



Civil Rights Groups and Allies Condemn White House Move to Censor Race and Gender Equity Training

Washington, DC, October 7, 2020 – 121 civil rights groups and allies, including NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the National Women's Law Center condemn the Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping issued by President Trump on September 22, 2020. The Executive Order is a blatant effort to perpetuate and codify a deeply flawed and skewed version of American history. It promotes a particular vision of history that glorifies a past rooted in white supremacy while silencing the viewpoints and experiences of all who have been victimized by individual and structural inequalities – a kind of dangerous propaganda or thought-policing comparable only to authoritarian regimes. The Executive Order attempts to erase the very concept of racism and sexism as being real, historical and present-day phenomena and undermines important and necessary employer initiatives aimed at understanding and dismantling racist, sexist, and discriminatory structures. The American people will suffer real harm and unjust consequences when those charged with serving the public do not learn the facts necessary to do their jobs effectively and equitably.

Our country is in the midst of a long overdue conversation about deeply entrenched, structural racism after the senseless murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Black individuals and during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is disproportionately ravaging communities of color. People of all races continue to come together in protests and demonstrations against police violence, white supremacy, and structural racism – issues that are tearing apart the fabric of our nation. Our nation also faces a continuing reckoning on sexual violence, a legacy that also pervades our nation's workplaces, schools, and homes and disproportionately affects Black women, girls, and transgender people. Conversations focused on racial and gender equity have made their way into the workplaces and boardrooms, with countless employers and businesses publicly supporting the Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements and making strong commitments to confront and work to eliminate systemic racism and end sexual harassment, including sexual assault.

Instead of seeking effective solutions to dismantle racism and misogyny at a time when so many are calling for transformative policy solutions, the Trump administration has issued a burdensome and divisive executive order, seeking to broadly curtail and deter diversity, equity, and inclusion training efforts by government agencies, federal contractors and sub-contractors, federal grantees, and the U.S. military. The order in part calls on the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), a critical enforcement agency, to go on a fishing expedition to identify trainings that may run afoul of the broad and vague order. The sweeping order also continues Trump's attacks on LGBTQ+ communities, and has already led to canceling several racial, gender, and LGBTQ+ equity trainings. This gross overreach of executive authority unnecessarily diverts the OFCCP's very scarce resources from the urgent task of tackling real discrimination during an unprecedented pandemic when



Black and Brown workers and women, especially Black and Latina women, are losing their jobs at disproportionately higher rates.

Throughout his tenure in office, President Trump has established his support for white supremacists while demonstrating deep hostility to civil rights and racial justice. Just last week during the first presidential debate, President Trump publicly told the Proud Boys, a group designated by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a hate group, to “stand back and stand by,” while also absurdly claiming that racial sensitivity trainings that address white privilege or critical race theory are “racist” and “teach[] people to hate our country.” President Trump continues to face multiple, credible allegations of sexual assault, while his administration has belittled survivors and sought to limit protections for them on campuses. Consistent with his actions and rhetoric during the course of this presidency, the order is not only a bald attempt to stifle progress towards racial equity and gender justice in our nation’s workplaces, it is an effort to assert autocracy, manipulate thought, and chill the significant efforts that employers have undertaken to increase diversity and inclusion for the benefit of all who live and work in this country.

The undersigned groups urge organizations and workplaces committed to anti-racism and gender justice to continue prioritizing robust diversity, equity and inclusion programs aimed at providing equal opportunity to people of color, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities and veterans. We must not let this administration get in the way of our fight for a better America where all are truly equal under the law.

Sincerely,

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
National Women’s Law Center
ACCESS
ADL
American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Atheists
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of Teachers
American Foundation for the Blind
American Humanist Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Americans for Financial Reform Education Fund
Americans United for Separation of Church & State
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault



Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
California Employment Lawyers Association
Caring Across Generations
Center for American Progress
Center for Community Progress
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Public Representation
Center for Responsible Lending
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Closing the Women's Wealth Gap
Consumer Action
Consumer Federation of America
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Education Law Center-PA
EMC Strategies
Epilepsy Foundation
Equal Pay Today
Equal Rights Advocates
Feminist Majority Foundation
Georgia Budget & Policy Institute
Global Policy Solutions
GLSEN
Golden State Opportunity
Hindu American Foundation
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights Campaign
ICA
Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence
Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Institute for Women's Policy Research
Interfaith Alliance
Jane Doe Inc.
Jewish Women International
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
Justice for Migrant Women
KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change



Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Lambda Legal
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Legal Aid at Work
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Michigan Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence
Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
NAACP
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Center for Youth Law
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)
National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Housing Law Project
National Indigenous Women's Resource Center
National LGBTQ Task Force
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
National Resource Sharing Project
National Urban League
National WIC Association
Native Women Lead
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault



OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
Pacific Community Ventures
PFLAG National
Poverty & Race Research Action Council
Public Citizen
RespectAbility
Revolving Door Project
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
TASH
The Advocacy Institute
The Arc of the United States
The Sikh Coalition
TIME'S UP Foundation
Union for Reform Judaism
United State of Women
United Steelworkers
Well Suited
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Women's Law Project
Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative, Saint Mary's College
Woodstock Institute
YWCA Cambridge