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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EDDIE WILLIAMS – SCHOLAR/ACTIVIST – WILL BE MISSED

A statement by Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

Eddie Williams, the past President of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies from 1972 to 2004, made his transition Monday at age 84. His contribution to Black political life and growth was enormous. Our prayers of comfort go out to his wife Jearline and his son Larry.

Eddie Williams was a scholar-activist, who guided the Joint Center from its earliest days to great heights. The Center documented and was the reservoir of political statistics and information on African American elected officials, who went from less than 500 officials around the country before passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act to more than 10,000 today.

He allowed policy experts to share their information with the broader community through various publications, including the Center's *Focus Magazine*. Every four years he convened Black elected officials to put together a civil rights agenda to present to presidential candidates and transition teams. He also founded the National Coalition of Black Civic Participation.

I, along with so many others, depended on Eddie Williams and the Center's information for enlightenment, speeches and writings. He will be greatly missed.

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Rainbow PUSH Coalition is a multi-racial, multi-issue, progressive, international organization that was formed in December 1996 by the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. through merging of two organizations he founded Operation PUSH People United to Serve Humanity (estab. 1971) and the Rainbow Coalition (estab. 1984). With headquarters in Chicago and offices in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and Oakland, the organization works to make the American Dream a reality for all citizens while advocating for peace and justice around the world. RPC is dedicated to improving the lives of all people by serving as a voice for the voiceless. Its mission is to protect, defend and gain civil rights by leveling the economic and educational playing fields while promoting peace and justice around the world.

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