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NEW YORK – Job growth in professional and business services, education, health, manufacturing, and construction is an encouraging sign, National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial recently said, but the nation's urban and minority communities are in danger of being left behind in the fragile recovery.

Proposed, deep cuts in federal spending could devastate job growth, he said.

"While other economic indicators show improvement, the unemployment rate has barely

budged," Morial said. "The Black unemployment rate declined only four-tenths of a percentage point, to an unacceptable 15.3 percent. The rate for Black males remains above 16 percent. Urban and minority communities can't afford to wait any longer for relief."

The overall unemployment rate changed in February, – 8.9 percent (from 9.0 percent in January). The Black unemployment rate declined to 15.3 percent (from 15.7 percent); the unemployment rate for Black men was 16.2 percent (from 16.5 percent); for Black women 13.0 percent (from 12.9 percent). The unemployment rate for Whites was unchanged at 8.0 percent while the Hispanic rate was 11.6 percent (from 11.9 percent). Rates of teen unemployment were 21.3 percent for Whites (from 22.8 percent), 38.4 percent for African-Americans (from 45.4 percent) and 30.6 percent for Latinos (from 32.9 percent).

Morial said job growth – 192,000 jobs in February – is not strong enough to promote a steady decline in the unemployment rate.

"The danger is that a deep term cut in federal spending will reverse the growth rate, trample job creation, and trigger an increase in unemployment," Morial said. "A $61 B cut in the current federal budget generate a loss of anywhere from 500,000 to 800,000 jobs.

"The economy is vulnerable to a negative shock that could generate a pause in continuing growth and tip the balance toward a double dip recession," Morial said. "These numbers show that we can't just sit back and expect the unemployment crisis to resolve itself. We need targeted solutions to get the economy moving and put urban America back to work."

The National Urban League's 12-point jobs plan, *Jobs Rebuild America*, advocates policies such as expansion of small business lending, the establishment of Green Empowerment Zones incentives for environmental industries in low income areas, enactment of the Urban Jobs Act (H.R. 5708) and restoration of the Summer Youth Jobs Program.

The full plan can be found at www.iamempowered.com/node/17890.

The first Friday of each month, when the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases monthly

employment statistics, is designated “Jobs Day” throughout the Urban League movement. In addition to commentary and analysis on the national and local level, an online jobs chat with economist Dr. Valerie Rawlston-Wilson provides an overview of the national economic situation, and addresses issues and answers questions posted by participants. The chat can be accessed at

www.iamempowered.com/february_2011_employment_Statistics