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Rev. Jackson joins NELA to support House Bill 1509 effort

CHICAGO – (May 5, 2007) Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr., founder and president of Rainbow PUSH Coalition, today called for the Illinois State Senate to pass House Bill 1509 to allow residents the right to go before the local courts on discrimination claims. State Representative Barbara Flynn Curry and State Senator Carol Ronan introduced the Bill.

Currently discrimination claims, with the exception of those under the Equal Pay Act, cannot be filed in Illinois courts. Instead, they are directed to the Illinois Human Rights Commission, where they do not get the full discovery of courts or a jury trial.

“Ninety percent of employment discrimination causes never get past the Department of Human Rights in the state of Illinois,” Rev. Jackson said during the weekly internationally-televised Saturday Morning Forum. “We support House Bill 1509 for the future fight against discrimination.

HB 1509 will bring Illinois in line with 38 other states and the federal government in giving local residents the right to file discrimination complaints in state court and tried before a jury.

“If we want to fight race discrimination in Illinois this is the most important bill in a long time,” Aaron Maduff, prominent Chicago employment lawyer and Vice President of the Illinois Chapter of the National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA).

Maduff has been working with State Representative Barbara Flynn Curry and State Senator Carol Ronan on its passage for the past six years.

The Rainbow PUSH Coalition is a progressive organization protecting, defending and expanding civil rights to improve economic and educational opportunity. The organization is headquartered at 930 E. 50th St. in Chicago. For more information about the RainbowPUSH Coalition, please visit the organization’s website, www.rainbowpush.org, or telephone (773) 373-3366. To confirm your attendance at the press conference, or to get additional information, please call the number listed above.