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Historic Number of Corporations File Amicus Briefs in U.S. Supreme Court in Support of College Admissions Policies That Foster Diversity

In a show of historic and overwhelming support for affirmative action, 82 corporations and business groups signed three amicus briefs filed in the Supreme Court of the United States in *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard* and *SFFA v. University of North Carolina* asking the Court to uphold over 40 years of precedent allowing colleges and universities to consider race as one of many factors in admissions.

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF), Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC, and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law are proud to stand with 82 leading corporations and business groups from a wide variety of industries and areas across the country in reaffirming to the Supreme Court that the economy derives direct benefits from employees educated in diverse settings. The group includes businesses that submitted briefs to the Supreme Court in support of race-conscious admissions almost 20 years ago in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, as well as new companies that did not exist then. Combined, the companies signing onto the amicus briefs account for over 5.5 million employees worldwide and more than \$3.2 trillion of annual revenue.

These businesses support the role of higher education in training our nation's future leaders and workforce. Specifically, the business community has important economic interests in having a well-educated and diverse workforce through race-conscious diversity programs in higher education. A diverse workforce enables our businesses to remain competitive in the global economy.

As noted in the [brief](#) on behalf of major American business enterprises: “[S]trong evidence supports the insight, confirmed by Amici’s experience, that university students who study and interact with diverse peers, and particularly with racially and ethnically diverse peers, exhibit enhanced cognitive development necessary for a wide range of skills highly valued in today’s economy ... Students of all racial backgrounds benefit from diverse university environments ... Building a diverse classroom experience is how to turn out the most informed critical thinkers. Classroom diversity is crucial to producing employable, productive, value-adding citizens in business.”

A second amicus [brief](#) filed by major American science and technology companies emphasizes the continuing importance of race-conscious, holistic university admissions practices to the competitiveness of the science and technology field. The brief explains that a) a racially diverse pipeline of graduates in disciplines such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is essential to the success of science and technology companies; b) racial diversity improves scientific endeavors and the innovation of new technologies; c) a racially diverse workforce helps guard against the possibility that science and technology companies will be out

of touch with their increasingly diverse and global customer base; and d) a racially diverse workforce helps STEM companies recruit and retain talent.

As the science and technology companies note in their brief: “For science and technology companies to achieve ... competitive advantages, universities must admit racially diverse classes of students and foster inclusive cultures ... [C]ompanies whose workforces are racially and otherwise diverse will be better equipped to identify and address any number of scientific and technological challenges ... Tech companies work on unconventional questions that require creative solutions, and diverse groups consistently outperform homogenous groups on exactly that type of problem solving.”

A third amicus brief filed by International Business Machines Corp. (IBM) and Aeris Communications, Inc. (Aeris) along with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Stanford University “underscore[s] the importance of diversity not just within higher education or the corporate world at large, but in the particular cross-section of academia and industry within the intensely collaborative, and increasingly global, STEM industries.” As IBM, Aeris, MIT, and Stanford explain, “Not only does diversity promote better outcomes for students in STEM, it contributes to better science. As such, American businesses at the forefront of innovation in STEM depend on the availability of a diverse cross-section of talented graduates from the nation’s most rigorous and elite institutions.”

Corporate signatories to briefs in support for race-conscious admissions include:

Accenture	Adobe Inc.	Aeris Communications, Inc.	Air Products & Chemicals, Inc.	Airbnb, Inc.
Alaska Airlines, Inc.	American Airlines, Inc.	American Express Company	American International Group, Inc.	Amgen Inc.
Apple Inc.	Applied Materials, Inc.	Ariel Investments, LLC	Bain & Company	Bayer US LLC
Biogen Inc.	Bristol Myers Squibb	Chamber of Progress	Cigna Corporation	Cisco Systems, Inc.
Corning Incorporated	Corteva Agriscience	Cruise LLC	Cummins, Inc.	Dell Technologies, Inc.
Dupont de Nemours, Inc.	Eaton Corporation	Engine Advocacy	Etsy, Inc.	General Dynamics Corporation
General Electric Company	General Motors Company	Gilead Sciences, Inc.	GlaxoSmithKline LLC	Google LLC
HP Inc.	International Business Machines Corp.	IKEA Retail US	Illinois Tool Works Inc.	Intel Corporation
Jazz Pharmaceuticals PLC	JetBlue Airways	Johnson & Johnson	Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.	KPMG LLP
Leidos Holdings, Inc.	Levi Strauss & Co.	LinkedIn Corp.	Logitech Inc.	Lyft, Inc.

Mastercard Inc.	Match Group, LLC	Mattel, Inc.	Merck & Co., Inc.	Meta Platforms, Inc.
Micron Technology, Inc.	Microsoft Corp.	Northrop Grumman Corporation	Paramount Global	PayPal Inc.
Pinterest, Inc.	Procter & Gamble Company	RealNetworks, Inc.	Red Hat, Inc.	Ripple Labs Inc.
Salesforce, Inc.	Shell USA, Inc.	Silicon Valley Leadership Group	Starbucks Corporation	Steelcase Inc.
The Hershey Company	The Kraft Heinz Company	The Prudential Insurance Company of America	Twilio Inc.	Uber Technologies, Inc.
United Airlines Inc.	Verily Life Sciences LLC	Verizon Services Corp.	ViiV Healthcare Company	VMware Inc.
Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc.	Zazzle Inc.			

In November 2020, the First Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed in a 104-page decision a trial court’s judgment that Harvard’s holistic, race-conscious admissions program is legal and permissible. The corporations submitting the amicus briefs ask the Supreme Court to affirm that decision pursuant to longstanding precedent.

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Founded in 1940, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights.