



## **Our Mission**

The National Conference of Black Mayors (NCBM) represents more than 641 African American Mayors across the United States; collectively its membership represents over 48 million citizens. NCBM is a leader in the redevelopment of our most vulnerable communities and works towards the empowerment of leadership on the local level. Founded in 1974 with the mission to enhance the executive management capacity of its member mayors, NCBM articulates public policy positions and serves as a clearinghouse on information pertinent to municipal development and financing. NCBM provides technical and management assistance through cutting-edge research, best practices and partnerships that enable its mayors to challenge and overcome grappling issues that erode the vitality and sustainability of our nation's cities.

## **Our Founding**

Thirteen Black mayors, newly elected in the South, were the visionaries who founded the Southern Conference of Black Mayors (SCBM) in 1974. They were elected following enactment of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965. Passage of this landmark legislation dramatically increased the number of African Americans elected to public office within a short time, especially at the local level in the South where the number of mayors multiplied fivefold.

A small group of Black mayors from several southern states met informally in Fayette, Mississippi in 1972 where they discussed the possible development of a program of mutual benefit to their respective communities. A year after meeting in Fayette, a second meeting of 15 Black mayors was held in Tuskegee, Alabama. Their discussions led to the founding of SCBM. In 1974, 20 Black mayors gathered in Santee, South Carolina and voted to officially incorporate the organization. The group hired its first executive director and opened a headquarters office that year in Atlanta, Georgia. By the occasion of its first annual convention in 1975 in Grambling, Louisiana, SCBM had identified various funding sources, performed several economic development and water systems studies, and developed an extensive technical assistance program.

In 1976, at the second annual convention in Atlanta, at the prompting of mayors from the Midwest who attended the meeting, the mayors voted to expand the organization's scope by changing the name to the National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc. (NCBM). The same year, NCBM obtained tax-exempt status as a 501(c)3 organization from the Internal Revenue Service, developed and presented a series of municipal management clinics in local communities, and produced a myriad of proposals that led to a significant increase of public support to member communities.