

# Are Green Jobs “Good Jobs” for African Americans?

Algernon Austin

“Not Just ‘Getting By’: Achieving Economic Security among  
African Americans”

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

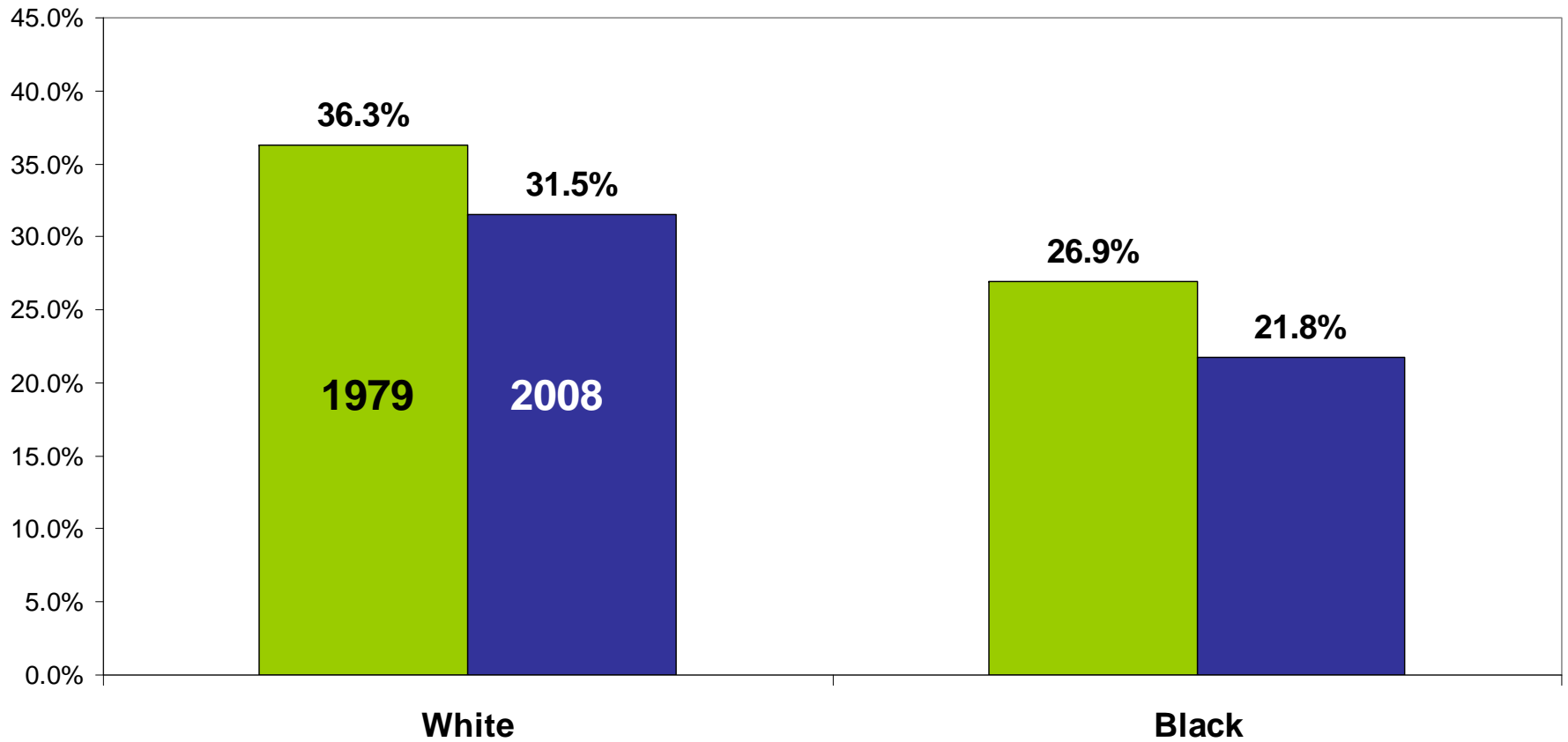
Annual Legislative Conference

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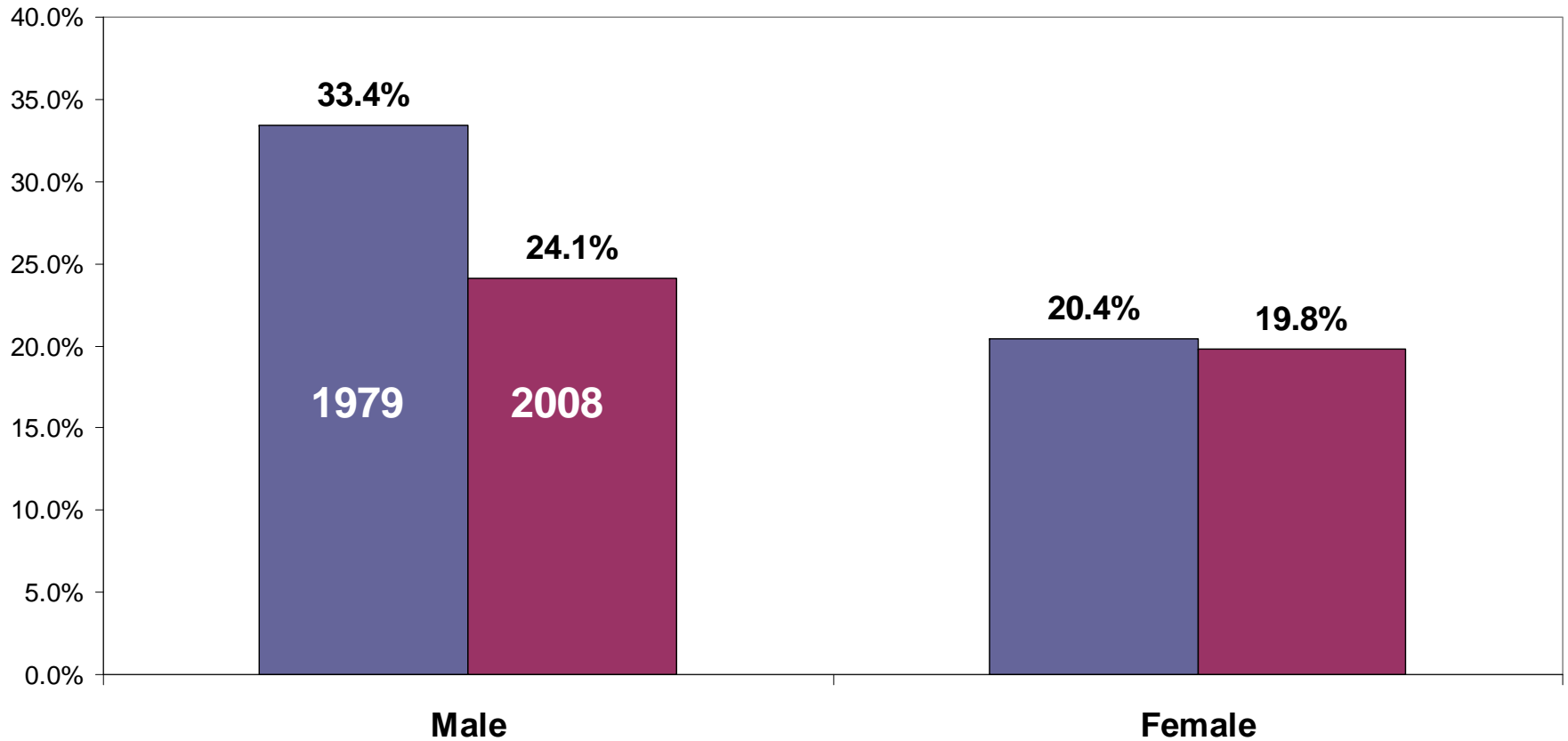
# Definition of a “Good Job”

- Has an hourly wage that provides at least 60 percent of the median household income annually
  - 2008 good-jobs wage: \$14.51/hr
  - 2008 poverty-level wage: \$10.59/hr
  - 2008 federal minimum wage: \$5.85/hr, \$6.55/hr
- Provides health insurance
- Provides a retirement plan

