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LDF Files Amicus Brief Highlighting the Importance of History and Context in Employment Discrimination in Case Before Supreme Court

Today, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) and five other civil rights organizations filed an [amicus brief](#) in *Ames v. Ohio Department of Youth Services*, an employment discrimination case centered on the correct application of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The case comes before the Supreme Court after Marlean Ames filed a lawsuit claiming her employer, the Ohio Department of Youth Services, denied her a promotion for being a heterosexual woman.

LatinoJustice PRLDEF, National Women's Law Center, National Employment Law Project, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), and Equal Justice Society joined LDF in submitting today's brief, which contends that the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals made an error when addressing certain legal principles in the case, but reached the correct result in ruling that Ms. Ames had not presented sufficient evidence of discrimination.

“At such a critical juncture for America’s democracy, Title VII remains a necessary tool in addressing discrimination against Black people and other marginalized groups,” said **Janai Nelson, LDF President and Director-Counsel**. “As the organization that spent decades developing the legal doctrine of this statute through impact litigation and legislative advocacy, LDF will fight to ensure that this vital civil rights protection is not undermined or misconstrued. This latest Supreme Court challenge involving a bedrock civil rights statute is part of a broader effort to dismantle the civil rights framework that has supported the success of our democracy and our economy. We say, ‘not on our watch.’”

“The issue in this case boils down to what is really a technical, procedural error by the Sixth Circuit that the Petitioner has made every effort to reframe as substantive misapplication of antidiscrimination law that allegedly unfairly targets and disadvantages majority group plaintiffs,” said **Alexsis Johnson, LDF Assistant Counsel**. “While majority groups are, of course, protected by Title VII, there is a persisting legacy of discrimination targeting Black people and other historically marginalized groups that cannot be ignored. Studies have shown that courts do not apply Title VII to the disadvantage of majority groups.”

LDF’s brief urges the Supreme Court to reaffirm the importance of Title VII’s protections for all employees and reject any rule that would prevent courts from considering the unfortunate realities of how discrimination tends to operate in our society. To support these claims, the brief highlights how certain individuals—especially members of Black communities and LGBTQ+ communities—are disproportionately targeted by discriminatory practices.

Oral arguments in *Ames v. Ohio* are scheduled for February 26, 2025.

Read the brief [here](#).

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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.