

Congressman Alcee Hastings delivered the following speech on September 11th, 2007 to honor George Burrows, Sr. for his hard work and determination which resulted in the revitalization of the Sistrunk Boulevard corridor in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. This once-blighted neighborhood is now the pride of Ft. Lauderdale's African-American community.

“Born in 1926, George Burrows was one of 14 children raised by his Bahamian immigrant parents. After serving in the Marines during World War II, George returned to Ft. Lauderdale. Using the G.I. Bill, he attended Bethune-Cookman College. In 1948, he earned his Associate of Arts degree in electronics, and soon after received his state certification as a licensed master electrician.”

“Madam Speaker, with only electrical wire, government-issued tools, and a used bicycle with front and rear baskets, George Burrows embarked on a career that has spanned more than five decades. He fought bravely against a segregated system that limited his services to Colored Town and went on to great success in the electrical business. The day before his alma mater Dillard High School was to play an important football game, its field still had no lights. George Burrows came to the rescue, installing lights on the field and saving the day.”

“One of his proudest accomplishments is his longtime involvement with the Black Chamber of Commerce, formerly the Negro Chamber of Commerce. George's work with the Chamber led to minority businesses obtaining contracts with the Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale International Airport and Port Everglades. George and his devoted wife of more than 50 years, Agnes, have raised four children.”

“Madam Speaker, even Ft. Lauderdale City Commissioner Carlton Moore, noted that George created a business that provided business opportunities to those who were locked out by the system. George Burrows' advice to aspiring entrepreneurs is to “get an education.” With an education, he says, “one can do anything they want in the field they choose.” George Burrows is living proof of that. We all owe this great man an enormous debt of gratitude for what he has done to make his neighborhood, his city, and our world a better place. He is truly someone of whom we can all be very proud.”

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