# Share of White and African-American Workers in "Good Jobs," 1979 and 2008



## Share of Male and Female African-American Workers in "Good Jobs," 1979 and 2008

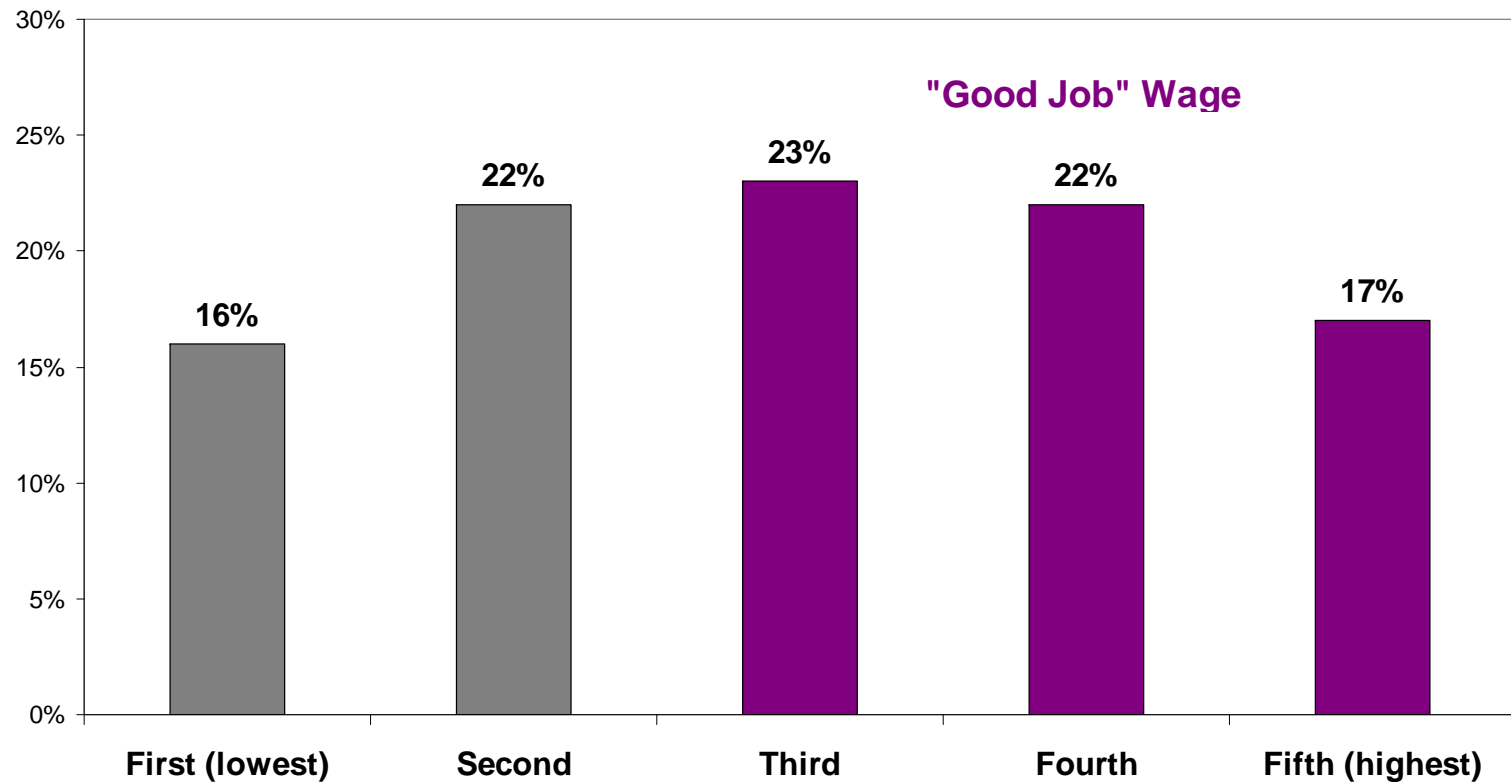


# Assessing Green Jobs Based on \$100 Billion in Investments

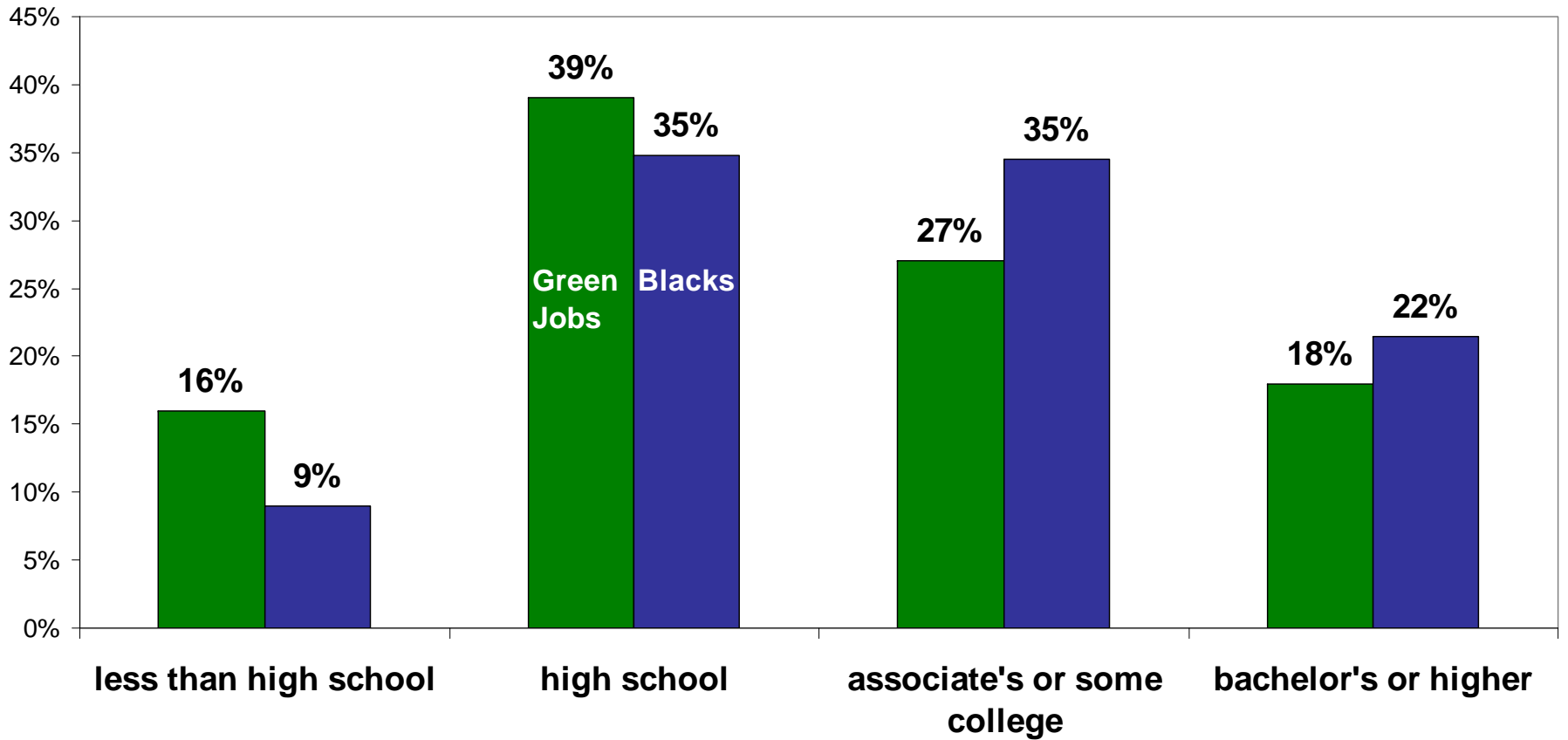
- Estimating the number, quality and demographics
  - Based on Political Economy Research Institute's industry flows
  - Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) employment requirements matrix
  - Links Current Population Survey demographic data to BLS industry data

