

We figured it was only a matter of time before we started covering next year's governor's race. What we didn't expect was the battle for endorsements to get jump started so quickly.

First, word came yesterday of former Birmingham mayor (& the first African American to be elected to the post) [Richard Arrington](#) planning to [announce his endorsement of Democratic gubernatorial candidate](#) and Alabama's agricultural commissioner [Ron Sparks](#) (that formal announcement is scheduled to happen around 2 p.m. this afternoon). Word came shortly thereafter from fellow candidate [Artur Davis](#)' campaign that [U.W. Clemon](#), the first African-American to receive a federal judicial appointment, [had endorsed the U.S. congressman](#).

Hopefully neither of these endorsements will mean as much as when the candidates meet during "State the Case", the first of a series of **Gubernatorial Informational Community Awareness Sessions** being organized by the **Metro Birmingham NAACP** on Friday, October 23 beginning at 6 p.m. at [Boutwell Auditorium](#).