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LDF Condemns Dangerous Executive Order That Needlessly Expands Law Enforcement Powers and Targets Equity Efforts

Yesterday, President Trump issued an [executive order](#) that, without cause or justification, aims to expand aggressive law enforcement practices that will increase criminalization, funnel federal resources—including military and national security assets—to local law enforcement agencies, bolster already expansive protections for law enforcement officers, and threaten prosecution of state and local officials who promote more equitable law enforcement and foster inclusive environments, including in Black communities that have borne the brunt of police abuses and misconduct.

In response to the executive order, [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) Director of Strategic Initiatives Jin Hee Lee issued the following statement:

“Yesterday’s executive order is an alarming and unprecedented attempt to expand failed and ineffective law enforcement strategies that prioritizes aggression and militarized force over research-backed, public safety measures. The order, if implemented, risks producing unsafe and alienated communities and widespread suppression of the right to protest. While the Trump administration seeks to drastically reduce federal support for vital programs, including in K-12 and higher education institutions, this order marshals federal resources to increase criminalization, lengthen incarceration, and shield officers from accountability. The aim of this order is not to keep people safe, but instead to create a climate of fear and intimidation, especially among those with dissenting views who stand in the way of the administration’s dangerous and antidemocratic agenda.

“Through this executive order, the Trump administration has disavowed any commitment to a public safety system that holds law enforcement officers accountable for misconduct and keeps communities safe through sustainable and meaningful investments that will ensure real public safety. Instead, the order uses the influence, assets, and funds of the federal government to militarize law enforcement and encourage aggressive enforcement of ‘all’ crimes, no matter how minor. It further threatens state and local officials with criminal prosecution for simply taking seriously their duty to ensure equal justice and opportunity for all. These actions amount to the creation of a police state that would undermine the foundations of our multiracial democracy.

“This order is an unabashed abuse of federal executive authority. We condemn it unequivocally.”

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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.