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Media Contact:
Troi Barnes, media@naacpldf.org

LDF Condemns Trump's First Round of Executive Orders and Forecasts Legal Action

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) today condemned a series of Executive Orders issued by President Trump on the first day of his second and final term in office that are a sweeping attack on democracy and civil rights. These actions include, among others, rescinding vital voting rights measures and police reforms, challenging birthright citizenship, increasing federal death penalty charges, dismantling federal policies that protect transgender people from discrimination, stripping civil servants of their job protections, and undermining diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in the federal government.

LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement:

“President Trump’s first actions upon returning to office confirm that his administration is intent on dividing, discriminating, and excluding. Individually, these Executive Orders are dangerous and unjust. Collectively, they represent a sweeping assault on our democratic ideals and an alarming attempt to reverse decades of progress toward equal opportunity, fair representation, and justice for historically marginalized communities.

“These measures are not about making America great – they are about returning America to its worst era by dismantling civil rights protections, silencing specific communities, and consolidating power among an extremist minority.

“In our constitutional democracy, the president is not a dictator and cannot make law. Many of Trump’s Executive Orders are an unlawful attempt to do precisely that through a dramatic and unconstitutional seize of power that belongs to the people and our elected representatives. LDF will not stand idly by as President Trump attempts to erase our hard-fought gains with the stroke of a pen. We will mobilize, organize, and, as we

did successfully in the first Trump administration, take every legal action necessary to ensure that America moves forward, not backward, in the fight for justice.

“We urge all everyone, including and especially our elected officials and business leaders, to join us in resisting this harmful agenda and reaffirming our country’s commitment to fostering an inclusive environment where all individuals – regardless of race, gender, LGBTQ+ status, and background – have the opportunity to thrive.”

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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.