



**For Immediate Release**

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### **Civil Rights Leaders Meet with Senate Democratic Leadership, Discuss Efforts to Combat Hate and Protect Civil Rights**

Today, civil rights leaders met with Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and other members of the Democratic caucus to discuss post-Charlottesville efforts to combat hate and protect civil rights. The groups participating in the meeting, convened at the request of Leader Schumer, included The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; Anti-Defamation League; Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Human Rights Campaign; MALDEF; Muslim Advocates; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Among the topics discussed were: the rise of domestic hate groups and white nationalist extremism; the increase in hate incidents and domestic terrorism around the United States fueled by racism and religious intolerance; the need to protect voting rights at the federal, state, and local level; the urgent need to protect Dreamers, and other issues concerning federal civil rights enforcement and policies, including congressional oversight of the executive branch.

The groups reiterated to senators that violent extremism has no place in America. The white supremacist rallies and hate-fueled violence around the country, marked by the recent events in Charlottesville, runs counter to the values that animate their organizations' work. The groups noted that while bipartisan condemnation by lawmakers of the violence in Charlottesville was welcome and important, Congress also needs to reject policies that exclude and divide us as a nation and advance measures that combat hate as well as promote American values of inclusion, fairness, and justice.

The civil rights groups, through The Leadership Conference, had reached out in August to set up a similar meeting with the Republican congressional leadership. To date, neither Senator Majority Leader Mitch McConnell nor Speaker Paul Ryan have made themselves directly available for such

a meeting. The civil rights leaders stand ready to meet with Republican leadership as the issues discussed today are not partisan but affect who we are and who we want to be as a country.

Civil rights leaders in today's meeting included:

Vanita Gupta, president and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Jonathan A. Greenblatt, CEO, Anti-Defamation League

Chad Griffin, president, Human Rights Campaign

Kristen Clarke, president and executive director, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Adam Fernandez, MALDEF

Farhana Khera, president and executive director, Muslim Advocates

Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

Richard Cohen, president and CEO, Southern Poverty Law Center

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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 and 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.*