



## U.S. BLACK CHAMBERS, INC.

*THE NATIONAL VOICE OF BLACK BUSINESS*

*\*NOT AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE*

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# A 'Sterling' Example of Our Confusion

Let me get my disclaimer out of the way first... **The U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. (USBC) is a business organization.** Our sole purpose is to improve the lives of Black people by actively working to change the market environment. We advocate for improvements in capital access, increased opportunity and the transfer of the skills necessary to successfully, and profitably compete in America's economy.

Despite this clarity of purpose, we are often called upon to weigh in on issues that typically are addressed by civil rights or social justice organizations. For certain, we are Black in America, so we do have opinions about continued evidence of inequality, racism, bigotry, discrimination and hatred being directed against Black people. But, as I said, we are a business organization, so **our perspective is always going to be a business perspective.**

Donald Sterling is a businessman who owns, among other interests, a National Basketball Association franchise. Donald Sterling said some insulting remarks that prove his disdain for Black people, **presumably including the men whose athletic ability make his franchise valuable. And, Donald Sterling, through his twisted thinking, has hijacked ALL of Black America's communications channels.**

Facebook, Twitter, radio, newspaper... all on fire with commentary about Sterling and what must be done to make him pay.

Excuse me, but there's real life going on here! Black America, even after the furor over Sterling's telephonic rant has dissipated, will STILL suffer from gross inequality. The \$2.5 million fine levied by the NBA for his "transgression" is a pittance for someone whose fortune is reported to be over a billion dollars. **His franchise, the Los Angeles Clippers, will still receive millions of dollars in television royalty payments, even if he is not allowed to attend games or go to his office.**

**And all the while, Black businesses are still not able to qualify for a loan guaranteed by the full faith and credit of the United States government! Black businesses are still failing to net their federally mandated share of contracts awarded by that same government. As a result, Black unemployment figures - as reported by the same federal government -- are still spiraling skyward, with no apparent ceiling.**

**Talk about misplaced anger!** This is not to diminish the obvious - that Sterling's perspective is unacceptable, is deserving of any fine, penalty, compensatory payment and public shaming available under law. But **Congress makes the laws that limit our ability to have equitable access in the marketplace and the courts interpret and uphold those laws, even in the face of glaring inequity. Doesn't that make you mad, too?**

So, if we're going to be mad about something... okay, okay, Donald Sterling is as good a place as any to start. But his despicable record in denying housing opportunities to Black families has had more direct impact on Black folks than anything he may have said to his "side piece" in a recorded phone conversation. So, maybe Sterling is a pretty good place to start showing just how angry we are today.

**In the meantime, if we truly want to demonstrate our displeasure, let's go cold turkey! Turn off the NBA playoffs. Don't buy another jersey. Don't watch NFL games this fall. Stop buying that profanity-laced, misogynistic crap that is being foisted upon us as cultural expression. If it's our money that is financing the exploitation of Black talent, we can do something about that. If the empires built on exploitation can no longer rely on our complicity (in ticket sales, athletic attire, and viewers/consumers, etc.) they will quickly lose their value.**

**If we truly want to demonstrate our displeasure, let our money do our talking. Do something different - support Black-owned businesses. Here at the USBC, we've grown fond of pointing out that if each of America's Black-owned businesses earned enough money to hire just one new employee, we'd wipe out Black unemployment overnight!**

So, we have a real opportunity here to **prove that we really have taught our dollars some sense.** Racism, bigotry, discrimination and personal animus seem to be - after all these years -- beyond our control. Unfortunately for us, those behaviors are also apparently beyond the control of federal laws designed to stamp them out.

**Our money, however, is entirely within our control. If you don't like racism, don't finance it. If you don't appreciate being discriminated against, don't finance it. If you don't like stupidity, don't finance it either! After all, money talks...and you-know-what walks. You can take that to the bank! (A Black-owned bank, please!)**

In the Spirit of Success,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R B S', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ron Busby, Sr.  
President  
U.S. Black Chambers, Inc.