NAACP
DeKalb County Branch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:
communications@naccpdekalb.org
Teresa Hardy, President president@naacpdekalb.org

October 18, 2019

NAACP DEKALB SUPPORTS THE PROPOSED COUNTY ETHICS ACT

The NAACP DeKalb County branch has thoroughly reviewed the proposed Ethics Act governing the Board of Ethics for DeKalb County and is fully supportive of the referendum.

The previous process for appointing members of the DeKalb Ethics Board was ruled unconstitutional by the Georgia Supreme Court in August of 2018. The Ethics Act, introduced in the Georgia General Assembly as Senate Bill 7 in January 2019, corrected the appointment process and is to be voted on by the DeKalb citizens on November 5, 2019. **(EARLY VOTING NOW THROUGH NOVEMBER 1, 2019)**

While there has been some misinformation distributed concerning the independence of the Board of Ethics and qualifications and duties of the Ethics Administrator in the Ethics Act, the NAACP has determined that these misgivings are unfounded and unnecessary. With the new Board of Ethics being authorized to employ its own staff and contract for the services of a competent court reporter, an attorney, and a private investigator, the effectiveness of the Board will not be diminished.

In addition, the Ethics Act's guidelines for the Ethics Administrator are quite comprehensive and should ensure the integrity and the independence of the Ethics Board. The Ethics Act further specifies the consequences for violations, and it retains the Board's subpoena powers.

The proposed Ethics Act should not compromise the employees' right to file a complaint while maintaining the integrity of the DeKalb Merit System.

A "NO" vote leaves DeKalb without any effective Ethics oversite, but a "Yes" gives citizens and employees a Board of Ethics that can begin the evolution of strong ethical governance in DeKalb County.

With the safeguards inherent in the proposed DeKalb Ethics Act, the NAACP believes that it deserves the support of the DeKalb citizens and urges a "Yes" vote on the referendum.