# 50-60% of Green Jobs Will Have “Good-Jobs” Wages

## Wage Quintile Distribution of Green Jobs

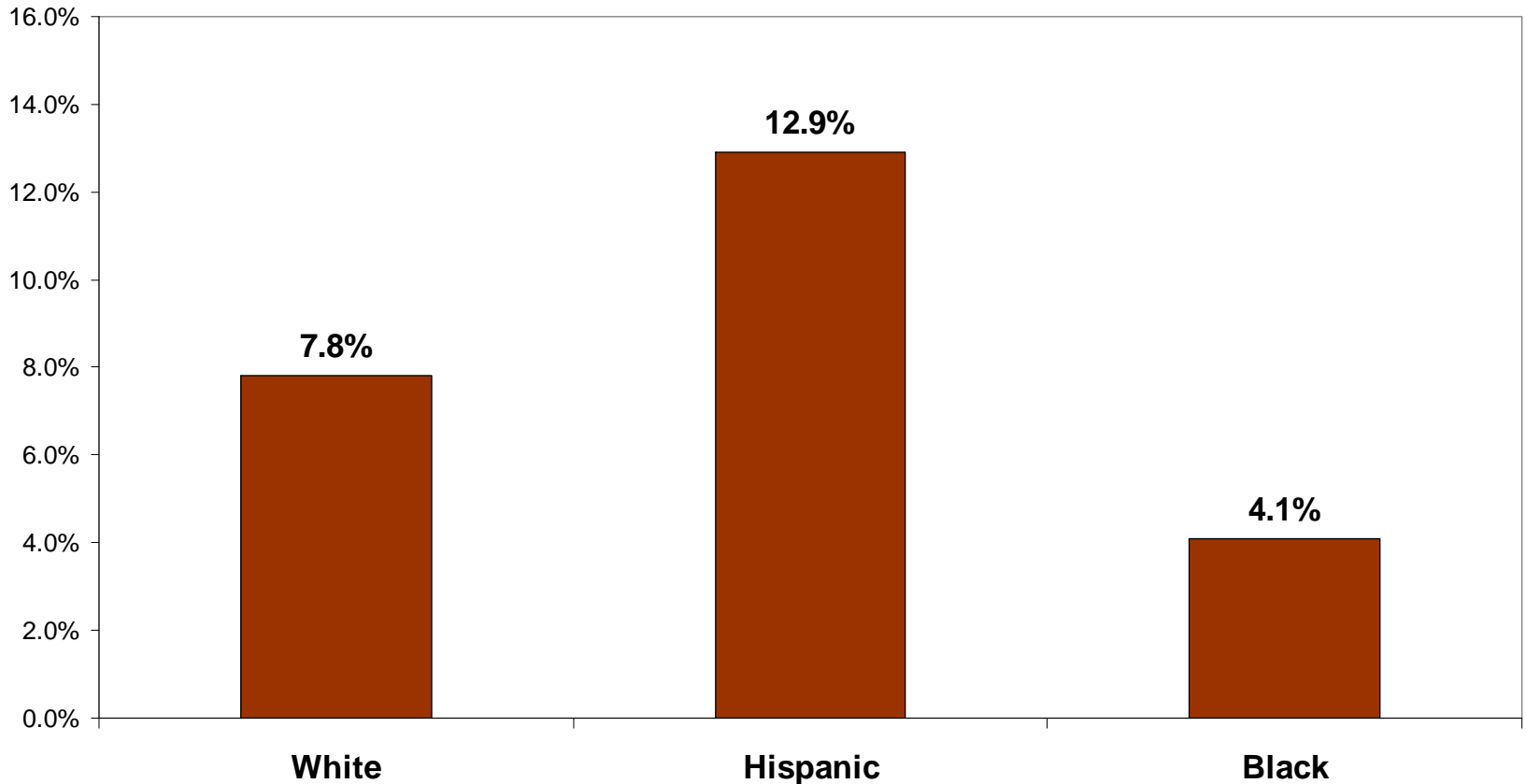


# Educational Distribution of Workers in Green Jobs and of African-American Workers



# 40% of Green Jobs are in the Construction Industry

## Share of Workers in the Construction Industry





# \$100 Billion=746,102 Green Jobs

- Expected number of black jobs: 84,720
- Percent of total: 11%
- Black share of total labor force: 11%
  
- 1/3 are union jobs
- 3/4 male jobs
- Should raise wages of non-college-educated workers 0.25% for each year of investment

# Green Jobs *Are* “Good Jobs” for African Americans

- Broad-based green investments will increase the number of jobs available for black workers.
- Most of the jobs will have “good-jobs” wages.
- They will disproportionately benefit black males who have especially high unemployment rates.

# Additional Reading

- Josh Bivens, John Irons, and Ethan Pollack, “Green Investments and the Labor Market: How Many Jobs Could be Generated and What Type?,” *Issue Brief #253* (Washington D.C.: Economic Policy Institute, 2009), [http://epi.3cdn.net/3ede40f054b5406d66\\_q6m6b9ne5.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/3ede40f054b5406d66_q6m6b9ne5.pdf).