

St. Louis should heed Urban League's call for opportunity compact

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Urban League President Marc Morial's call to establish an "opportunity compact" should not be viewed solely as a means to address the needs of low-income people and others who historically have been denied access to programs and resources that fueled the growth of the middle class in this society. Rather, it is an "opportunity" for all of us to engage in the work of building a more inclusive community, stopping the disparities that target groups of people and promoting an effective pluralistic democracy that will work for everyone and not just some

Mr. Morial's call simply asks us to understand our community as a family in which there is shared concern, responsibility and support that serves the self-interest of the whole by promoting equity in housing, wealth-building, education and health care. Over the past two decades, our community has struggled mightily with racial polarization, class disparities and other divisions. Our own reports and recommendations align with Mr. Morial's call. We all are in this together. As a community, we can act in these areas to improve the health and welfare of all St. Louisans. The time has come to do so.