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Commissioner Daisy Lynum Scolds Orlando Sentinel

The paper refers to Commissioner Lynum as controversial --- which she says is labeling

ORLANDO, FL – On Thursday, May 7, 2009, The Orlando Sentinel published an article announcing that two challengers for the District 5 City Council seat had filed intents to run for the seat that the incumbent, Commissioner Daisy W. Lynum, has held for three terms and had also filed her intent to run for a fourth term. However, in the article, the reporter described Commissioner Lynum as controversial, a label that other media has also begun to assign to the outspoken Lynum.

In a response to the Sentinel's reporter and newsroom editor, Commissioner Lynum scolded them for assigning to her an inaccurate, negative, and punitive label and description. The Commissioner reports that anyone, especially Black people ascribed a label such as controversial, is a code to diminish, demean and/or to devalue one's identity and role. This is particularly true in the south, where code words for people of color had its origin. "Words matter," says the Commissioner, "they give others permission to accept, reject or to fear another as being dangerous or different, and this mockery of individuals and communities has got to stop. And, if you don't speak up about your person or your communities, i.e. crime hills for Pine Hills, crime ridden Parramore for Parramore, etc., others will always characterize our leaders and our communities in whatever negative or unflattering term they choose."

Commissioner Lynum reports that any label that is assigned to her, should be based on the entrepreneurial environment that she has fostered for small, local and minority businesses in all of Orlando. Her struggle to accomplish each success produced long-term significant economic development: 1) FAMU College of Law, 2) Nap Ford Community Charter School, 3) City View/Hughes Supply mix-use development, 4) Parramore housing, including Carver Park Hope VI (as a result her relationship with Senator Mel Martinez), 5) Mercy Drive and Tampa Avenue roads improvement, 6) Northwest community Police Sub-station, 7) The Venues Blueprint and, 8) The BBIF mix-use project that has taken ten (10) years to get through city council and, the list goes on.

As a city commissioner of one of the most underserved and underrepresented communities in the city, Commissioner Lynum said that her advocacy should be applauded by a major daily newspaper such as the Sentinel and our local television media. Contrastly, mass media has always been a tool used to control the behavior of the Black community and even though its effectiveness is diminishing, it is still the most powerful forum available to shape our views of one another, our community and the world.

On the world scene, Commissioner Lynum has represented Orlando and our country in Japan, Africa and China numerous times and is known nationally as a hard hitting history teaching speaker for all audiences, but particularly for Black elected officials and individuals planning to seek public office. Commissioner Lynum is described as a leader among her peers across the country and is currently serving as the National President of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC-LEO), the oldest and largest constituency group with the National League of Cities (NLC), President-Elect of the Women in Municipal Government (WIMG), and a past director for the National League of Cities (NLC). Her municipal leadership focus for NLC has been transportation and infrastructure. She says the key to her success locally and nationally is the ability to establish great relationships with people, who have somehow ascended to every level of service there is, including Majority Whip of Congress. How controversial is this leadership?

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