



## **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  
The 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