourage companies to establish best practice policies to identify and interview at least two qualified minority job candidates (at the director/managerial level and above) before filling a position and to interview qualified minority-owned businesses prior to awarding a procurement contract.

“Today, I call on President Obama to publicly announce his support for the RLJ Rule as he did on December 13, 2011, during a White House meeting of African American business leaders, convened by Representative Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO), then-Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, to discuss how we could stimulate employment and economic opportunity for African Americans without legislation or increasing taxes.

“President Obama told me and the other business leaders at that meeting he ‘supported the RLJ Rule and it was a good idea that he could get behind.’ Today, I urge the President to use the persuasive power of his office as he did in his speech in Osawatomie, Kansas (12/06/11) where he said ‘everyone deserves a fair shot’ by asking the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable to endorse the RLJ Rule as he suggested he would do with his Jobs Council when it was still in existence. If we, as a Nation, fail to look for voluntary solutions to divisive issues such as racial inequality, we fail as a Nation to create an economic playing field that gives everyone an equal opportunity to be a part of the American Dream.”

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