



National
Urban League



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**NAACP Legal Defense Fund, National Urban League, National Fair Housing Alliance File
Suit Against Trump Administration; African American Policy Forum Launches
#TruthBeTold Campaign**

Today, the [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.](#) (LDF), the National Urban League (NUL), and the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) [filed a federal lawsuit](#) challenging the Trump Administration’s “Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping” on the grounds that it violates the guarantees of Free Speech, Equal Protection, and Due Process – fundamental rights secured in the United States Constitution. In addition, The African American Policy Forum (AAPF) has launched the #TruthBeTold campaign to rescind the order and raise awareness for the need for even deeper engagement on and examination of issues of race, gender, intersectionality, and justice.

President Trump’s Executive Order, issued in September, makes federal contracts contingent upon subscription to a false and revisionist history of our nation and compliance with censorship of what the administration deems “Divisive Concepts,” “Race or Sex Stereotyping,” and “Race or Sex Scapegoating.” It is chillingly punitive, requiring contractors, subcontractors, vendors, and potentially grantees, to comply with exacting speech limitations and submit to the government all plans for diversity and inclusion training to ensure the demand for censorship is satisfied, or risk termination of their contract.

“As with the ‘Muslim Ban,’ attempts to add a citizenship question to the Census, and the ban on transgender individuals serving in the military, this Executive Order is another attempt by President Trump to erase the lived experiences of people and communities,” said Janai Nelson, LDF’s Associate Director-Counsel. “This administration has gone even further this time by attempting to completely rewrite centuries of the country’s history and dishonoring the memories of those who have been involved in the ongoing struggle for racial and gender equality and the perfection of our democracy. It operates as an effective ban on truth and an assault on equality in the workplace. The Order is an unvarnished attempt to strip Americans of their freedoms of speech and expression. President Trump’s revisionist history and desire to preserve the systemic inequalities that continue to punish women and communities of color must not be allowed to stand and the Order should be fully and immediately rescinded.”

The swift implementation of the order serves to censor federal contractors and grantees who wish to present historically accurate information and context to their employees to advance the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion. It also extends to subcontractors and vendors, ensuring an alarmingly wide reach and widespread damage. Further alarming are the echoes of McCarthyism through the establishment of a “hotline” for reporting contractors and subcontractors who hold workforce training sessions that include topics banned in the executive order.

“President Trump has stoked racial resentment and courted the support of white supremacists since the moment he announced his campaign, and this executive order is just one more example of that strategy,” National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial said. “A policy that attempts to erase the role of racism, bias, and discrimination is a policy that weakens our economy and our nation. We cannot heal our nation’s wounds by pretending they don’t exist, and we will not allow our communities to be sacrificed for any candidate’s political gain.”

“Trump’s Executive Order is extremely dangerous. It runs counter to this nation’s values and stifles our ability to carry out the purpose of fair housing laws,” said Lisa Rice, President and CRP of the National Fair Housing Alliance. “Education about racial and gender diversity, equity, and inclusion is necessary for the healing of this nation and to develop effective policies to overcome discrimination and structural inequity, and ensure that everyone has access to the opportunities they deserve. Residential segregation and racism are the bedrocks of inequality and negatively impact people’s access to housing, fresh food, clean environments, credit, healthcare, employment, and other necessities of life. We cannot ignore this fact if this nation is to move forward.”

In response, AAPF, the founders of the #SayHerName campaign, have launched the #TruthBeTold campaign to shine light on the impacts of Trump’s Executive Order. The campaign will tell the stories of the damage inflicted by Trump’s Truth and Equity Gag Order. Individuals have already reported canceled, altered, or halted programming or procedures at federal agencies, universities, and non-profit organizations in more than 35 states. Recent AAPF data suggests that more than 300 organizations report trainings canceled and other disruptions due to the gag order.

“The fact that this President is attacking successful anti-racism programs is not just disgusting, it’s dangerous. It’s denial and distraction. The President has denied that the U.S. suffers from systemic racism, and his continued pursuit of this message is just another attempt to distract from the reforms Americans on all sides know need to happen,” said Kimberle Crenshaw, AAPF’s Executive Director and founder of the #SayHerName campaign.

Earlier this month, LDF submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of Management and Budget seeking documents related to the Executive Order. The [FOIA request](#) seeks to determine on what basis the Trump Administration concluded that such a misguided order was appropriate and what steps have been taken to implement it. Also this month, 121 civil rights groups and allies [signed onto a letter](#) condemning the Executive Order noting that it is a blatant effort to perpetuate and codify a deeply flawed and skewed version of American history.

Read the full complaint [here](#).

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. 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. 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 NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

Founded in 1996, The African American Policy Forum (AAPF) is an innovative think tank that connects academics, activists and policy-makers to promote efforts to dismantle structural inequality. We utilize new ideas and innovative perspectives to transform public discourse and policy. We promote frameworks and strategies that address a vision of racial justice that embraces the intersections of race, gender, class, and the array of barriers that disempower those who are marginalized in society. AAPF is dedicated to advancing and expanding racial justice, gender equality, and the indivisibility of all human rights, both in the U.S. and internationally. Follow AAPF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

The National Urban League is a historic civil rights organization dedicated to economic empowerment in order to elevate the standard of living in historically underserved urban communities. The National Urban League spearheads the efforts of its 90 local affiliates through the development of programs, public policy research and advocacy, providing direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 2 million people annually nationwide. Visit www.nul.org and follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @NatUrbanLeague.

Founded in 1988, the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) is a consortium of more than 200 private, nonprofit fair housing organizations and state and local civil rights agencies from throughout the United States. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., NFHA works to eliminate housing discrimination and ensure equal housing opportunity for all people

through leadership, education, outreach, membership services, public policy initiatives, community development, advocacy, and enforcement.